

Landon School

Bethesda, United States



An all-boys campus of 75 wooded acres near D.C., where a teacher-coach-mentor model pairs AP rigor with 22 varsity sports.

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	65/100
Academic outcomes	73/100
University placement	72/100
Prestige & heritage	74/100
Alumni network	19/100
Facilities	75/100
Transparency	66/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

Landon occupies a clear niche in the Washington market: an all-boys day school with serious academic expectations, a large athletic programme and a campus footprint that most urban independents cannot match. The headline facts do the work. This is a 1929-founded school on 75 wooded acres in Bethesda, teaching boys aged 8 to 18 through the US high school diploma with AP courses, with ****22 varsity sports****, an ****8:1**** student-teacher ratio in the verified context, and an annual day fee of ****\$51,000****. The teacher-coach-mentor model is the point of difference. Landon sells structure, adult attention and a boy-centred culture without apology. For families who want co-education, it is not the answer. For families who want a school built expressly around how boys learn, compete and are held to account, it belongs on

the shortlist.

What marks Landon out is the combination of breadth and control. At 720 students, it is big enough to sustain deep co-curricular choice and a broad peer group, yet small enough to keep classes at an average of 14. The school talks openly about character, service and leadership; many schools do, but Landon has the infrastructure to make that credible, from the scale of its athletics to the stability of a long-established college-prep programme. Its published college indicators are solid rather than flashy: a middle 50% SAT range of **1240–1470** and **88%** of the Class of 2026 attending a college where they applied early or priority. That points to a school that knows how to manage applications and place pupils sensibly, not a school trading on a handful of headline admits. The old-school independent profile remains visible too: this is a boys' prep school with traditions, expectations and a confident sense of itself. Some families will find that *reassuringly structured*; others will find it *too bounded*.

The boy who thrives here is competitive, busy and responsive to close adult guidance. He does not need to be a star athlete, but he will get more from Landon if he enjoys teams, routine and a campus culture where sport carries weight. He also needs to tolerate, and ideally value, a school that speaks in the language of responsibility, character and commitment. The fit is strong for boys who want *clear standards*, *room to run*, *serious coaching* and *a defined path to university*. It is weaker for boys who want a looser atmosphere, a more visibly progressive identity, or the social mix of a co-educational setting. In market terms, Landon is a polished, high-cost, high-involvement Washington-area boys' school with substance behind the pitch.

STRENGTHS

- Average class size is 14 students, with 70 percent of full-time faculty holding advanced degrees, giving boys close faculty attention in an all-boys day setting.
- Landon is located on 75 acres in Bethesda, MD, outside of Washington, D.C., and offers 22 arts and 21 athletics options, with facilities such as a STEM center noted in school materials.
- Financial aid available annually totals \$6.9 million, with 27% of students receiving aid, indicating a sizeable need-based support programme.
- Founded in 1929 by Paul Landon Banfield, the school moved to its present 75-acre Bethesda campus in 1935, giving it a long-established institutional history and alumni network in the Washington D.C. area.
- The Class of 2026 includes 89 students who will attend 60 colleges and universities around the country and world, reflecting breadth in college placement.

TRADE-OFFS

- The school is single-sex (boys only) and day-only, so it does not suit families wanting co-education or a boarding option.
- Grades 3-5 tuition is \$53,500 and Grades 6-12 tuition is \$59,000 for the 2025-26 year, placing it among the higher-fee day schools in the DC region.
- In 2018, Landon announced it would discontinue AP courses to focus on offering its own set of high-level "advanced" courses, which may complicate comparisons with standard AP-based systems familiar to some expat families.
- The acceptance rate at Landon School tends to vary by year, but it's generally around 30-40% according to third-party estimates, and admission windows are limited to specific entry grades.

ADMISSIONS

Landon admits boys in grades 3-12, though most places open at grades 3, 7 and 9. The school states applications are accepted every year for Grades 3-11, with Grade 12 only under special circumstances, via its online Ravenna portal. Requirements typically include transcripts, teacher recommendations, an interview, and (for older applicants) standardized testing such as the SSAT or ISEE. Third-party estimates put the acceptance rate around 30-40%, suggesting moderate to high selectivity rather than open enrollment. Financial aid is available and need-based, administered by a dedicated financial aid office.

NOTABLE ALUMNI (35)

SPORT: Donald Dell, Fred McNair, Robbie Bordley

MUSIC: Ahmet Ertegun

DRAMA: Nicholas Hammond, Teddy Sears

VISUAL_ARTS: Ned Bittinger

LETTERS: Maury Povich, Q6422239, Topper Shutt, Doug McKelway

POLITICS: John Jacob Rhodes III, Rush D. Holt, Jr., Bronson La Follette, William Eacho, Q91080484

SCIENCE: Rush D. Holt, Jr., Alan Brinkley, Thomas A Wadden, Q91080484

BUSINESS: Ahmet Ertegun, Hassan Nemazee, Tom Scott, Todd Boehly

WTS RATING 

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