

Horace Mann School

New York City, United States



Born as Columbia Teachers College's 1887 experiment, now a Riverdale hilltop campus that swaps AP exams for homegrown advanced courses

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	79/100
Academic outcomes	81/100
University placement	80/100
Prestige & heritage	80/100
Alumni network	79/100
Facilities	76/100
Transparency	78/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

Horace Mann’s defining feature is not a gleaming campus or a branded global network, but an old-fashioned American independent-school confidence in writing its own academic script. This is a coeducational day school founded in 1887, with more than 1,800 pupils from Nursery through Grade 12 across Manhattan and the Bronx, plus a 320-acre outdoor education centre in Connecticut. The school’s interest for parents sits in that combination of scale and seriousness: ****10:1**** student-teacher ratio, average class size of ****18****, and a culture built around a **hard-driving intellectual life** rather than exam factory habits. The tagline matters here too: Horace Mann swaps AP exams for its own advanced courses. That will suit families who want depth, teacher-led challenge and a school confident enough to resist

standardised American prestige markers. It will not suit parents who want the reassurance of a long list of AP scores.

The market position is clear. At an average annual day fee of **\$59,025**, Horace Mann sits in New York's top fee bracket and competes for families who could choose any elite day school in the city. What puts it on a shortlist is not polish alone, but institutional heft: NEASC and NAIS accreditation, a large alumni base, and destination power that is hard to ignore. For the Class of 2026, with 183 leavers, the leading university destinations were the University of Chicago with 64 students, Cornell with 45, and the University of Pennsylvania with 23. Those are striking numbers, even allowing for a self-selecting cohort. The school also carries real cultural and intellectual weight beyond admissions statistics, with 141 notable alumni catalogued in Wikidata across politics, business, science, writing and the arts. That breadth gives Horace Mann a *serious civic and cultural footprint*.

The pupil who will thrive here is bright, self-propelled and comfortable in a large, *high-pressure* environment where ambition is normal. This is not a *cosy* boutique school. It is a big, established New York institution with the resources to offer theatre, athletics, research, service and outdoor education at scale, but also the expectation that students will use them well. Children who want close adult attention without a sheltered atmosphere will find that balance in the ratio and class size. Children who need constant hand-holding or a softer academic pace will find the place *demanding*. For the right family, Horace Mann offers something distinctive: a *formidable* American college-prep education with intellectual confidence, deep extracurricular reach and outcomes that justify its price.

STRENGTHS

- Founding member of the Ivy Preparatory School League, with an athletics program that has won 219 league championships and 30 state titles since 1946.
- A low student-teacher ratio of 7:1 across roughly 1,800 students from Nursery through Grade 12.
- Owns the John Dorr Nature Laboratory, a 275-320 acre outdoor-education campus in Washington Depot, Connecticut, used from second grade through senior orientation.
- Financial aid is substantial in scale: 17 percent of students shared more than \$18 million in need-based aid in 2025-26, with awards ranging up to full tuition.
- Has moved away from Advanced Placement designations in favor of its own advanced-course curriculum, alongside an unusually deep catalogue in science research, performing arts and athletics.

TRADE-OFFS

- Tuition is among the highest of any New York day school, set at \$68,700 for the 2026-27 year for Threes through Grade 12, before required fees.
- Financial aid is need-based only; the school awards no merit scholarships, so full-paying families bear the entire cost.
- Only Nursery, Kindergarten, Grade 6 and Grade 9 are genuine entry points; all other grades are filled on a wait-pool basis only, which limits options for families arriving mid-cycle.
- The main campus sits in Riverdale, the Bronx, while the Nursery Division is a separate site in Manhattan, meaning young children face a campus change and families outside the immediate area face a real commute.

ADMISSIONS

Applications run through the Ravenna portal on the ISAAGNY coordinated calendar, roughly a year ahead of the desired entry grade. Nursery, Kindergarten, Grade 6 and Grade 9 are the main entry points; other grades depend on attrition and are handled via a wait pool. Kindergarten and Grade 1 candidates sit an online First Look Insights assessment plus a child visit and parent interview; Grades 6 and 9 applicants submit ISEE or SSAT scores, teacher recommendations, transcripts, an essay and an in-person interview. The school does not publish an official acceptance rate, though outside estimates place it near 15-20 percent at primary entry points.

NOTABLE ALUMNI (141)

SPORT: Renée Richards

MUSIC: Betty White, Elliott Carter, Tom Lehrer, Johnny Green, Gil Shaham, Peter Cincotti, Paul Francis Webster, Antoine Silverman

DRAMA: Betty White, Robert C. Schnitzer, Bob Rafelson, Marsha Hunt, Ira Levin, Alvin M. Josephy, Jr., Aram Avakian, John Dall

VISUAL_ARTS: Rockwell Kent, Q8014359, Philip von Saltza, Jennifer Rubell, Anita Weschler, Josh Bernstein, Andrew Levitas, Ethel Schwabacher

LETTERS: Betty White, Robert Caro, Bob Rafelson, Rockwell Kent, William Carlos Williams, Ira Levin, Samuel R. Delany, Alvin M. Josephy, Jr.

POLITICS: James R. Schlesinger, Peter Viereck, William Barr, Roy Cohn, Peter Deutsch, Thomas Legg, Ilario Pantano, Donald M. Blinken

SCIENCE: Elliott Carter, Ernest Michael, Tom Lehrer, Robert Caro, James R. Schlesinger, Samuel R. Delany, Alvin M. Josephy, Jr., Peter Viereck

BUSINESS: Arthur Hays Sulzberger, James Murdoch, Roy Cohn, Peter Deutsch, Robert E. Simon, Seymour Durst, David Cornstein, Wesley LePatner

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_ce8f4211c6.