

Sierra Canyon School

Chatsworth, CA, United States

Along equestrian trails in the San Fernando Valley foothills, a liberal-arts day school fields 76 varsity teams.

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	60/100
Academic outcomes	70/100
University placement	69/100
Prestige & heritage	68/100
Alumni network	0/100
Facilities	75/100
Transparency	66/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

Set against the equestrian trails of Chatsworth in the San Fernando Valley foothills, Sierra Canyon pairs a full American school ladder for ages 4 to 18 with an athletic operation on a scale that is unusual for a day school: ****76 varsity teams****. That alone tells parents a great deal. This is not a niche progressive school or a narrowly academic hothouse. It is a large, **high-visibility** independent school with serious investment in student life beyond the classroom. The structure is clear — Lower School from Pre-K to Grade 6, Middle School for Grades 7 and 8, Upper School for Grades 9 to 12 — and the school also flags college counselling, experiential learning, character education, after-school enrichment and summer programmes as core parts of the offer, not side notes.

What makes Sierra Canyon distinctive is the breadth of ambition. Many schools claim to value arts, athletics and academics in equal measure; Sierra Canyon has built visible infrastructure around all three. The website gives as much prominence to its Arts Academy, film festival and spring arts festival as it does to its athletics pages and sports medicine provision. That breadth will appeal to families who want a child to do several things at once, and to do them seriously. The average annual day fee is ****\$42,038****, which places Sierra Canyon firmly in the expensive US private-day bracket. Parents paying that level will expect depth, options and a polished college-preparatory environment. Sierra Canyon offers that, with the caveat that families seeking a small, understated or deliberately low-pressure school are shopping in the wrong market.

This school belongs on a shortlist for students who are **energetic, outward-facing** and comfortable in a busy institutional culture. It suits children who want the conventional American independent-school package done at scale: strong co-curriculars, organised school spirit, extensive team sport, visible performing arts, and the infrastructure of a Pre-K-12 day school that has been in place since 1978. It also fits students who thrive when there is a lot to join, a lot to try and a lot happening around them. It is less

suited to the child who wants anonymity, a *quietly alternative* atmosphere or a stripped-back academic setting with little fanfare. Sierra Canyon’s appeal lies in range, reach and momentum; for the right student, that is *a powerful mix*.

STRENGTHS

- Ages 4–18 on one campus pathway
- American curriculum, clear for US university preparation
- Nationally prominent basketball and football pipeline
- NAIS accreditation provides recognised external oversight

TRADE - OFFS

- Day school only; no boarding for overseas families
- English-only instruction may limit non-native speakers
- Heavy athletics profile may overshadow other priorities

ADMISSIONS

Sierra Canyon is a non-religious American day school in Chatsworth serving Pre-K through Grade 12, so the obvious admissions entry points are the usual division starts: Lower School (Pre-K-6), Middle School (Grades 7-8) and Upper School (Grades 9-12). The school's admissions pages publicly reference visits, how to apply, tuition and financial aid, an international programme and admission FAQs, but it does not, in the material provided here, publish a fully detailed assessment sequence. Families should therefore expect a standard independent-school process centred on an application, with further screening or evaluation depending on year level, but the exact format is not stated.

Deadlines are not given in the source material supplied, so applicants should not assume a universal cut-off and should check the school directly. Financial aid is clearly available, as tuition and financial aid are listed within admissions. What stands out is less an unusual formal selection mechanism than the school's particular profile: a broad Pre-K-12 structure paired with unusually high-profile athletics, especially in basketball and football.

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_8e8ce01660.