

Blair Academy

Blairstown, United States



A hilltop New Jersey campus, founded 1848, where the weekly Society of Skeptics turns global debate into a signature course of study

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	72/100
Academic outcomes	72/100
University placement	71/100
Prestige & heritage	74/100
Alumni network	74/100
Facilities	75/100
Transparency	65/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

The hilltop setting is not the point at Blair Academy. The point is scale, intensity and breadth packed into a high school of unusual self-confidence: a ****460-acre**** New Jersey campus, students aged 14 to 19, and a coeducational boarding-and-day model that still treats school as a full community rather than a timetable. The school teaches an American curriculum, holds NEASC and NAIS accreditation, and charges an average annual boarding fee of ****\$76,300****. That places Blair firmly in the top tier of the US boarding market. Parents are paying for a substantial residential experience, not a boutique sixth form or a commuter prep school with beds attached.

What puts Blair on a shortlist is the combination of old-school boarding structure and real extracurricular range. The campus supports 30 varsity teams plus 21 junior varsity and thirds sides, which tells you something concrete about opportunity: students do not need to be elite athletes to compete seriously. Arts also have visible weight, and the school’s own emphasis on faculty who know students well matters in a boarding context where supervision, judgement and adult presence shape daily life. Blair’s editorial tagline points to the weekly Society of Skeptics, and that detail matters more than the name itself. It signals a school that values argument, public reasoning and intellectual sparring, not passive compliance. That is a **distinctive** note in a market full of schools selling “well-roundedness” without defining it.

This is a strong fit for teenagers who want a **fully immersive** American boarding school, who will use a big campus, and who enjoy being busy across classes, teams, arts and residential life. It also suits students who like debate and can handle a culture with standards and visible tradition. It is a weaker fit for families seeking a small, softly structured environment or a narrowly specialised academic hothouse. Blair offers breadth before niche. The recent university destinations listed here — Amherst College, Saint Joseph’s University and Barnard College — show credible onward routes, but the school does not publish a broader destinations picture in this brief. Its alumni base is also substantial, with ***58*** notable alumni catalogued in Wikidata across politics, business, scholarship, the arts and journalism. The overall impression is **serious, expansive and unsentimental**: a boarding school for students who want room to test themselves, and adults who will expect them to do it.

STRENGTHS

- Founded in 1848 and entered into the National Register of Historic Places in 1992 in recognition of its historic and architectural significance, giving the school a long institutional history.
- The school's student-teacher ratio is 7:1, with an average class size of 12, supporting close faculty-student contact.
- Under coach Jeff Buxton, the wrestling team won 31 National Prep Titles in a row, from 1981 to 2012, reflecting a strong, long-standing athletics tradition.
- Alumni include Vanguard Group founder John C. Bogle (1929-2019), who started The Vanguard Group, a big investment company, and Appaloosa Management founder David Tepper, Billionaire Hedge Fund Manager, Appaloosa Management founder (1976), Carolina Panthers owner.
- The 463-acre campus is set among rolling hills near the Delaware Water Gap, and the school offers 21 interscholastic sports.

TRADE - OFFS

- Admission is highly competitive: the acceptance rate of Blair Academy is 15%, which is lower than the boarding school average of 64%, so a place is far from guaranteed.
- Fees are substantial: tuition is \$78,980 for boarding and \$55,050 for day students (2025-26), among the higher end for US boarding schools.
- The campus is located 65 miles from New York City in a rural setting, meaning limited independent access to a major city for boarders used to urban life.
- The school's official profile lists IB: No, ESL: No, so families needing an International Baccalaureate track or dedicated English-language support should verify what alternative provisions exist.

ADMISSIONS

Blair Academy admits students into grades 9 through 12 plus a postgraduate year, as both boarders and day students. The application deadline is January 15, with rolling review thereafter, and an interview is required as part of the process. With an acceptance rate of roughly 14-15 percent, well below the typical boarding-school average, admission is competitive; families should expect standardized testing (or school-specific assessments), transcripts, recommendations, and an on-campus or virtual interview to be central to the review.

NOTABLE ALUMNI (58)

SPORT: J.P. Geise, Sasha Patane

MUSIC: George F. Houston, John Sebastian, Christine Evans

DRAMA: George F. Houston, John Cassavetes, John W. Campbell, Bob Guccione, Jesse Louis Lasky Jr., Tucker Max, Robert Hutton, Ed Sabol

VISUAL_ARTS: Jerome B. Robinson, Bob Guccione, John Sebastian, John P. Miller

LETTERS: James Hagerty, Stuart Loory, John Cassavetes, John W. Campbell, Taki Theodoracopulos, John C. Bogle, Hudson Taylor, Jesse Louis Lasky Jr.

POLITICS: Joseph Horace Shull, Samuel S. Stratton, Tim Eustace, William E. Simon, Albert G. Rutherford

SCIENCE: Emily Ray Gregory, John C. Bogle, Jesse Louis Lasky Jr., Andrew R. Heinze

BUSINESS: George P. Jenkins, Manasses Grove, John C. Bogle, William E. Simon

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_c52b5e4cc7.