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### Public vs. Private High School Education

**Situation:** As a graduate of Middletown High School North in New Jersey, I am giving a speech to the parents of Middletown middle school children to convince them to send their children to public high schools in the area. In Middletown, many of the brightest children and their parents choose private schools in the surrounding area for the child to go to, rather than taking advantage of the great public school system we have. My ultimate goal is for the parents and children to choose Middletown public high school as their choice of schooling.

Good evening parents of Middletown middle-schoolers. I am here tonight to talk to you about the great public high schooling options you have available to you in Middletown, New Jersey. As a 2014 graduate and former valedictorian of Middletown North, I would like to talk with you about my high school experiences and convince you to take advantage of the wonderful Middletown public schools. In many situations, the choice between private and public education for high school comes down to the amount of money a family has and how bright their child is. In past years, many of the families of the brightest and/or wealthiest children have chosen private schooling because they saw that as the best option for their child's education. However, as a graduate of a public elementary, middle, and high school in Middletown, I argue that public schooling is a great option for students, no matter their economic background, and should be considered.

To begin, I want to talk to you about the diversity provided to students in public school, which is not as typical in private schools. Diversity in schooling is important because it prepares students for the people they will meet and interact with in the real world. Exposure to diversity

in high school will help to ingrain in your child's mind that even though there are people who do not share their ethnic background and/or have more or less money than them, all still deserve their respect. This semester, I took a social psychology course at the University of Notre Dame in which we discussed the mere-exposure effect. The main premise of this phenomenon in human interaction is that the more a person is exposed to someone else, the more likeable that other person will seem. In other words, if you are exposed to certain types of people in everyday life, you will be more likely to have pleasant feelings toward them. Therefore, diversity in schooling leads to more tolerance among students due to the mere-exposure effect.

One of the main sections of diversity in public schooling is economic diversity. This is important because your children will come into contact with individuals of a variety of backgrounds in the real world. As you probably already know, townships usually district their schools in a way that allows for equal economic distribution so both wealthy and underprivileged neighborhoods will be districted to each public school. Here in Middletown, we have two quality public high schools, Middletown North and Middletown South, which are districted so that the wealthier neighborhoods are split between both schools, leading to equal economic distribution. In my experiences at Middletown North, I made friends with students who had the luxury to go out to eat every weekend and go shopping at the mall often, but also students who were not able to go out often because of their lack of money. This made me value and make the most of what I have, especially in college. In USA Today, a mother speaks of her excitement of sending her son to an economically diverse school. She writes, "This school symbolizes the world I want my son to inherit, where deeper integration occurs, and everyone has something valuable to contribute to the learning process" (Turley). Therefore, an economically diverse schooling experience would be beneficial to your child.

This economic distribution cannot also be said for private schools. As you all know, one of the common private school options for boys is Christian Brothers Academy. On the CBA website, one of the questions on the Admissions FAQ page asks “We are not sure that we can afford to send our son to CBA given the economic climate and what we need to do for our other children’s education as well. Are there scholarships available?” The response says, “At the present time, CBA is fortunate to be able to offer a limited number of academic scholarships to the most highly qualified students” (“Admissions”). This being said, CBA must have limited economic diversity if only a limited number of students who need financial aid are able to attend the school. Furthermore, families with limited funds do not see private school as an option because of how expensive it is and because they may also have to pay for a college education in the near future as well. Therefore, this leaves less economic diversity in private schooling and more in public schools.

Not only is economic diversity prevalent in public schools, but also racial diversity. In general, public schools contain more racial diversity than private schools. On Privateschools.com, 86,792 public school and 29,429 private school demographics were looked at and compared in relation to race. In Public schools, 45.1% of students are non-white while only 25.5% of students in private schools are non-white. (“Characteristics”) While Middletown Township is majority white no matter what school you attend, there is still more racial diversity in public schools, and, according to Schooldigger.com, this diversity is increasing every year. From example, in 2004, the percent of white students attending Middletown North was at 93%. By 2013, that percentage has gone down to 87% whites. However, for Christian Brothers Academy, the percentage of whites started at 94% in 2004, and has only decreased to 92% by 2014. (“Middletown Schools”) In the book, “Multicultural Education: Issues and Perspectives,”

James A. Banks writes, “Research indicates that children come to school with many negative attitudes toward and misconceptions about different racial and ethnic groups” (Banks 21).

