

# USA Education Curriculum

---



SAMANTHA ZOLTANSKI

AMERICAN BOARDING SCHOOLS INTERNATIONAL

# Overview of Education in the USA

---

**Quality** - Across the range of American schools, from the larger schools in the city to the small schools in rural areas, students can find programs taught by leading experts in their field – experts in the US and often the world.

**Variety** - The US education system has often been said to be the most diverse in the world, in terms of size of population, admissions criteria, programs, delivery and culture.

**Student-centered** - The American school system is centered on a belief in individualism, on personal growth, and on opportunity for anyone – regardless of race, class, or other differences – to achieve a quality education. Students are encouraged to voice their opinions, and to participate actively in their learning.

**Well-rounded** - Students are viewed as individual human beings most of all, and while grades are important, American educators believe strongly that students being active in social, sports, and cultural activities is crucial to their well-being and eventual success in their lives and careers.

# Overview of Education in the USA

---

Different than in many countries, the national (federal) government does not make most of the decisions about American education. The federal government influences policy and some of its broad-based initiatives, and ensures that schools are following national laws, but most decisions are made by individual states, local school districts and schools.

The school calendar usually begins in August or September and continues through May or June. The majority of new students begin in Fall, so it is a good idea for international students to also begin their studies at this time.

The academic year at many schools is composed of two terms called “semesters.” (Some schools use a three-term calendar known as the “trimester” system.)

