Founded in 2001, Headwaters School is an independent school in Austin, Texas serving students from early childhood through grade 12. Our current enrollment is 535 students.

- Springs Campus (Early Childhood) in South Austin at 6305 Manchaca Road
- Creek Campus (Elementary) in Southwest Austin at 9607 Brodie Lane
- River Campus (Middle and High School) in Downtown Austin at 807 Rio Grande Street

Shuttle service offered between Creek and River Campuses.
Headwaters School’s Purpose, Promise, and PACT

We are inspired, organized, and guided by our Purpose, Promise, and PACT. These ideas serve as the foundation for our daily work.

Our Purpose
We cultivate identity formation, foster empathy, and embrace diversity to bring more peace to the world.

Our Promise
We guide our students to live authentically, think expansively, and create bravely.

Our PACT
We invite our students, guides, staff, parents, and trustees to be:

Peacemakers. As we learn to resolve conflicts, we demonstrate compassion, grace, skill, and courage. We take responsibility for our actions.

Advocates. We strive to understand and value diverse perspectives, cultures, and faiths. We recognize our agency and act with integrity in pursuit of a more just and equitable society.

Creators. Curiosity, wonder, and the creative process are essential to a fulfilling life. We discover ourselves and our voices by taking intellectual and artistic risks.

Thinkers. As self-directed learners, we approach education with intention. We use observation, research, and reason to explore problems that matter to us, our community, and the world.

Montessori Foundation, International Baccalaureate® Diploma

The Montessori curriculum in our Early Childhood and Elementary programs is the foundation that leads to our International Baccalaureate® (IB) Diploma Programme, and sets us apart from every other school in Austin. Both Montessori and IB share a dedication to growing compassionate global citizens who are self-directed, lifelong learners. The mission of the International Baccalaureate is “to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.” This is exactly what Maria Montessori hoped to create—a way of helping children learn who they are both as individuals and as part of the global community.

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Peace Education and Mindfulness

Peace Education is paramount to us. We believe that the best way for children to learn about the power of peaceful, healthy communication and conflict resolution is through practice. We dedicate time to the ongoing teaching of communication skills, from discussions with the whole class to one-on-one coaching. As children progress through each grade level, they acquire increasingly sophisticated tools for problem-solving, and students are encouraged to practice utilizing these tools. Academically, we examine and celebrate peace leaders and movements throughout history.

We explore mindfulness at each level at Headwaters. By sharing periods of intentional silence that we call Centering, both students and guides are able to set an intention for the class, self-regulate emotions, and feel more connected to their surroundings. These moments of silence or guided meditation allow each of us to calm and focus the mind and body. In fact, every class in the Middle and High School starts with Centering, often led by a student.

Student Body

- The Headwaters Early Childhood program serves 125 students, ages 18 months to Pre-K.
- The Elementary School serves 190 students in Kindergarten through grade 5.
- The Middle and High School serves 225 students in grades 6 through 12. This number includes 11 international students from five countries including China, Germany, France, Senegal, and Vietnam.
- Sixteen percent of our student body receives tuition assistance.

CULTURE: STUDENT-LED CONFERENCES

Twice each year, 4th-12th grade students reflect on their academic and social progress in collaboration with their advisor and parents. Students examine and consider their goals for the year and present their insights to these caring adults.

CULTURE: THE FORWARD

The Headwaters Forward is an annual trip during which Headwaters staff and students from the Middle and High School spend several days playing and bonding in the beautiful Texas Hill Country. This trip is one of the most memorable experiences of the school year, and we consider it to be an important part of the Headwaters curriculum.

CULTURE: PEACE EDUCATION AND MINDFULNESS

We guide our students to demonstrate compassion, grace, skill, and courage. We take action with integrity in pursuit of a more just and equitable society.

CULTURE: THINKERS

As self-directed learners, we approach education with intention. We use observation, research, and reason to explore problems that matter to us, our community, and the world. Curiosity, wonder, and the creative process are essential to a fulfilling life. We discover ourselves and our voices by taking intellectual and artistic risks.