Therefore, because of the mere-exposure effect, if students are exposed to people of different races every day in school, your child will be more racially tolerant.

Now I want to discuss an amazing advantage of public schools—they are free! The tuition per year for Middletown Township private institutions is \$10,500 at Mater Dei Prep (“Financial Information”), \$12,420 at Red Bank Catholic (“Red”), and \$14,550 at Christian Brothers Academy (“Finance FAQ”). Add that up and after four years, you will have spent \$42,00-\$58,200 on a high school education for your child. If you have more than one child, this amount would obviously double or triple. College tuition is getting increasingly more expensive, and it would be advantageous to save your money by going to a quality public high school such as Middletown North or South rather than an expensive private school. Therefore, public schooling is a great option because your child will be receiving a quality education for free.

To continue with the topic of college, you may believe that students who attended public schools will have a more difficult chance of getting into quality universities. However, the high school that a student attends is not a significant factor colleges look for in an applicant. On eCampusTours.com, many factors are named in answering the question, “What do colleges look for in an applicant?” The main elements are a challenging schedule, grades, standardized test scores, extracurricular activities, application essay, and letters of recommendation. Both Middletown North and South give students a plethora of options in extracurricular activities, standardized test preparation, and challenging schedule options. Both public high schools offer 24 AP courses and 23 honors courses. This will allow for your child to challenge him or herself in preparation for college. Each subject—English, Social Studies, Mathematics, Science, World

Language, Arts, and Career Education—has more than one AP course available for students to take. This means that your child will have options on which subjects, and even sub-subjects he or she would like to take. There are also 40 clubs available to students, plus many freshman, junior varsity, and varsity sports teams that students can join. (Middletown Township Schools) Attending the Middletown public schools will allow for your child to be well rounded, which will, in turn, allow for them to be admitted into quality universities.

While the facts speak for themselves in proving that Middletown public schools will allow your child to become well rounded and get into a good university, I am also living proof. As I said, I went to Middletown North and graduated in 2014. I was a member of Bottlecappers, Student Council, Spanish Honor Society, Math Team, National Honor Society, and Science League. I was a member of the varsity basketball team as well. I succeeded in the 9 AP courses and 12 honors courses that I took throughout my four years at Middletown North, which allowed me to be at the top of my class. Public school gave me the opportunity to be a well-rounded student and I took advantage of that. Now I am studying at my dream school, The University of Notre Dame, and I am so thankful for my high school experiences. My schedule was challenging but it paid off in the end. I have no doubt in my mind that each and every one of your students will be given the means to succeed at Middletown North or South.

Not only did I get accepted to an excellent university, but so did many of my fellow classmates. On Naviance.com, a website many of you will learn about if your child attends a public high school, students will be able to find possible college options and apply to these schools through the application. Once your child attains a Naviance account, he or she can find out where graduates of his or her high school in past years got accepted to and enrolled in. Some of the many top universities that Middletown North graduates attended are Boston College,

Brown, Carnegie Mellon, Cornell, Dartmouth, Duke, and Notre Dame. (“College”) Therefore, Middletown public schools will be a great option for your children because they give students the means to go to great universities.

If you are still not convinced that public school is your best option, it may be because you believe that students who receive a public education do not achieve proficient or advanced-proficient test scores. According to USNews.com on education, Middletown North is 96% proficient in language and 89% proficient in math, while Middletown South is 97% proficient in language and 89% proficient in math. Both of these scores put Middletown North and South above or at the New Jersey Average in language and math. USNews.com also calculated college readiness of public schools according to the amount of students who took AP tests and the amount that passed. 34% of students at Middletown North took an AP course and 20% passed, putting the school as the New Jersey average. 42% of students at Middletown South took an AP course and 30% passed, putting South above the New Jersey average. (“Middletown Township”) Therefore, if you send your child to either Middletown North or South, they will be given the resources to test proficiently or even advanced-proficiently in testing.