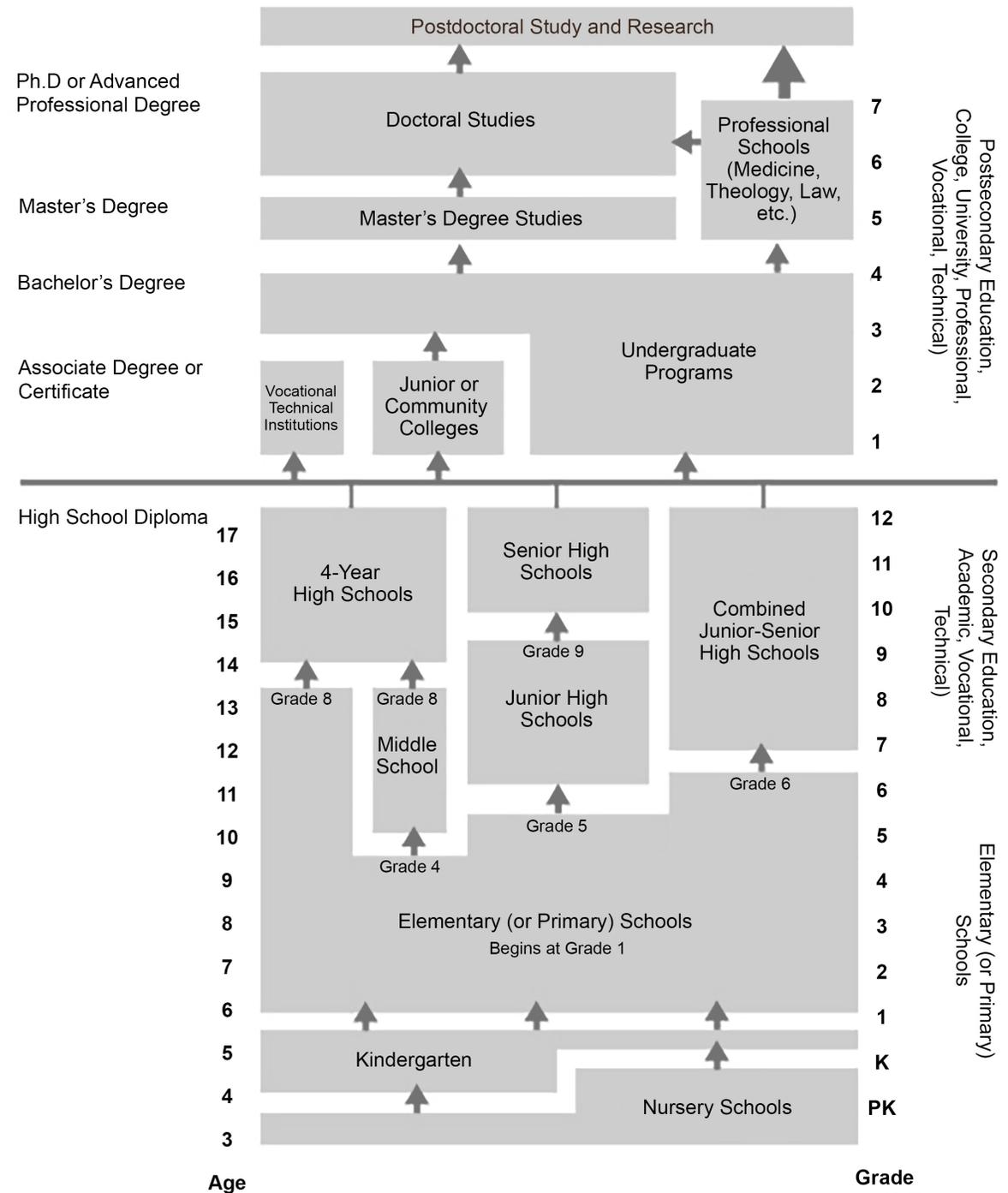
# Nursery/Pre-school and Kindergarten

American students begin either in preschool or kindergarten for 1–3 years before progressing to elementary (primary) school.

