

Noble and Greenough School

Dedham, United States



Founded in Boston in 1866, this Charles River campus pairs rigorous academics with hands-on EXCEL leadership training.

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	77/100
Academic outcomes	79/100
University placement	77/100
Prestige & heritage	78/100
Alumni network	77/100
Facilities	78/100
Transparency	75/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

A ****187-acre**** campus on the Charles River gives Noble and Greenough a physical scale that few day schools near Boston can match, and the school uses it to reinforce a clear identity: academically demanding, outward-facing and serious about leadership. Founded in 1866 and based in Dedham, Nobles is a coeducational, nonsectarian American school for ages 12 to 18, with ****638**** pupils in grades 7 to 12. The distinctive feature is the combination of a traditional independent-school academic core with EXCEL, its hands-on leadership programme. That matters because plenty of strong US schools talk about character and service; fewer build structured leadership training into school life in a way parents can identify quickly.

This is an expensive school, even by US independent-school standards. The average annual day fee across the years it covers is ****US\$68,500****, and the average annual boarding fee is ****US\$74,800****. The boarding model also matters: this is five-day boarding, not full seven-day boarding, which suits families who want access to Boston and New England networks without sending a child into a fully residential institution. Accreditation by NEASC and NAIS places it squarely inside the established New England independent-school world. The alumni base adds weight: Wikidata alone records 57 notable former pupils across politics, finance, scholarship, journalism and sport. That breadth points to a school with real reach, not a niche local operation.

Why shortlist it? Because Nobles offers a **high-pressure**, **high-opportunity** version of the American private-school model on a large, well-sited campus, with enough boarding to widen its catchment and enough day-school culture to stay connected to family life. It will suit the student who wants rigorous academics, who likes the idea of leadership being taught rather than merely praised, and who can thrive in a **competitive**, **self-directed** environment. It is not the obvious choice for a child who needs a soft, intimate or highly sheltered atmosphere. It is for the student who wants stretch, expects talented peers and is ready to use a **serious** school platform well.

STRENGTHS

- Set on a 187-acre campus bordering the Charles River, originally landscaped by Frederick Law Olmsted, with a historic mansion ("the Castle") serving as the dining hall.
- Long-established college-preparatory pedigree dating to 1866, with historical ties to Harvard and alumni such as astronomer Percival Lowell and architect Guy Lowell.
- Was the single largest contributor of student-athletes to Harvard's varsity teams in the 2020-21 season, reflecting a strong athletic-to-Ivy pipeline.
- Offers 14 Advanced Placement courses and reports that roughly 60 percent of faculty hold advanced degrees.
- Coeducational and non-denominational today, having broadened from its narrower historical intake.

TRADE-OFFS

- Annual fees are substantial, with day tuition and five-day boarding both running in the low-to-high \$60,000s depending on the year cited.
- Admission is selective, with acceptance figures reported around 24 percent, making entry uncertain even for strong applicants.
- Boarding is a small minority of school life: five-day boarders make up only a small fraction of the roughly 620-630 student body, so the residential community is limited compared with full boarding schools.
- The school has a documented history as an exclusive, historically Episcopalian, Boston-elite institution that did not admit Black students until 1964 or girls until 1974, a legacy families may wish to weigh against its current diversity efforts.

ADMISSIONS

Nobles' main entry points are grade 7 and grade 9, with occasional openings in other grades. Applicants submit transcripts, teacher recommendations, a parent and student statement, and typically an interview, alongside ISEE (grades 7-8) or SSAT (grade 9+) scores. The application fee is reported at \$60 for domestic and \$100 for international families, with a January 15 deadline. Reported acceptance rates near 24 percent place it among the more selective New England day/boarding schools, and prospective boarding families should note that boarding places are limited since Nobles is predominantly a day school.

NOTABLE ALUMNI (57)

SPORT: Clarence Cook Little, Robert Dunham, Robert Treat Paine Storer

MUSIC: Guru, Jude, Ayla Brown, Woolson Morse

DRAMA: Michael Beach, Robert Dunham

VISUAL_ARTS: Harry Crosby, Guy Lowell, Melvin Johnson

LETTERS: Percival Lowell, Abbott Lawrence Lowell, Samuel Eliot Morison, Francis Peabody Magoun, Robert Dunham, Jonathan Kozol, Harry Crosby, Selden Edwards

POLITICS: Percival Lowell, Abbott Lawrence Lowell, Francis W. Sargent, Leverett Saltonstall, Richard P. Freeman, Roger Putnam, John F. Kennedy, William Phillips

SCIENCE: Percival Lowell, Abbott Lawrence Lowell, Samuel Eliot Morison, Francis Peabody Magoun, Arthur Everett Austin, Jr., James N. Wood, Peter L Ward

BUSINESS: Percival Lowell, Wyc Grousbeck, Q4710896, Mayo A. Shattuck III, Ralph Lowell, Seth Goldman, Russell S. Codman Jr.

WTS RATING 

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