The last point I want to talk about is the teachers at Middletown public schools because the teachers are what make or break an educational institution. I only had experiences with teachers at Middletown North so I am going to talk about my experiences with them. Dr. Patricia Giordano was my AP Calculus professor for two years and I can honestly say that she was the best math teacher I ever had. Dr. G cares so much about her students and pushes them very hard in class to make sure that they succeed on the AP test. I received 5’s on both of my AP exams, as did the majority of my class, which shows how excellent of a teacher Dr. Giordano is. Another fantastic teacher at Middletown North is Mr. Dan Bucko, the AP Psychology

teacher. He teaches a well-structured and interesting class, which keeps the students engaged and learning. Because of experiences in Mr. Bucko's class, I thought about minoring in psychology at Notre Dame. These are just two of the many memorable teachers I experienced at Middletown North and I highly recommend you to send your child to Middletown North so that he or she can experience these amazing teachers as well.

To sum up, public school would be a great option for your child's high school experience. Not only is it free, but it would also give your child the means to succeed in college and in the real world. I would not be the driven, well-rounded person I am today if it weren't for my experiences at Middletown North. Thank you so much for allowing me to share my perspective and for keeping an open-mind throughout my speech. If you would like to discuss this topic even more, feel free to approach me with questions and I would be happy to help. Good luck to you and your children in deciding your high school of choice.