# Elementary (Primary)

In most states, the age at which a child must start school is 6.

Students attend elementary from Grade 1 until Grade 5.



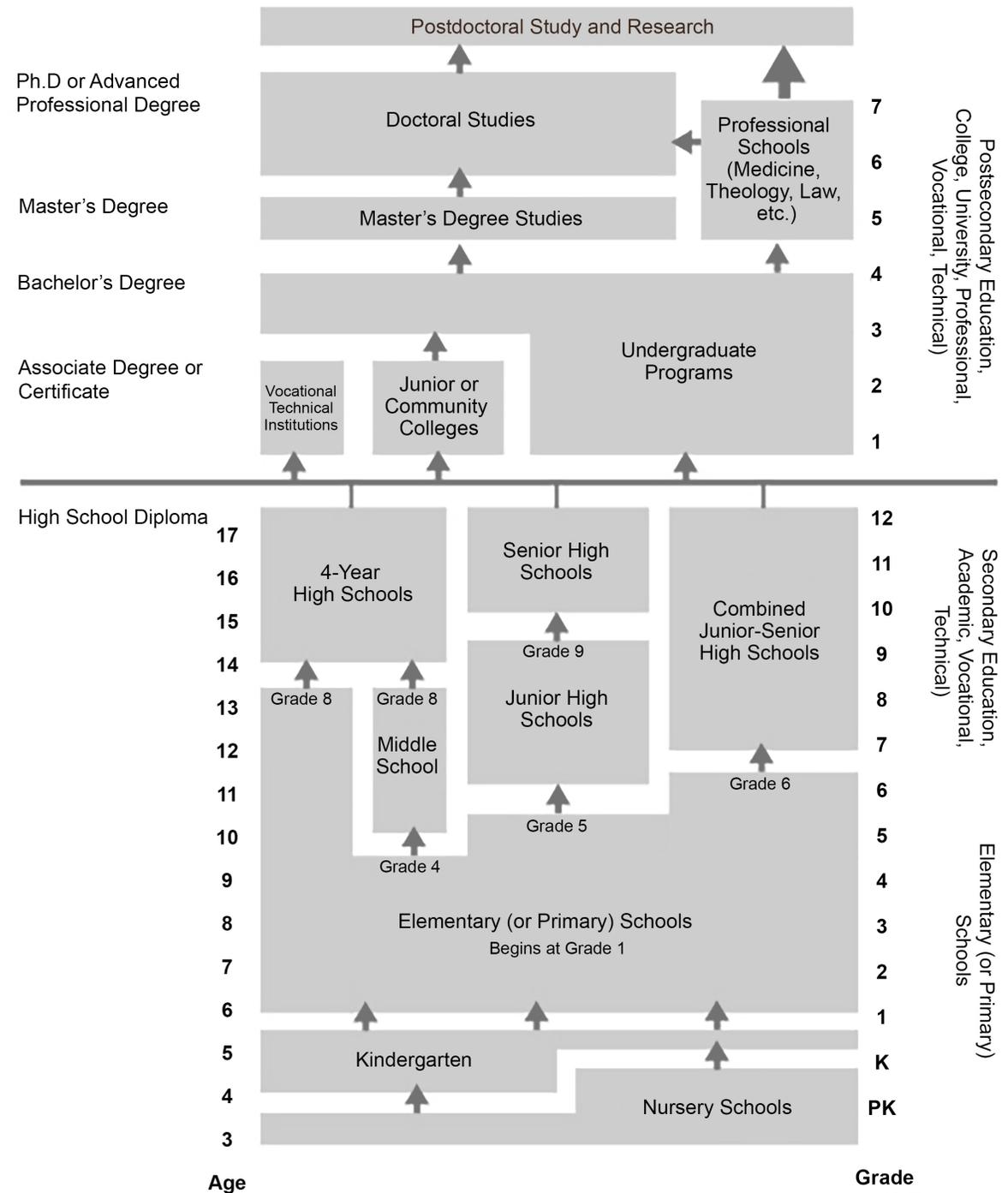
# Junior High School / High School (Secondary School)

