

Table 1. School Choice Comparison Grid

School Type	Research	Pros	Cons	Equity Considerations
Charter Schools Publicly funded but independently operated, these schools offer specialized programs and innovative teaching methods.	<p>The "National Charter School Study III" (CREDO, 2013) found that urban charter students outperform traditional public school peers in math and reading.</p> <p>A comparative analysis of charter and district school funding in Washington, D.C. by Kaput, Ali, Schiess from 2024 suggests that when accounting for demographics and funding disparities, performance gaps between charter and public schools narrow, highlighting the impact of systemic factors like funding and resources (Eaken, 2025).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuition-free • Innovative curricula • Smaller classes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competitive enrollment • Performance variability • Funding challenge 	<p>May draw funding from traditional public schools (Modan, 2023)</p> <p>Often serves fewer students with disabilities (Center for Learner Equity, 2021)</p>
Private Schools Tuition-based institutions that offer diverse curricula, often with religious affiliations or unique educational philosophies.	<p>A U.S. Department of Education report (2020) found higher standardized test scores for private school students, though selection bias may play a role.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rigorous academics • Specialized programs • Enriched experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costly • Selective admissions • Lack of government oversight 	<p>Limited accessibility for low-income families without significant financial aid (Freedland, 2025)</p>

Homeschooling A parent-directed educational approach that allows for flexible and customized instruction.	Research from the National Home Education Research Institute (NHERI) (Ray, 2021) indicates homeschooled students perform above average on standardized tests and exhibit strong self-motivation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customized education • Flexible pacing • Strong family involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires parental commitment • Limited peer socialization 	May lack access to specialized services and supports (Coalition for Responsible Home Education, n.d.)
Online Schools Fully or partially virtual learning model that provides flexible scheduling and access to specialized courses.	A study by the Center on Reinventing Public Education (Miron et al., 2010) found online students need strong parental support and time management skills to succeed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible scheduling • Broad course offerings • Accessibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires self-discipline • Less face-to-face interaction • Digital equity concerns 	Access depends heavily on broadband availability and home support (National Rural Education Association, 2023)
Magnet Schools Public schools with specialized curricula, such as STEM or the arts, that attract students across different districts.	Findings from George and Darling-Hammond (2021) highlight positive effects on student achievement, attendance, and graduation rates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialized curricula • Strong academic standards • Diverse student body 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competitive admission • May require long commutes 	Admission policies can impact equity of access (George & Darling-Hammond, 2021)

Micro-Schools Small, community-based schools with personalized, student-centered instruction and flexible learning models.	Case studies highlight high engagement, personalized instruction, and innovative methods (e.g., Prenda's model of student-driven learning) (Horn, 2021).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small class sizes • Personalized learning • Innovative instruction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited resources • Often tuition-based • Not always accredited 	Typically less accessible to low-income families without scholarships (Russon, 2023)
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