

White Bear Lake

MAGAZINE

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Discover Private School Education Options in White Bear Lake ^[1]

A quick, handy-dandy guide to some of the area's private schools.



Students at the Liberty Classical Academy with teacher Becky Renstrom.

Your child's private school education is a valuable investment, but with many private school options in the area, it can be a tad overwhelming on which one to choose. So we've done the groundwork and put together a quick guide on some of the local schools to consider. Feel free to contact them directly to schedule a tour and learn about their open-house events.

St. Jude of the Lake Catholic School ^[2]

In 2014, St. Jude of the Lake Catholic School celebrates 60 years of educating students in the Mahtomedi area. This faith-based school offers an academic education for kindergarten through eighth-grade students addressing the whole child: mind, body and spirit. This approach focuses on academic excellence, worship and service to others to help students understand their deeper

responsibility to the world.

St. Jude was recently designated an International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Program; they are the only Catholic elementary school in the Midwest with this distinction. Principal Cressy Epperly says, “Our IB program is all about developing inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people, and preparing them to be global thinkers and to be aware of other cultures and world views.”

The student body population at St. Jude of approximately 100 students study in classes of 12–16 pupils. The school’s small size allows everyone to know each other and encourages family connectedness and a customized learning environment.

In addition to core academics, students at St. Jude’s have access to Spanish language instruction, art, band and theater. Students in grades five through eight can participate in sports programming offered through the Catholic Athletic Association. An onsite Lake Area Discovery Center preschool makes life easier for parents with multiple children. Applicants need not be church members; the school is open to families of all faiths and typically doesn’t have a waiting list for admission.

Tuition: Grades K–8: \$4200. Financial assistance is available to those in need.

Information: 600 Mahtomedi Ave., Mahtomedi; 651.426.2562.

Magnuson Christian School ^[3]

Magnuson Christian School began with a class of 16 kindergartners in September 2004. The school was a dream long discussed by dedicated church members and pastor emeritus Magnuson of First Lutheran Church. Pastor Mahan provided additional passion for providing a Christ-centered, academically excellent school to the community. Growth continued by adding another grade each year. Magnuson now educates over 130 students in kindergarten through eighth grade.

Magnuson is housed at First Lutheran Church, but is a separate entity and is open to all. The challenging and exciting core curriculum includes reading, math, social studies, science, computers, chapel and Bible lessons, as well as Spanish and Chinese language instruction, music, art, physical education, and band and piano lessons.

Because Magnuson seeks to grow the whole child, there is a strong emphasis on monthly mission projects like food drives and Valentines for veterans. Cross-generational opportunities such as sing-a-longs, gift making, lunch sharing and socializing with church seniors are supported and encouraged. Church members also volunteer to provide tutoring and enrichment opportunities to Magnuson students.

Shared events with Lake Area Discovery Center, a preschool in the building, and partnering older students with kindergartners further emphasizes the school’s cross generational approach.

Tuition: K–5: \$3995; grades 6–8: \$4495. Tuition discounts are offered to families with multiple students, and tuition assistance is available for those who need it.

Information: 4000 Linden St., White Bear Lake; 651.429.5349.

Liberty Classical Academy ^[4]

Liberty Classical Academy is in its 11th year. The school started when a group of families was dissatisfied with the lack of available education options that emphasized both high academic standards as well as traditional Christian values. Together, they launched Liberty Classical Academy with 28 students. Liberty Classical currently educates 139 students in kindergarten through 12th grade and 24 preschoolers.

The education model at Liberty Classical Academy focuses on three areas: grammar, logic and rhetoric. Development and marketing director Bethany Zenner says, "It's the rhetoric piece that most other schools omit, and it's something we do extremely well." Zenner describes the rhetoric component, aimed at ninth through 12th graders, as learning to communicate what they have learned in an intelligent manner.

"All students in upper grades are required to take logic and speech courses," says Zenner. "This helps them learn to formulate logical arguments and defend what they've learned. We are teaching kids how to think, not what to think." Rigorous academic standards are taught from a Christian faith-based perspective that integrates Bible-based and high moral values into all coursework. In addition, most major sports are available to students for after school participation.

Headmaster Rebekah Hagstrom says, "Liberty Classical Academy students are high academic achievers, consistently earning test scores above the national average. The last three graduating classes have been awarded an average per student college scholarship of \$25,000 a year." Liberty Classical is open to all faiths without restriction or any required statement of faith.

Tuition: Kindergarten: \$5800; grades 1–5: \$8100; grades 6-8: \$8600; grades 9–12: \$8950. A scholarship program is available to assist with tuition.

Information: Lower grades located at 1660 Birch Lake Ave., White Bear Lake, upper grades located at 2696 Hazelwood St., Maplewood; 651.772.2777.

White Bear Lake Regional Catholic School (name yet to be determined)

Opening September 2014, the combined school of St. Mary of the Lake and St. Pius X will serve approximately 310 students from preschool through eighth grade. "We are excited to provide a regional location for Catholic education in White Bear Lake," says Patrick Gallivan, current principal at St. Mary of the Lake who will retain the role at the new school. "Two strong Catholic communities are joining forces to deliver a rich education integrated with academic programming that will lead our children to success in the 21st century."

The new school will employ the STREAM program concept (which incorporates the typical STEM classes of science, technology, engineering and math, adding religion and arts) and will be instrumental in "taking Catholic education in the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis to new heights," according to Gallivan.

"The delivery of Catholic education will change from a traditional Catholic school approach to one that places a greater emphasis on ethical science instruction connecting the physical world we live in to the spiritual world we strive to achieve," he continues. "The STEM methodology of exploring our natural world will allow teachers and learners to identify the truths of our faith. The community of White Bear Lake, the surrounding community and the entire archdiocese will benefit from this new course of action and one day will be looked upon as the new model of successful Catholic education."

Tuition: yet to be determined

Registration: applications now being accepted

Information: 4690 Bald Eagle Ave., White Bear Lake; 651.429.7771.

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