They then progress to one of the following:

- a junior high school for two years (generally Grades 6-8)
- a combined junior/senior high school (generally Grades 7-12)
- a four-year high school (Grades 9-12)

# Boarding Schools

Most boarding schools will begin accepting international students for Grades 9-12, sometimes earlier.



# Boarding Schools in the USA

---

The state in which a school is located will have legislated minimum requirements for curriculum content which every school must meet or exceed.

**99% of boarding schools exceed those minimum requirements.**

Most boarding schools prepare their students for college level work, therefore they are considered to provide a college preparatory (prep) curriculum, but the approach is student-centered as opposed to the traditional teacher-centered approach to learning.

Boarding schools typically offer an extensive amount of academic offerings, high-class facilities, along with a variety of arts, athletics, clubs and activities for students.

Most boarding schools, schools are staffed with well-qualified teachers, small-class sizes, 24/7 supervision and provide individual support for students.

# 5 Advantages of Boarding Schools

---

Boarding schools are a great fit for international students especially because they are residential, so they can offer unique benefits to students such as:

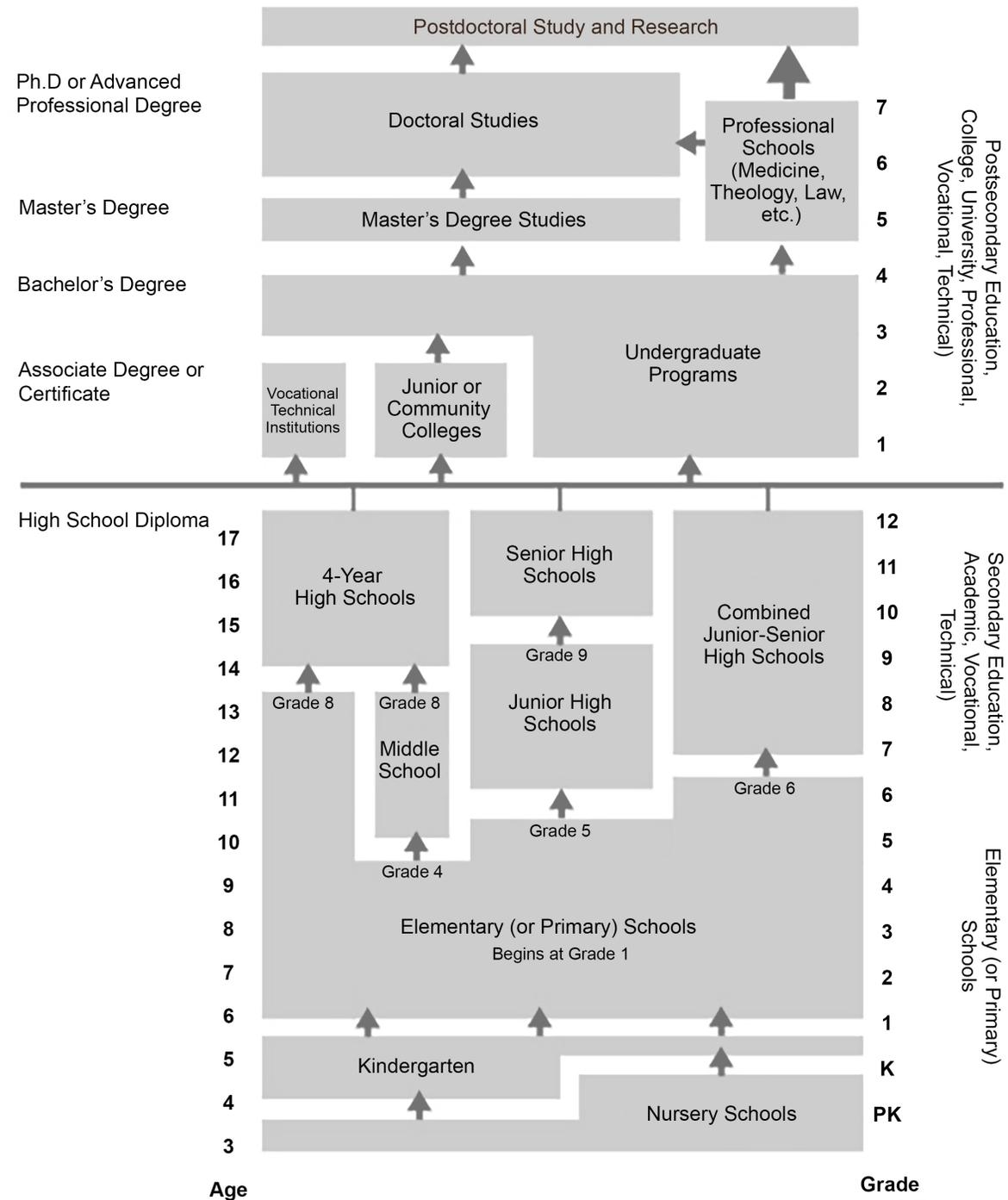
1. Superior academics, supported by small classes and heightened interaction between teachers and students;
2. Students' immersion in a unique residential campus environment in which they live, which promotes friendship among peers, and a trust and honesty with mentors and adults that endures for a lifetime;
3. The responsibility of appropriate independence, in which students learn how to live with and among peers and mentors;
4. Preparation for elite universities;
5. Preparation for general success (studies show that boarding school graduates rapidly advance in their professional careers, and are more engaged in their communities than their peers).

# Graduating High School

A diploma or certificate is awarded upon graduation from high school to students who have completed the school's curriculum. Because of the state and local jurisdiction over education in the US, what courses must be completed to earn a high school diploma will vary from one school to another.

American students normally graduate high school at age 17 or 18.

After graduating high school (12th grade), U.S. students may go on to college or university. College or university study is known as "higher education."

