

How are Independent Schools Different?

Independent schools are different in that independent school teachers interact with their students not only as instructors in a classroom but as counselors, coaches, and leaders in all aspects of school life.

They are different in that curriculum is faculty determined, different in that teachers are accorded great freedom to teach in individual styles and to choose materials they deem appropriate to the particular students they teach.

They are different in that they are not comprehensive schools but are rather designed for particular elements in the community, be they the gifted, the middle of the road, the learning disabled, the verbally or the visually oriented, or those with special academic bent.

They are different in that their simple administrative structure enables them to respond rapidly to changing conditions and needs, to develop appropriate methods and materials, to take advantage of new discoveries in learning, to dispose of practices which no longer serve best interests.

They are different in that they are financed almost entirely by private means through tuition's, contributions, and fund raising activities. They do not seek public funding because they know that public funding brings public regulation and with it the loss of the independence so vital to their being.

They are different in that they are directly accountable to parents. Independent schools which do not meet parents standards do not last, because parents withdraw their children and with them financial support.

They are different in that they are actively self-regulating, actively promoting self-improvement through their member accrediting agencies.

They are different in that they are free each to seek the most effective ways to educate the particular children in their charge and in so doing to provide for the needs of a diverse population. Different children learn in different ways. Different independent schools provide those ways.

The New York State Association of Independent Schools