JP MARKETING

GUIDE + DIRECTORY LIST

The Best Backlinks & Directories for Private Schools

Where to get listed, which links matter, and how to get them

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What's a backlink? (the simple version)

A **backlink** is when another website links to yours. Google sees it like a vote. If trusted sites vote for you, Google trusts you more.

A **directory listing** (also called a **citation**) is a place online that lists your business name, address, and phone. Even without a link, these help Google and AI tools know you're real.

For private schools, the best links come from 3 places:

1. **Industry sites** (associations and directories made for private schools)
2. **Local sites** (your town, chamber, schools, news, partners)
3. **Big trusted directories** (Google, Bing, Apple, Yelp, BBB, Facebook)

AI tools like ChatGPT and Google's AI answers also read these sites. Being listed on the right ones helps you show up there too.

Words to know

Word	What it means
SEO	Search Engine Optimization: doing things so Google shows you more.
Map Pack	The 3 businesses on the map at the top of a local Google search.
Service page	A page about ONE thing you do.
Backlink	A link from another website to yours. Like a vote of trust.
AI search	Tools like ChatGPT, Gemini, Perplexity, and Google's AI answers.
Schema	Hidden code that labels your info for computers.
Citation	Your Name, Address, and Phone listed on another site.
N.A.P.	Name, Address, Phone.

Rule #1: Make your info match everywhere

Your **N.A.P.** is your **Name, Address, Phone**. It should be exactly the same on every site.

Looks small	But causes problems
Suite 100 vs. Ste 100	Usually fine
Old phone number	Bad: calls go nowhere
Old address	Bad: Google gets confused
Two different business names	Bad: looks like two businesses

Write down your official N.A.P. and copy-paste it every time.

Step 1: The core listings every business needs

Site	Why it matters
Google Business Profile	Maps and the Map Pack
Bing Places	Bing, and it feeds some AI tools like Copilot
Apple Business Connect	Apple Maps and Siri
Yelp	Reviews; often shows up in AI answers
Facebook page	Trust and reviews
BBB	Trust
Nextdoor	Neighbor recommendations
Data aggregators (Data Axle, Foursquare)	They send your info to lots of other sites

Step 2: The best industry links for Private Schools

These are the sites that matter most for private schools. Start at the top.

Site	Type	How to get it
Niche.com	School directory/ reviews	Claim your profile; encourage parent and alumni reviews.
Private School Review	School directory	Claim and update all info.
GreatSchools	School directory	Check your private school listing.
NAIS / state independent school association	Association	Member schools get directory links.
Accrediting body (Cognia, ACSI, SAIS, etc.)	Accreditation	Many list accredited schools with a link.
State athletic association	Athletics	School pages often link to your site.
MaxPreps	Athletics	Claim your team pages; add your site link.
Local newspaper and community magazines	PR	Send news: awards, new buildings, scholarships.
Churches and faith networks	Community	If faith-based, partner church pages.
Local businesses you partner with	Sponsorship	Athletic sponsors and booster partners.
College counseling partners	Education	Dual enrollment colleges sometimes list partner schools.
Summer camp directories	Seasonal	List camps on local guides.
Chamber of commerce	Local	Member link.
Relocation and real estate guides	Local	Realtors write 'best schools in Franklin' guides. Ask to be included.

> **Tip:** Some of these are paid. Start with the free ones. Then try one paid listing at a time and see if it brings real calls before you add more.

Step 3: Local links (the secret weapon)

Local links are hard for competitors to copy. Ideas that work for private schools:

- **Sponsor something local:** a youth team, school event, 5K, or festival. Ask for your logo + a link on their site.
- **Partner pages:** businesses you work with often have 'trusted partners' pages.
- **Host a free event:** a workshop or class at the library or community center. They usually list it online.
- **Local news:** offer helpful tips on timely topics. Reporters need experts.
- **Chamber of commerce:** join and get a member listing.
- **Local 'best of' lists:** find blog posts like 'best private schools in Franklin' and ask how to be included.
- **Give back:** charity drives and volunteer days often get written about.

Step 4: An email you can send

Use this to ask a partner or local group for a link:

> **Subject:** Quick question about your website
>
> Hi [Name],
>
> I'm [Your Name] with Harpeth Ridge Academy here in Franklin. We love working with you on [event/partnership].
>
> I noticed you have a [resources/partners/sponsors] page on your website. Would you be open to adding us there? Here's our link: [your website].
>
> Happy to share your info on our site or social pages too.
>
> Thanks so much! [Your Name] | [Phone]

Links to stay away from

- Buying links from strangers ("500 backlinks for $50!")
- Link farms and fake 'blog networks'
- Spammy foreign directories
- Fake scholarship pages made only to get .edu links
- Paying for reviews or 'review links'

These can hurt you. Google is good at spotting them.

