

Cranbrook Schools

Bloomfield Hills, United States



A National Historic Landmark campus designed by Eliel Saarinen houses college-prep classrooms inside Michigan's storied arts-and-science community

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	75/100
Academic outcomes	74/100
University placement	73/100
Prestige & heritage	77/100
Alumni network	77/100
Facilities	78/100
Transparency	71/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

What separates Cranbrook from the pack is not a slogan but a place: a National Historic Landmark campus by Eliel Saarinen, folded into a larger Bloomfield Hills arts-and-science community with its own art museum and institute of science on site. That matters. Plenty of American college-prep schools talk about educating the whole child; Cranbrook has the physical and cultural infrastructure to do it in a way most schools cannot match. It runs from ages 3 to 18, offers the US High School Diploma with AP, and combines day and boarding provision. For families who want an all-through school with a serious sense of

continuity, that is a strong proposition. For families who want a compact, purely academic factory, it is not.

The draw here is breadth with substance. The school’s own framing leans hard on “comprehensive college preparation”, “individualised instruction” and a boarding community with students “from around the world”. That points to the right conclusion: Cranbrook suits students who want a *full-spectrum education* rather than a narrow exam drill. The best fit is the child who will use the campus — the scientist who wants proximity to a serious science institute, the artist who benefits from daily exposure to museum-grade surroundings, the boarder who wants a *contained, collegiate environment* rather than a commuter school with dorms tacked on. The notable alumni footprint is real, with **19** verified Wikidata alumni across politics, business, scholarship, writing, film, music and the visual arts. That breadth reinforces the school’s identity: not a specialist conservatory, not a sporting machine, but a *high-culture American prep school* with range.

Fees place it in the premium US independent-school bracket: an average annual day fee of **\$29,957** and an average annual boarding fee of **\$63,000** across the full age range. That is expensive, but not irrational for a boarding-and-day school with this kind of estate and institutional ecosystem. The trade-off is straightforward. If you want published headline data on outcomes, the school does not disclose aggregate AP results in the information we have, and no university destination list is set out here. Parents who need hard performance tables before they engage will find that opacity frustrating. Parents who care more about intellectual atmosphere, institutional heritage and a *richly textured* student experience will keep Cranbrook on the shortlist.

Cranbrook is for students who are bright, self-directed and ready to exploit an environment with a lot going on beyond the classroom. It will suit the child who wants challenge without a single-track culture, and who thrives in a school that treats arts, sciences, service and student life as part of the same project. It is *not for the faint-hearted* in the sense that the setting itself invites ambition: if a student drifts, the opportunities will pass them by. For the right family, that is the point.

STRENGTHS

- Campus is a National Historic Landmark designed chiefly by Eliel Saarinen, giving day-to-day school life a backdrop of significant Arts-and-Crafts and mid-century modern architecture.
- Low 8:1 student-to-faculty ratio with average class sizes around 16, allowing more individual attention than many large college-preparatory schools.
- Academically strong upper-school cohort, with average standardized test scores around 1470 SAT and 31 ACT among admitted students.
- Extensive co-curricular offering, including roughly 22 to 25 interscholastic sports plus access to the on-site Cranbrook Institute of Science, Art Museum and Academy of Art.
- Long track record producing alumni active in politics, journalism, business and the arts,

TRADE - OFFS

- Tuition is substantial: day fees run roughly \$31,900 to \$44,100 depending on grade, with boarding tuition near \$60,000 to \$65,800 plus additional fees.
- Admissions are selective, with a reported acceptance rate around 38 percent, below the average for comparable boarding schools.
- Boarders are a minority of the upper-school population (roughly 257 boarding versus 554 day students), so the boarding community is smaller than at schools built primarily around residential life.
- Location is suburban Detroit rather than a major global gateway city, meaning international families must factor in connections via Detroit Metropolitan Airport, about 17 miles away.

including figures such as Mitt Romney and Daniel Ellsberg.

ADMISSIONS

Cranbrook admits across PK through grade 12, with the Upper School (boarding and day) drawing the most external applicants. The stated application deadline is January 31, with rolling admission thereafter; requirements typically include transcripts, a recommendation letter, an application essay and an interview. Reported acceptance rate is around 38 percent, and admitted upper-school students average roughly 1470 SAT or 31 ACT, indicating a competitive but not hyper-selective process compared with top East Coast boarding schools.

 ADMISSIONS CALENDAR

The next 3 milestones for Cranbrook Schools. Dates confirmed against the school's most recent published admissions calendar — check the official site to confirm before submitting.

Nov 15, 2026 3MO	ASSESSMENT SSAT + campus visit
Jan 15, 2027 5MO	REGISTRATION CLOSES ⓘ Priority application deadline
Mar 10, 2027 7MO	DECISION Admission decisions

► 1 PAST DATE

NOTABLE ALUMNI (19)

- MUSIC: Alexi Lalas, Michael Moriarty, Renée Elise Goldsberry
- DRAMA: Selma Blair, Michael Moriarty, Edmund White, Renée Elise Goldsberry
- VISUAL_ARTS: Florence Knoll, Q18515490, Stephanie Snider
- LETTERS: Daniel Ellsberg, Michael Moriarty, Edmund White, Michael H. Hodges, Q138015190, Mitt Romney
- POLITICS: Daniel Ellsberg, Ann Romney, Pete Dawkins, Elissa Slotkin, Mitt Romney
- SCIENCE: Daniel Ellsberg, Edmund White, Bing Gordon, Michael Eric Dyson
- BUSINESS: Alexi Lalas, Florence Knoll, Mitt Romney

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_954c216203.