

BASIS Chandler

Chandler, United States



Where compulsory Advanced Placement from ninth grade fuels a No. 2 national STEM ranking and a 2024 Blue Ribbon distinction.

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	73/100
Academic outcomes	85/100
University placement	79/100
Prestige & heritage	68/100
Alumni network	62/100
Facilities	65/100
Transparency	75/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

BASIS Chandler occupies a narrow, demanding corner of the US schools market: a non-religious day school in Arizona that runs an American high school diploma alongside compulsory AP from Year 9 onward. That structure is the headline. Many schools offer AP as an option for strong older pupils; BASIS builds it into the spine of the secondary programme. For families who want academic acceleration without the fog of progressive jargon, that is a serious point of difference. Founded in 2003, teaching in English, and accredited by Cognia, the school has had time to prove that this is not an experiment. The promise is clear: **fast pace**, **hard-edged ambition**, and a curriculum built for pupils who do not need coaxing to work.

Its market position rests on outcomes culture and academic intensity, not on roundedness for its own sake. The editorial tagline points to a No. 2 national STEM ranking and a 2024 Blue Ribbon distinction; both matter because they reinforce the school’s reputation for serious academic delivery. Parents should also note the operating texture: a student-teacher ratio of **20:1** and an average class size of **22**. Those figures do not describe boutique intimacy. This is not a tiny tutorial school built around pastoral hand-holding. It is a scaled, disciplined academic model that expects students to keep up, stay organised and absorb a demanding workload. For the right child, that creates *intellectual pressure* of the productive sort. For the wrong child, it creates drag.

Why shortlist it? Because BASIS Chandler offers a version of American schooling that is unusually explicit about standards. There is no mystery about what the school values: subject mastery, exam readiness and depth in mathematics and science. That attracts families who care more about academic traction than about glossy campus theatre. A child who thrives here will be bright, resilient, competitive enough to tolerate comparison, and happy in classrooms where speed matters. A child who needs frequent reassurance, broad curricular looseness or a gentler learning curve will find the model *unforgiving*. In plain terms, BASIS Chandler is for students who want to be stretched early, live comfortably with external benchmarks, and treat school as a place for *serious work* rather than self-expression first.

STRENGTHS

- Tuition-free public charter school admitting via lottery, with no entrance exam or academic screening required for entry.
- Ranked second in the nation on U.S. News & World Report's 2025-2026 'Best STEM High Schools' list among BASIS Arizona campuses.
- All students are required to begin Advanced Placement coursework and exams starting in ninth grade, giving a structured, rigorous academic pathway.
- Seniors can choose the AP Capstone track or the network's own senior program, which includes seminar classes and a self-designed off-campus project.
- Offers a fine arts program with sizeable Orchestra and Symphony ensembles alongside its STEM-heavy core curriculum.

TRADE-OFFS

- Historically very oversubscribed: about 1,000 applications were received for a senior class of under 100 places in a recent year, making guaranteed entry unlikely.
- As an Arizona charter, BASIS is not required to hire state-certified teachers, and BASIS teacher pay has been reported below the state public-school average, which can affect staffing continuity.
- The school covers only grades 5-12; families need a separate BASIS primary campus (K-4) for younger children, so there is no single-campus continuity from kindergarten.
- Admission runs on a random lottery rather than merit, interview or catchment guarantee, so even highly motivated local families face genuine uncertainty of a place.

ADMISSIONS

BASIS Chandler is a tuition-free public charter serving grades 5-12, with separate K-4 primary campuses feeding into it. There is no entrance exam; places are allocated by an annual random lottery run after the fall Open Enrollment period, with priority given first to returning students, siblings and staff children. Demand has historically exceeded supply, with roughly 1,000 applications recorded for a senior class of under 100 in one recent year. Families should apply promptly within the Open Enrollment window and treat a lottery offer as uncertain even for priority applicants.

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_c1d792d022.