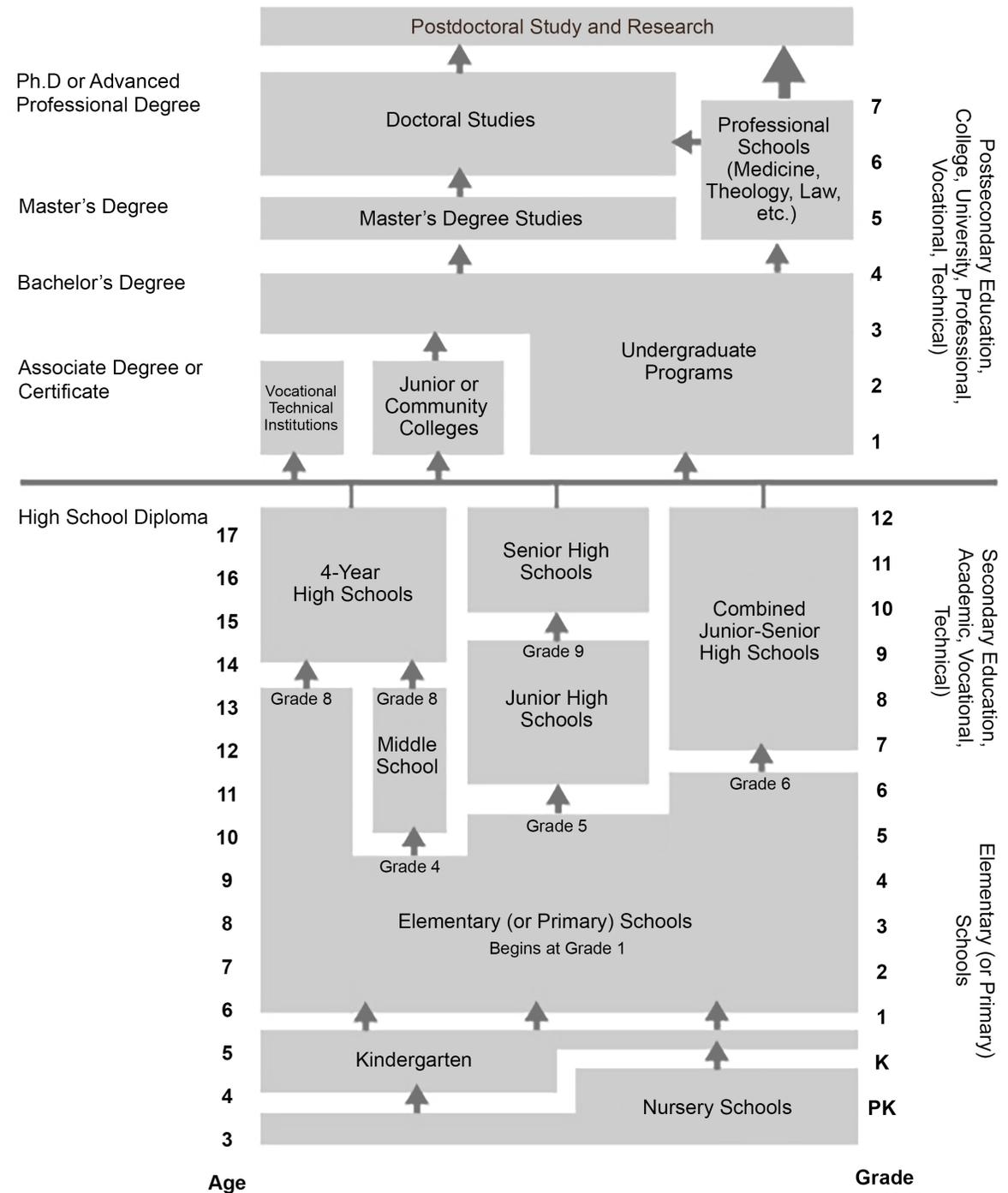


# Vocational Technical Institutions

Teach the skills necessary to help students acquire jobs in specific industries such as:

- Welding
- Cosmetology
- Plumbing
- Carpentry
- Locksmithing
- Electrical installation and maintenance
- Motorcycle and automotive repair
- Floral design
- Medical transcription
- Hotel and restaurant management

