

athletics; (3) students are too sheltered; (4) students and teachers should be in other schools as witnesses; (5) the school is for students who cannot do well in other schools; (6) teachers are not highly qualified; (7) finances are too meager to provide quality education; (8) principals are not highly trained; (9) faculty and administrative turnover is excessive; (10) money spent on the school should go to foreign missions; and (11) the tuition costs are too high.

Since each Christian school is independent, apart from a few which are a system, each must be considered on its own merits and limitations determined. Sweeping generalizations about the schools should be heard with caution.

STATISTICAL DATA

The United States Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) generates the most comprehensive and authoritative data on nonpublic schools. NCES surveys over the past few years indicate a period of growth for private elementary and secondary education. As indicated by Table 35.1, "Private education is assuming an increasing share of the American educational effort at the elementary and secondary levels."¹

TABLE 35.1
PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND ENROLLMENTS
ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY LEVELS
U.S. TOTALS, FALL 1980 AND 1983

CATEGORY	TOTAL	PUBLIC	PRIVATE	PERCENTAGE PRIVATE
Schools				
Revised 1980	110,400	85,900	24,500	22.2
Current 1983	112,700	85,000	27,700	24.6
Enrollment (in millions)				
Revised 1980	46.2	40.9	5.3	11.5
Current 1983	45.2	39.5	5.7	12.6

Sources: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, surveys of private and elementary schools; *Digest of Education Statistics, 1983-84* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1984); and *The Condition of Education, 1984* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1984).

Table 35.2 gives a further breakdown of the number of private schools, students, and teachers. Catholic private education accounts for the largest portion of American private education activity. However, "other affiliated" and "nonaffiliated" segments are increasing, whereas the Catholic share is decreasing.

1. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Educational Statistics, Bulletin, *Private Elementary and Secondary Education, 1983 Enrollment, Teachers and Schools*, December 1984.