CULTURE: ADVOCATES

We strive to understand and value diverse perspectives, cultures, and faiths. We recognize our agency and create space for all. As we learn to resolve conflicts, we act with integrity in pursuit of a more just and equitable society.

CULTURE: PEACEMAKERS

We act with integrity in pursuit of a more just and equitable society. We strive to understand and value diverse perspectives, cultures, and faiths. We recognize our agency and create space for all. As we learn to resolve conflicts, we act with integrity in pursuit of a more just and equitable society.

CULTURE: THINKERS

As self-directed learners, we approach education with intention. We use observation, research, and reason to explore problems that matter to us, our community, and the world. Curiosity, wonder, and the creative process are essential to a fulfilling life. We discover ourselves and our voices by taking intellectual and artistic risks.

CULTURE: ADVOCATES

We strive to understand and value diverse perspectives, cultures, and faiths. We recognize our agency and create space for all. As we learn to resolve conflicts, we act with integrity in pursuit of a more just and equitable society.
“If we try to think back to the dim and distant past... what is it that helps us reconstruct those times, and to picture the lives of those who lived in them? It is their art... It is thanks to the hand, the companion of the mind, that civilization has arisen.” – Dr. Maria Montessori

BEYOND ACADEMICS IN OUR YOUNG CHILDREN’S COMMUNITY & PRIMARY PROGRAMS

Primary students have weekly Movement Education classes and daily outdoor time. Our movement education groups include elements of a PE. class but are based largely on the principles of dance and movement therapy, which uses movement to help further integrate the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive aspects of a person. Students practice mindfulness, learn to express feelings, build coping skills, and practice functioning in a group, all while exploring body boundaries, dynamic movement, and static movement.

We place a deep emphasis on art and creative expression. Art is a way for children to communicate their feelings as well as develop their fine motor skills. In the Montessori environment, open-ended art activities are provided to help children explore and use their creativity.

Music is naturally woven into the school day. We sing songs to announce transitions like clean-up and leaving for the day, as well as during circle times. We also use instruments such as guitar or bells, and sometimes, we even have parades with different instruments from the percussion family. Songs at circle time range from fun songs to songs that teach important lessons around social and emotional growth.

Why We Call Our Teachers Guides

Across all three campuses, our educators are called Guides. Our lower school Montessori program is designed with the knowledge that children entering these stages of development are increasingly capable people who are eager for new, broader learning opportunities and social explorations. We believe that every child deserves to have an exceptionally planned and well-prepared learning environment. The role of each educator is to prepare the learning environment and to act as personal guides to each and every student; to recognize readiness, to follow personal interests, and to illuminate the way on the child’s journey through active discovery. The Montessori Guide is first an observer and then a facilitator, guiding the child toward ever-expanding concepts of interest and ability.

CULTURE: GATES OF LIFE

“An ending is but another beginning. Rejoice all ye who pass through these gates.” At the end of each school year, students participate in a graduation ceremony to celebrate those students who are moving on to a new class the following year.
ACADEMICS

Our Montessori Elementary program builds upon each child’s innate curiosity about the world and encourages independent and collaborative projects within and outside of the carefully prepared classroom. Through a combination of group and individual lessons, hands-on materials, and inquiry, we guide children to explore different areas of the curriculum and topics of interest.

Children move from one level of mastery to another as they navigate the materials and curricula. They are able to advance at their own pace. A child may quickly master one concept and need to spend a longer amount of time on another.

We document the children’s progression through the curriculum with a combination of student recordkeeping and portfolio maintenance as well as teacher observation, evaluation, and recordkeeping to ensure all academic goals are met.

Special attention is given to navigating social interactions as well as implementing effective problem-solving strategies and practices.

Each classroom regularly visits our campus library for research and for recreational reading. Special classes each week include Spanish, Music, Art, Gardening, and P.E. Early and Upper Elementary classrooms are equipped with computers for the introduction of technology usage and online research.

