

BASIS Peoria

Peoria, United States



Tuition-free, test-driven American schooling that pushes grade 5-to-12 students through an AP-heavy STEM curriculum.

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	74/100
Academic outcomes	80/100
University placement	76/100
Prestige & heritage	70/100
Alumni network	69/100
Facilities	68/100
Transparency	74/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

BASIS Peoria sits in a narrow but important niche: a tuition-free public charter school for ages ****10-18**** that delivers an American curriculum through an unapologetically AP-driven model. Founded in ****2014****, it offers something rare in the US market: a no-fee route into a high-pressure, academically selective culture more commonly associated with expensive private schools. That alone puts it on a serious parent's shortlist. The draw is not warmth, pastoral softness or expansive extracurricular theatre. The draw is intellectual pace, early specialisation and a timetable built to reward **competitive ambition**, **academic stamina** and a taste for measurable attainment.

What makes BASIS Peoria distinctive is the combination of access and intensity. It is secular, English-medium and Cognia-accredited, but those basics do not define it. The defining feature is a test-driven structure that pushes students hard through middle and upper school, with AP courses carrying unusual weight. In practice, that means a school for families who want rigour without paying private-school fees, and who accept the trade-off: less educational cushioning, more pressure, more exams, more sorting by performance. For the right child, that produces **serious academic momentum**. For the wrong child, it produces fatigue, frustration and a constant sense of falling behind.

This school belongs on a shortlist for students who are strong in maths, science and analytical subjects, who like clear standards, and who do not need endless hand-holding to stay organised. The best fit is the child energised by hard classes, external benchmarks and a peer group that treats high performance as normal. It suits **self-propelled learners**, **high scorers** and pupils who value subject mastery over the broader, more polished social experience sold by many independent schools. It does not suit students who need a gentler pace, broad academic flexibility or a school culture built around emotional reassurance first and academic pressure second.

In market terms, BASIS Peoria competes less with conventional district schools than with selective magnets, exam-focused charters and lower-cost private college-prep options. Its central proposition is blunt: academic intensity without tuition. That is a powerful offer. Parents who want **disciplined stretch**, **visible standards** and a school that treats achievement as the main event will find it compelling. Parents looking for rounded ease, institutional softness or educational romance will not.

STRENGTHS	TRADE-OFFS
• BASIS Peoria was named the No. 1 high school in the United States in the 2024 US News & World Report Best High Schools rankings, up from No. 12 the previous year. • It is a tuition-free public charter school with no entrance exam; admission is not restricted by academic achievement or any protected class. • By graduation, students have taken a minimum of six Advanced Placement courses as part of an accelerated liberal arts and sciences curriculum. • State assessment data show 83% of students scoring at or above proficient in math and 79% in reading, matching or exceeding district and state comparisons. • Extracurricular offerings include several sports teams, Model UN and a robotics club alongside the academic program.	• The wider BASIS charter network, including its Arizona flagship campuses, has drawn criticism for high student attrition between lower and upper grades, with one commentator noting hundreds of students leaving similar top-rated charters after a short period. • Student demographics skew heavily toward one group, with school data showing 74% of pupils identifying as Asian, 12% White, 6% Hispanic and 4% African American, limiting broader ethnic diversity. • As a lottery-admission charter school, a seat is not guaranteed even for well-prepared families; oversubscribed grade levels can carry waitlists despite open, non-selective enrollment rules. • The accelerated, AP-heavy academic pace that drives the school's rankings is demanding by design, which is not a fit for every learner regardless of ability.

ADMISSIONS

BASIS Peoria is a tuition-free public charter school serving grades 5-12 (a separate K-4 primary campus feeds into it). Entry is via an annual electronic lottery held after an Open Enrollment period; there is no entrance exam and admission is not based on prior academic record. Registration priority is given to returning students, siblings and staff children before the general lottery. Given the school's 2024 US News No. 1 national ranking, demand is high and waitlists are common in oversubscribed cohorts, particularly at the standard 5th-grade entry point.

WTS RATING 

This profile summarises editorial research by World's Top Schools. Verify all admissions dates directly with the school before submitting. Sources are cited in the full online profile at WorldsTopSchools.com/schools/sch_35c6a91f06.