Track your progress

Keep a simple sheet:

Site	Status	Login/email used	Date done	Link to listing
Google Business Profile	Done	admin@...		
Niche.com	Applied			
Private School Review	To do			

Checklist

- [ ] Wrote down my official Name, Address, Phone
- [ ] Google, Bing, and Apple listings done
- [ ] Yelp, Facebook, BBB, Nextdoor done
- [ ] Top 5 industry listings done
- [ ] 2 local link ideas started this month
- [ ] Sent 3 partner link emails
- [ ] Checked old listings for wrong info

Step by step: your top 8 industry listings

Niche.com

Type: School directory/reviews

How to get it: Claim your profile; encourage parent and alumni reviews.

1. Search Google for: Niche.com private school listing
2. Look for a button like Claim, Join, Add your business, or Get listed.
3. Use your exact Name, Address, and Phone.
4. Add your website, logo, photos, hours, and services.
5. Save the login in your list.

Private School Review

Type: School directory

How to get it: Claim and update all info.

1. Search Google for: Private School Review private school listing
2. Look for a button like Claim, Join, Add your business, or Get listed.
3. Use your exact Name, Address, and Phone.
4. Add your website, logo, photos, hours, and services.
5. Save the login in your list.

GreatSchools

Type: School directory

How to get it: Check your private school listing.

1. Search Google for: GreatSchools private school listing
2. Look for a button like Claim, Join, Add your business, or Get listed.
3. Use your exact Name, Address, and Phone.
4. Add your website, logo, photos, hours, and services.
5. Save the login in your list.

NAIS / state independent school association

Type: Association

How to get it: Member schools get directory links.

1. Search Google for: NAIS / state independent school association private school listing
2. Look for a button like Claim, Join, Add your business, or Get listed.
3. Use your exact Name, Address, and Phone.
4. Add your website, logo, photos, hours, and services.
5. Save the login in your list.

Accrediting body (Cognia, ACSI, SAIS, etc.)

Type: Accreditation

How to get it: Many list accredited schools with a link.

1. Search Google for: Accrediting body (Cognia, ACSI, SAIS, etc.) private school listing
2. Look for a button like Claim, Join, Add your business, or Get listed.
3. Use your exact Name, Address, and Phone.
4. Add your website, logo, photos, hours, and services.
5. Save the login in your list.

State athletic association

Type: Athletics

How to get it: School pages often link to your site.

1. Search Google for: State athletic association private school listing
2. Look for a button like Claim, Join, Add your business, or Get listed.
3. Use your exact Name, Address, and Phone.
4. Add your website, logo, photos, hours, and services.
5. Save the login in your list.

MaxPreps

Type: Athletics

How to get it: Claim your team pages; add your site link.

1. Search Google for: MaxPreps private school listing
2. Look for a button like Claim, Join, Add your business, or Get listed.
3. Use your exact Name, Address, and Phone.
4. Add your website, logo, photos, hours, and services.
5. Save the login in your list.

Local newspaper and community magazines

Type: PR

How to get it: Send news: awards, new buildings, scholarships.

1. Search Google for: Local newspaper and community magazines private school listing
2. Look for a button like Claim, Join, Add your business, or Get listed.
3. Use your exact Name, Address, and Phone.
4. Add your website, logo, photos, hours, and services.
5. Save the login in your list.

3 more emails you can copy

Sponsorship ask

> Hi [Name], Harpeth Ridge Academy would love to support [team/event] this season. Do sponsors get listed on your website? We'd be happy to help. - [Your Name], [Phone]

Local news tip

> Hi [Reporter], with [season/event] coming up, I can share 3 quick tips for Franklin families on [topic]. Happy to do a short interview or send a written quote. - [Your Name], Harpeth Ridge Academy

Partner swap

> Hi [Name], we send a lot of families your way, and we'd love to keep doing it. Would you add us to your 'trusted partners' page? We'll do the same for you. - [Your Name]

Common questions

How many backlinks do I need?

There's no magic number. 10 great local and industry links beat 500 junk links.

Are paid directories worth it?

Sometimes. Try one at a time and track calls from it for 90 days.

Do links help with AI search?

Yes, in a way. AI tools often trust and cite the same sites that link to you or list you.

Want us to do this for you?

JP Marketing helps local businesses show up on Google, Google Maps, and AI search tools like ChatGPT. We build the websites, write the pages, run the ads, and set up the follow-up.

Book a free strategy call at jpmarketing.co. We'll look at your site and your Google profile, and show you the 3 fastest wins for your business.

Rules on Google, Meta, and AI tools change a lot. This guide was last updated November 2026. It is general marketing info, not legal advice.