BEYOND ACADEMICS IN OUR ELEMENTARY PROGRAM

In our Elementary Physical Education program, our goal is to guide each child to possess the healthiest body, spirit, and mind possible. Elementary students have P.E. classes three times a week, and learn cooperative and team-building games, as well as basic individual skills that involve gross motor movement, ball handling, and hand-eye coordination. Elementary students also have daily recess. Students can also participate in an after-school Outdoor Leadership Club that utilizes our 10.7 acre nature preserve, complete with a low ropes challenge course.

Our weekly art classes encompass the elements of art, principles of design, art history, and an introduction to various materials, techniques, and processes. Each year the children experience working with a wide variety of media, including drawing, painting, printmaking, clay, sculpture, and crafts. All lessons incorporate critical thinking and problem solving skills, while fostering individual creativity. There is an open studio at the end of each school year to showcase the children’s artwork.

Our weekly music classes follow the Orff teaching philosophy. This philosophy presents lessons with an element of play to allow children to explore singing and playing instruments incorporated with movement and dance in nearly every class. Through imitation, then exploration, the class “orchestra” moves towards musical experiences where multisensory learning and high engagement can be readily observed.

Several of our classes perform annual theater productions that the children write, design, and organize. We also have an after-school theatre club where students write scripts, develop plots, create sets, and act in their own productions.

Singing Songs gatherings happen each semester on our Early Childhood and Elementary School campuses. Parents and children from each program gather together to sing songs that the children have learned. In the fall semester, the theme is Halloween, and in the spring semester, the theme is Martin Luther King Jr.’s legacy.
At the foundation of our cultural structure in the Middle and High School is our Advisory curriculum, which creates a small-scale support structure for academic and personal success. Each student in our Middle and High School is a member of a peer Advisory group with 12-16 other students. The Advisor serves as a first point of communication between a child’s teachers and their family.

CULTURE: ADVISORY

During Project Week each spring, each Middle and High School student creates a project of their choice from conception to completion. Students are supported in finding a topic of interest to study independently or in a small group, and are then allotted an entire week to execute the project of their choice. The week culminates in students presenting their work to the community. Past projects have included internships, community service, global travel experiences, filmmaking, in-depth research, and more.

CULTURE: PROJECT WEEK

Middle and High School Programs

6th to 8th Grade

MIDDLE SCHOOL ACADEMICS

Our Middle School creates an environment that allows students to be curious, take risks, stretch their limits, and make mistakes. We believe that the job of our guides is not to simply impart knowledge, but to help students to make meaning from knowledge. Most of all, we believe that joy is a key component of learning, and we work to help students maintain that spark as they navigate these middle school years.

Middle School students study English, Social Studies, Science, Mathematics, Language Acquisition, Wellness, Study Skills, Movement, and the Arts. Classes like Middle School Orientation help students develop study skills and organizational habits early as we encourage students to have a healthy school/life balance. See all courses at headwaters.org/catalog.

We have several student leadership opportunities in the Middle School, including Honor Council, Admissions Council, and Community Leader programs.

BEYOND ACADEMICS IN OUR MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL

Headwaters offers beginner to advanced classes in studio art (painting, drawing, and printmaking), filmmaking, and digital photography. The purpose of the Arts programs at Headwaters School is to provide opportunities for our students to develop skills in creative problem solving; to practice a craft with dedication; and to express thoughts, ideas, and feelings about the world. In the Middle School we offer semester-long introductory classes so that students can try a variety of modalities. In the High School, many courses are year-long and evolve into advanced skills. We recognize the importance of creative thinking in life and in all professional positions, and therefore require students to study in the Arts every year. Headwaters film students have received local and statewide recognition for their work.

All students have the opportunity to participate in our sports program. Our teams compete in a league with other schools in the Austin Private School Association and other local leagues. We offer flag football, volleyball, basketball, and soccer. Middle School students take a daily PACTivity class in which they engage in our school values through movement, wellness and social-emotional learning. High School students independently complete a Physical Education credit each year, including any team sports in which they compete.