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college acceptance history (All years to 2015)									
College	Accepted (Map)	Enrolled (Map)							
Ablene Christian University	5	0	University of Connecticut	20	3	University of Hawaii at Manoa	2	0	University of Michigan
Adelphi University	1	0	The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science & Art	1	0	High Point University	8	0	Middlesex County College
The University of Alabama	13	3	Cornell University	7	2	Hofstra University	27	3	Millersville University of Pennsylvania
Albright College	23	1	The Culinary Institute of America	4	2	University of Illinois at Urbana- Champaign	5	1	Misericordia University
Alderson-Broaddus College	1	0	Dartmouth College	3	0	Indiana University at Bloomington	3	0	University of Mississippi
Albany College	8	0	Delaware State University	1	1	Indiana University of Pennsylvania	5	0	Monmouth University
Alvernia University	8	2	Delaware Valley College	14	3	Iona College	16	4	Montclair State University
American University	12	4	University of Delaware	87	18	Itasca College	18	3	Moravian College
Arcadia University	18	3	Desales University	4	0	Jacksonville University	2	1	Mount Saint Mary's College
Arizona State University	4	0	DeVry University	4	4	James Madison University	40	12	Mount Saint Mary's University
The University of Arizona	4	1	Dominican College	4	1	John Jay College of Criminal Justice of the CUNY	4	1	NCAA Eligibility Center
Assumption College	10	4	Drew University	15	2	Johns Hopkins University	1	0	Neumann University
Baruch College	1	0	Duke University	61	3	Johnson & Wales University (Charlotte)	5	0	New England College
Becker College	2	1	East Carolina University	1	1	Johnson & Wales University (Providence)	21	5	University of New Hampshire
Bentley University	7	0	East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania	44	14	Kean University	103	33	University of New Haven
Berkely College - Woodbridge Location	2	2	Eastern University	4	2	University of Kentucky	2	0	New Jersey City University
Berkely College NYC Midtown Location	3	2	Edinboro University of Pennsylvania	2	2	Kings College	3	0	New Jersey Institute of Technology
Berkely College- Paramus Location	8	2	Elizabeth Town College	14	3	Kutztown University of Pennsylvania	5	1	The College of New Jersey
Berklee College of Music	4	1	Eon University	6	1	La Salle University	26	8	New York University
Brigham Young University	8	0	Emerson College	3	2	Lafayette College	14	2	University of North Carolina at Charlotte
Brighton College	4	1	Fairleigh Dickinson University	11	2	Lebanon Valley College	7	0	University of North Carolina at Greensboro
Bloomfield College	4	1	Fairleigh Dickinson University	38	7	Lebanon Valley College	5	3	University of North Carolina at Pembroke
Bloomington University of Pennsylvania	8	1	Fairleigh Dickinson University	39	10	Lehigh University	12	3	University of North Carolina at Wilmington
Boston College	15	3	Fashion Institute of Technology	15	5	Liberty University	2	1	University of North Florida
Boston University	22	2	Felician College	9	0	LMI College (Laboratory Institute of Merchandising)	14	2	North Carolina State University
Brookdale Community College	1174	838	Fitchburg State University	3	1	Long Island University, Post Long Island University	4	1	Northwestern University
Brown University	1	1	Fletcher College	6	1	Lock Haven University of Pennsylvania	4	1	Northwestern University
Bryant University	7	0	Florida Atlantic University	12	3	Louisiana State University	1	0	Norwich University
Buffalo State College of SUNY	4	1	Florida Gulf Coast University	1	1	Louisiana State University	27	3	University of Notre Dame
Cabrini College	7	2	Florida Institute of Technology	9	1	Lovain University Maryland	1	0	Old Dominion University
Calm University	3	1	Florida International University	1	0	Lycoming College	4	1	Pace University, New York City
Caldwell University	11	2	Florida Southern College	1	0	Lynn University	3	0	Pace University, Westchester Campus
Carnegie Mellon University	1	1	Florida State University	7	2	University of Maine	8	1	Pennsylvania College of Technology
Castleton State College	4	0	University of Florida	1	0	Manhattanville College	16	3	Pennsylvania State University-- World Campus
The Catholic University of America	4	2	Fordham University - Lincoln Center Campus/Rose Hill Campus	26	2	Manhattanville College	4	1	Pennsylvania State University, Berks Campus
Cedar Crest College	3	0	Franklin Pierce University	4	1	Martlet College	15	2	Pennsylvania State University, University Park
Centenary College	13	4	Full Sail University	7	4	University of Maryland, Baltimore County	10	1	Philadelphia University
Central Connecticut State University	1	0	George Mason University	8	1	University of Maryland, College Park	28	11	University of Pittsburgh
University of Central Florida	2	0	The George Washington University	8	0	Marquette University	13	3	Polytechnic Institute of NYU
Champlain College	8	3	Georgetown University	1	0	Marquette University	1	0	Pratt Institute
College of Charleston	6	2	Georgia Institute of Technology	2	0	University of Massachusetts, Amherst	26	2	Pratt Institute
Chestnut Hill College	3	0	The University of Georgia	2	0	University of Massachusetts, Boston	1	0	Providence College
University of Chicago	1	0	Georgian Court University	36	6	McGill University	2	1	Purchase College State University of New York
Christopher Newport University	4	0	Gettysburg College	5	2	Mercy College	4	2	Purdue University
Clark University	1	0	Gordon College	1	0	Merrimack College	3	1	Quinnipiac University
Clemson University	8	2	Goucher College	2	0	Messiah College	5	1	Ramapo College of New Jersey
Coastal Carolina University	34	8	Hampshire College	3	1	University of Miami	4	1	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
Coquette University	3	0	University of Hartford	16	2	Michigan State University	4	1	
University of Colorado at Boulder	10	4	Hartwick College	3	0		2	1	
Colorado State University	4	3	Harvard University	1	0		1	1	

