

DeMatha Catholic High School

Hyattsville, MD, United States



A Hyattsville boys' Catholic prep where a 1965 upset of an unbeaten NY power built a basketball dynasty alongside rigorous AP study.

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	52/100
Academic outcomes	60/100
University placement	63/100
Prestige & heritage	58/100
Alumni network	4/100
Facilities	71/100
Transparency	27/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

DeMatha Catholic High School occupies a clear niche in the Washington market: a boys’ Catholic day school that treats scholarship, sport and religious formation as co-equal parts of the programme, not decorative add-ons. Founded in **1946**, it has the age and institutional confidence many younger college-prep schools borrow but do not possess. The school’s own language is unusually direct: faith, community and service sit alongside academics, arts and athletics as the six pillars. That matters. Parents looking for a school with a strong internal logic, a defined moral framework and no embarrassment about Catholic identity will find one here. The **1:12** student-teacher ratio adds a practical advantage to that proposition.

What sets DeMatha apart is not only the well-known athletic reputation, though that remains a major draw, but the fact that the school refuses to cast sport as separate from intellectual discipline. This is a place for boys who benefit from structure, clear expectations and a culture that prizes **hard work**, **healthy competition** and **serious belonging**. The curriculum is the US High School Diploma with Advanced Placement, delivered in English, and the school states plainly that it serves students of differing abilities and interests. That breadth is a strength, but it also defines the experience: DeMatha is not a boutique academic enclave for boys who want a narrow, seminar-style existence detached from school spirit, service or religion. It is a bigger, more public-facing institution with a strong communal identity and a **muscular sense of purpose**.

Why shortlist it? Because few schools in this category combine a rigorous college-preparatory frame, explicit Catholic formation, extensive co-curricular life and a long-established boys' school culture with this degree of coherence. The school's Trinitarian tradition gives it a distinct religious inheritance rather than a generic Catholic gloss, and the emphasis on service and moral principles is woven into the mission, not bolted on for admissions copy. Accreditation by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools adds a baseline external check. For families who want **moral seriousness**, **high expectations** and a school that pushes boys towards adulthood rather than indulging adolescent drift, DeMatha deserves attention.

The best fit is a boy aged ****14-18**** who wants an all-boys environment, is comfortable with Catholic life, and will use the school's full range of opportunities rather than resisting them. He does not need to be an athlete, but he will thrive if he respects effort, responds to accountability and wants to be part of a **tight-knit brotherhood** with visible traditions. Boys who want a highly informal culture, a secular ethos, or a school organised around individual preference rather than communal standards will find DeMatha constraining. Boys who want **discipline with ambition** and a school identity that means something will find one of the stronger options in the area.

STRENGTHS

- Long-established all-boys Catholic college-preparatory school, founded in 1946 by the Trinitarian order in Hyattsville, Maryland.
- Nationally recognized basketball program built under legendary coach Morgan Wootten, producing NBA alumni such as Adrian Dantley and Danny Ferry.
- Offers a broad Advanced Placement curriculum alongside the standard US high school diploma track, supporting college-bound students.
- Located just outside Washington, D.C., giving students easy access to the cultural and educational resources of the capital region.
- Strong track record of graduates progressing to four-year colleges, reflecting the school's college-prep orientation.

TRADE-OFFS

- Single-sex (all-boys) institution, which will not suit families seeking co-educational schooling.
- Distinct Catholic religious identity with mandatory theology classes and chapel observance, a consideration for non-Catholic or secular families.
- Strict uniform and discipline code that may feel rigid to families used to more relaxed international school environments.
- As a day school with no boarding option, it is only practical for families able to commit to living within commuting distance of Hyattsville.

ADMISSIONS

Entry is primarily at grade 9, with occasional space in upper grades. Applicants sit the High School Placement Test (HSPT) and submit prior transcripts, teacher recommendations, and an application fee. Admission is competitive given the school's reputation, particularly for students seeking a spot in academically strong or athletically prominent cohorts. Catholic sacramental records are requested where applicable, though the school enrolls students of other faiths. Interviews or shadow days may be part of the process; families should check the admissions office for current deadlines and required testing dates.

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_bf113306e4.