Our High School Outdoor Leadership program focuses on leadership, environmental awareness, and specialized outdoor skills. Outdoor Leadership provides opportunities for students to discover their innate leadership ability and build self-confidence and a sense of connection to people and nature. Specialized skills taught through this program include a level of expertise in at least one area, including minimal-impact camping, backpacking, canoeing, kayaking, caving, rock climbing, and nature appreciation (botany, bird watching, etc.), where students lead their own trips in their area of specialty. Students also master wilderness first aid and CPR.

Our Middle School music program includes woodwinds, strings, percussion, and brass. Our students learn improvisation, musical notation, instrument fundamentals, and independent musical reading skills. The intention of the program is creativity and improvisation. Our High School music students further their exploration of music through fundamentals like reading, music theory, instrumental practice, improvisation and public performance. Our 11th and 12th graders compose, perform, research, learn about the music industry, practice ear training, analyze scores, and develop a deeper understanding of music.

We know that engaging in a theatre arts program teaches leadership, self-confidence, teamwork, and creativity. We offer an after-school theatre program that culminates in a theatrical production. Students learn techniques in acting, stage design, production, music, lighting, and costuming.
In our high school, we believe that student agency is important for authentic learning. Our teachers are guides, pointing students in the right direction and giving them the resources to find their way while being careful not to limit their pursuits and interests. We promote collaboration and communication, depth over breadth, and genuine engagement. The lessons of self-sufficiency and self-advocacy learned in ninth and tenth grades coalesce in our International Baccalaureate (IB) program for juniors and seniors. All of this is supported with intentional community building, a robust advisory program, and a personalized college counseling experience.

High School students take four years of study in English, Social Studies, Science, Mathematics, Language Acquisition, and the Arts. All 11th and 12th grade students can choose from a variety of International Baccalaureate course offerings. See all courses at headwaters.org/catalog.

During students’ Junior and Senior years, our college counselor guides families through the college application process. The goal of our program is to support both students and parents in addressing college admissions with a manageable, student-centered method. Parents are supported with private counseling meetings to address specific needs of each family as well as through several group meetings targeting admissions testing, FAFSA, and parents’ responsibilities.

**Credits Required for Graduation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Requirement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>4 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Language</td>
<td>3 years (through IB II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>4 years (through IB II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>4 years (through IB II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>4 years (through IB II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts</td>
<td>3 years (through IB II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theory of Knowledge</td>
<td>2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Thesis</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Wellness and Life Skills</td>
<td>1 semester (in 9th Grade)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Electives: 1.5 years (9th and 10th Grade)**

**College Planning:**

Required in junior and senior year.

**Yearly Participation in**

Advisory and Project Week

**Physical Activity:**

1 credit for 9th and 10th Grade; 1 credit for 11th and 12th Grade

(as part of IB Creativity-Activity-Service hours)

**Community Service:**

25 hours per year for 9th and 10th Grade; 25 hours per year for 11th and 12th Grade

(as part of IB Creativity-Activity-Service hours)

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**International Baccalaureate® (IB) Diploma Program**

We are an International Baccalaureate® World School offering the IB Diploma Programme. The International Baccalaureate® is an academically challenging and balanced program that prepares students for success at university and beyond. It has been designed to address the intellectual, social, emotional, and physical well-being of students. Students can participate either as full IB diploma candidates or as individual course certificate candidates. Like us, the International Baccalaureate® values character development as its core purpose.

The Diploma Programme ensures that students make connections across traditional academic disciplines and explore the nature of knowledge through the unique Theory of Knowledge course; undertake in-depth research into an area of interest through the lens of one or more academic disciplines in the Extended Essay; and enhance their personal and interpersonal development through Creativity-Activity-Service (CAS) hours. See all the details about Headwaters and the IB at headwaters.org/ib.

**Accreditation**

Headwaters School is accredited by the Texas Alliance of Accredited Private Schools (TAAPS), which is a TEA-endorsed State accreditation agency. TAAPS is a member of TEPSAC, the State governing body of private school accreditation associations.
Life Beyond Headwaters™

Our graduates have been accepted to the following colleges and universities, and have matriculated to the schools indicated with an asterisk.

