

## How To Choose a Private School

(Published by the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, Jan. 2015)

We all instinctively want what is best for our children, and this naturally includes the best education.

For this reason, many people choose to send their children to private schools. With the outcome so important, making just the right choice seems like a daunting task.

It becomes less daunting if you give it some thought, do some research and break the process down into steps. The following tips may help you choose just the right school **(the items in bold were inserted by the Catholic Schools of Fairbanks)**:

1. Start by objectively evaluating your ultimate educational goals for each child (every child is different).
  - a. **At Catholic Schools of Fairbanks faith and academics meet**
  - b. **97% of our students go on to higher education**
  - c. **Our graduating class of 24 students (in 2014) raised more than \$1,000,000 in scholarships**
2. Ask for recommendations from your child's current school, teachers, guidance counselors, family and friends. This should give you a good starting point.
  - a. **Catholic Schools of Fairbanks is a community of students, teachers and parents**
3. Make a general list of the things your ideal school would offer. E.g. do you want your child to have access to extra-curricular activities such as sports, band, art or debate?
  - a. **Catholic Schools of Fairbanks offers band, orchestra, choir, sports, drama, Academic Decathlon, Art Club and multiple other extracurricular opportunities**
4. Do an internet search (or word of mouth) of the schools in the area. Check out their website, do they still interest you?
  - a. [www.catholic-schools.org](http://www.catholic-schools.org)
  - b. **Facebook: Catholic Schools Fairbanks**
5. Depending on how far away the school is, you will need to determine if there are suitable transportation options available to and from the school. The perfect school won't be so perfect for you if you are going to have transportation issues.
  - a. **Catholic Schools of Fairbanks offers bus service at no additional charge**
6. Once you have done the preliminary research, you are ready to make your "short list" of schools. These are the schools that fit your initial criteria and you and your child think should be in the running.
  - a. **Christ, community, consistency and fun = Catholic Schools of Fairbanks**
7. Once you have your list in hand, it is time to start filling in the details. This will help you further narrow the field. Don't forget to determine entrance requirements and insure that your child meets them before moving forward with a particular school.
  - a. **We begin each day with prayer and pledge**
  - b. **Weekly Mass**
  - c. **Religion taught in ALL grades**

8. Call the schools that interest you and set up a tour.
  - a. Create a list of general questions along with a set of specific questions for each of the schools on your list. While there, ask questions about the enrollment paperwork and any testing your child will have to complete.
  - b. Use your time at the school to get a feel for the atmosphere. Is it relaxed and friendly or more structured and disciplined? Most importantly, is it what you expected and will your child feel comfortable here?
  - c. Pay attention to how you are treated by the staff members. Are they friendly, helpful and respectful of your questions and concerns about your child's education? Remember these will be the people you will be dealing with throughout your child's school career.
  - d. Picture your family engaging in school activities and particularly picture your child spending time there. Try to meet as many of the staff and teachers as are available which, of course, depends largely on what time of year you go on your tours. If your child attends the tours, make sure to ask her what she thinks about the schools.
  - e. **Catholic Schools of Fairbanks' phone number is 456-4574.**
9. After your tours have been completed, start reviewing your notes. At this point you will have already begun to eliminate schools.
10. Now you also have a better understanding of the total financial cost of each school. If you will need it, you should already have asked each school if they have any financial aid.
  - a. **Affordable tuition**
  - b. **Small school feel; big school opportunities**
11. If all has gone well, you'll be able to apply to the school of your choice and have your child happily accepted.
  - a. **Easy application process**
  - b. **Available to print online [www.catholic-schools.org](http://www.catholic-schools.org)**
  - c. **Call 907-456-4574 if you need assistance**
  - d. **We are located at 615 Monroe Street**
  - e. **[info@catholic-schools.org](mailto:info@catholic-schools.org)**

*"How to" Article published by the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, answers provided by Catholic Schools of Fairbanks.*

### **Catholic Schools of Fairbanks Application Process and Timeline**

1. Submit application to front office (615 Monroe Street or [info@catholic-schools.org](mailto:info@catholic-schools.org))
2. Interview
  - a. The front office will call you to schedule
  - b. Interviews start taking place by April
    - i. The sooner you submit your application, the earlier your interview will be
3. Acceptance
  - a. Usually within a week of the interview
4. Tuition Agreement Signing
  - a. A quick 15-minute meeting shortly after your acceptance
  - b. Your child is registered after the completion of this meeting