<a href="#">Rhode Island College</a>	2	0	<a href="#">College of Staten Island</a>	8	3
<a href="#">University of Rhode Island</a>	39	5	<a href="#">Stevens Institute of Technology</a>	31	13
<a href="#">Richard Bland College</a>	5	0	<a href="#">Stevenson University</a>	7	0
<a href="#">University of Richmond</a>	2	0	<a href="#">Stockton University</a>	144	37
<a href="#">Rider University</a>	131	15	<a href="#">Stonehill College</a>	1	0
<a href="#">Roanoke College</a>	6	1	<a href="#">Stony Brook University</a>	14	2
<a href="#">Rochester Institute of Technology</a>	6	3	<a href="#">Suffolk University</a>	8	4
<a href="#">Roger Williams University</a>	7	2	<a href="#">SUNY College at Cortland</a>	4	1
<a href="#">Rollins College</a>	1	1	<a href="#">SUNY Maritime College</a>	5	1
<a href="#">Rowan University</a>	259	82	<a href="#">Susquehanna University</a>	9	0
<a href="#">Rutgers University–New Brunswick</a>	270	82	<a href="#">Syracuse University</a>	8	1
<a href="#">Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey at Camden</a>	5	2	<a href="#">The University of Tampa</a>	17	3
<a href="#">Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey at Newark</a>	13	3	<a href="#">Temple University</a>	22	5
<a href="#">Sacred Heart University</a>	11	2	<a href="#">University of Tennessee, Knoxville</a>	1	1
<a href="#">College of Saint Elizabeth</a>	4	1	<a href="#">The Art Institute of Philadelphia</a>	3	1
<a href="#">Saint Francis University</a>	2	1	<a href="#">The Ohio State University</a>	2	1
<a href="#">Saint Joseph's University</a>	13	1	<a href="#">Towson University</a>	60	22
<a href="#">Saint Leo University</a>	13	3	<a href="#">Tulane University</a>	2	1
<a href="#">Saint Peter's University</a>	16	3	<a href="#">Union College</a>	3	0
<a href="#">The College of Saint Rose</a>	1	0	<a href="#">United States Naval Academy</a>	2	1
<a href="#">Salisbury University</a>	10	2	<a href="#">Universal Technical Institute</a>	2	2
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<a href="#">San Diego State University</a>	2	2	<a href="#">The University of the Arts</a>	2	0
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<a href="#">Seton Hill University</a>	3	0	<a href="#">Virginia Tech</a>	14	8
<a href="#">Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania</a>	1	0	<a href="#">Virginia Wesleyan College</a>	5	0
<a href="#">Siena College</a>	6	1	<a href="#">Wagner College</a>	27	10
<a href="#">Skidmore College</a>	2	0	<a href="#">Washington College</a>	9	2
<a href="#">University of South Carolina</a>	11	4	<a href="#">Wesley College</a>	6	0
<a href="#">University of South Florida, Tampa</a>	5	2	<a href="#">Wesleyan University</a>	1	0
<a href="#">University of South Florida, St. Pete</a>	1	0	<a href="#">West Chester University of Pennsylvania</a>	40	6
<a href="#">Southern Connecticut State University</a>	5	2	<a href="#">West Virginia University</a>	53	17
<a href="#">Springfield College</a>	5	2	<a href="#">Western New England University</a>	8	1
<a href="#">St. John's University – Manhattan Campus</a>	4	0	<a href="#">Westminster Choir College of Rider University</a>	3	2
<a href="#">St. John's University – Staten Island Campus</a>	3	0	<a href="#">Widener University</a>	9	2
<a href="#">St. John's University – Queens Campus</a>	31	2	<a href="#">Wilkes University</a>	6	2
<a href="#">State University of New York at Albany</a>	3	0	<a href="#">College of William and Mary</a>	1	0
<a href="#">State University of New York at New Paltz</a>	3	1	<a href="#">William Paterson University of New Jersey</a>	77	11
<a href="#">College of Staten Island</a>	8	3	<a href="#">Worcester Polytechnic Institute</a>	2	0
<a href="#">Stevens Institute of Technology</a>	31	13	<a href="#">Yale University</a>	3	0
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<a href="#">Stockton University</a>	144	37			
<a href="#">Stonehill College</a>	1	0			
<a href="#">Stony Brook University</a>	14	2			
<a href="#">Suffolk University</a>	8	4			



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