Abilene Christian University*
Academy of Art University
Agnes Scott College
Allegheny College
Allegheny College
Allegheny College
American University
American University
American University
American University
American University
Amherst College
Angelo State University*
Antioch College*
Arcadia University
Arizona State University
Arizona State University – Barrett, The Honors College
Art Institute of Austin*
Art Institute of Dallas*
Auburn University
Austin College*
Austin Community College*
Baldwin Wallace University
Bar Bard College
Bates College*
Baylor University*
Belmont University*
Beloit College*
Bennington College*
Berklee College of Music*
Blinn College*
Boston College – Boston, Massachusetts
Boston Conservatory of Music*
Boston University*
Bowdoin College
Brandeis University
Brigham Young University*
Bucknell University*
Butler University
California College of the Arts*
California Polytechnic State University – San Luis Obispo, California*
Carleton College
Carnegie Mellon University
Carroll College – Helena, Montana
Catholic University of America
Central Washington University
Centre College
Champlain College*
Chapman University
Chatham University
Clark University*
Colby-Sawyer College
College of Charleston*
College of the Holy Cross
College of St. Benedict
College of Wooster
Colorado College*
Colorado School of Mines – Golden, Colorado*
Colorado State University*
Columbia College Chicago*
Columbia University
Concordia University
Concordia University at River Forest*
Connecticut College*
Cooper Union
Cornell College
Cornell University*
Dallas Baptist University
Davidson College
Denison College
DePaul University
Dickinson College
Dominican University of California
Drury University
Drexel University
Duke University*
Earlham College
Eastern Michigan University
Eckerd College
Elizabethtown College*
Elon University*
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University
Emerson College*
Emory & Henry College
Emory University
Evergreen State College*
Exeter College for Digital Arts
Fairfield University
Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising
Flagler College
Florida Atlantic University
Florida Gulf Coast University
Florida International University
Florida Southern University
Fordham University
Fort Lewis College*
Franklin and Marshall College
Franklin University
Switzerland – Lugano, Switzerland
George Mason University
George Washington University
George Washington University Honors Program*
Georgia Institute of Technology
Goucher College*
Green Mountain College
Grinnell College
Guilford College
Gustavus Adolphus College
Hampshire College*
Hawaii Pacific University*
Hendrix College*
High Point University*
Hiram College
Hofstra University
Howard University
Humboldt State University
Huston-Tillotson University*
Illinois Wesleyan University
Indiana University
Iowa State University
Ithaca College
Johns Hopkins University – Peabody Institute
Kalamazoo College
Kennesaw State University
Kenyon College
Knox College
La Salle University
Lawrence University*
Lesley University
Lewis & Clark College*
Linfield College
London Metropolitan University
Long Island University Brooklyn
Los Medanos College
Louisiana State University
 Loyola Marymount University
Loyola University New Orleans
Lubbock Christian University*
Lynn University*
Macalester College
Manhattanville College
Marlboro College
Maryland Institute College of Art
Massachusetts College of Pharmacy & Health*
McDaniel College
McGill University
Merimack College
Miami University, Oxford
Michigan State University
Middlebury College
Midwestern State University
Mills College*
Montana State University, Billings
Mount Holyoke College*
Muhlenberg College
Musician’s Institute
Naropa University*
New College of Florida*
New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology
New York Film Academy*
New York University*
Northeastern University
Northeastern University Honors Program*
Northern Arizona University
Northwestern University
Northwestern University
Oberlin College*
Occidental College
Ohio Wesleyan University
Oklahoma City University
OKlahoma State University
Orange Coast College*
Oregon College of Art & Craft
Oregon State University
Pace University, NYC
Parsons the New School for Design
Pennsylvania State University Polytechnic Institute of New York University*
Portland Community College*
Portland State University*
Pratt Institute*
Preston College
Purdue University
Quest University – Squamish, British Columbia
Reed College*
Regents University London
Regis University
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
Rhode Island School of Design*
Rhodes College – Memphis, Tennessee
Rice University
Richmond The American International University in London
Rider University
Ringling College of Art & Design
Rochester Institute of Technology*
Rutgers University*
San Diego State University*
San Francisco Art Institute
San Francisco State University
Santa Clara University
Santa Fe University of Art & Design
Sarah Lawrence College*
Savannah College of Art & Design*
School of Art Institute of Chicago*
School of Visual Arts – New York Schreiner University
Seattle University*
Seton Hall University
Sewanee: University of the South
Smith College*
Southern Methodist University*
Southern Oregon University
Southwestern University*
Spelman College
St. Andrew’s University*
St. Edward’s University
St. Edward’s University Honors Program*
St. John’s University*
St. John’s University
Queens Campus
St. Kate’s University
St. Mary’s University of San Antonio
Stanford University*
Stephen F. Austin State University
Stephens College*
Stony Brook University
Suffolk University
SUNY – Geneseo
SUNY – Purchase
SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry
Swarthmore College
Sweet Briar College
Syracuse University*
Tampa University Honors Program
Temple University
Texas A&M University*
Texas Christian University*
Texas Lutheran University
Texas State Technical College*
Texas State University Honors Program
Texas Tech University*
Texas Tech University The New School*
Trinity College
Trinity University*
Tulane University*
Universidad del Valle de Mexico – Monterrey*
Universiteit van Amsterdam*
University College Cork
University College Dublin*
University of Alabama
University of Alaska Southeast
University of Arizona*
University of Arkansas
University of British Columbia
University of California at Berkeley
University of California at Davis*
University of California at Irvine
University of California at Los Angeles
University of California at San Diego
University of California at Santa Barbara
University of California at Santa Cruz*
University of Central Florida
University of Cincinnati
University of Colorado at Boulder Honors
University of Colorado at Colorado Springs
University of Colorado at Denver
University of Dallas
University of Denver*
University of Edinburgh
University of Georgia*
University of Hawaii at Hilo
University of Hawaii at Manoa*
University of Hawaii West Oahu*
University of Houston, Victoria
University of Houston*
University of Idaho
University of Illinois at Urbana
University of Iowa
University of Kansas
University of Kentucky
University of Limerick
University of Mary Hardin-Baylor*
University of Massachusetts, Amherst
University of Miami
University of Miami Frost School of Music
University of Mississippi
University of Missouri at Columbia
University of Montana at Missoula
University of Nebraska at Lincoln
University of Nevada
Honors Program
University of Nevada, Reno
University of New Mexico
University of North Carolina at Asheville*
University of North Carolina at Charlotte
University of North Texas School of Jazz
University of North Texas*
University of Oklahoma*
University of Oregon
University of Portland*
University of Puget Sound
University of Redlands
University of Rochester*
University of San Diego
University of San Francisco*
University of Southern California
Viterbi School of Engineering*
University of Southern California*
University of Tampa
University of Texas at Arlington*
University of Texas at Austin*
University of Texas at Austin
Butler School of Music
University of Texas at Austin
Cockrell School of Engineering*
University of Texas at Austin
Dean’s Scholars Program*
University of Texas at Austin Plan II Honors Program*
University of Texas at Austin
Turing Scholars Honors Program*
University of Texas at Dallas*
University of Texas at San Antonio*
University of Texas at Tyler*
University of the Pacific
University of Toledo
University of Tulsa
University of Utah
University of Vermont*
University of Washington
Honors Program
University of Washington*
University of West Florida*
University of Wisconsin at Madison
Ursinus College*
Vanderbilt University*
Virginia Tech University*
Wake Forest University
Warren Wilson College
Washington & Lee University
Washington State University
Washington University in St. Louis
Webster University
Wesleyan University
West Texas A&M
Western State University
Western Washington University
Westminster College*
Westhampton College
Whitman College*
Whittier College*
Willamette University
Williams College
Woodbury University
Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Yale University

*matriculations