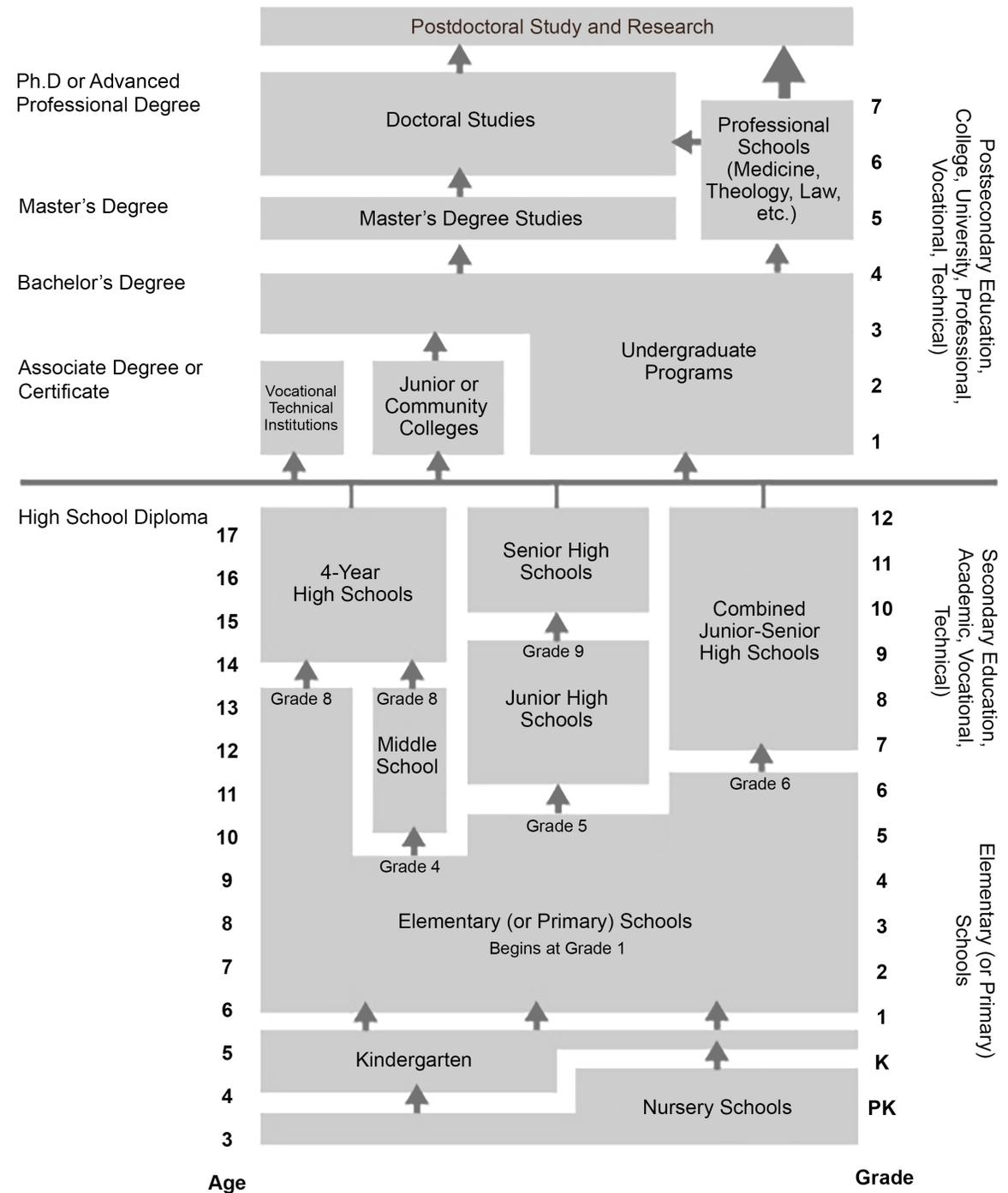
Most vocational schools offer programs that students can complete in about one or two years and receive a certificate.



# Community or Junior College

Public institutions that generally offer two-year degrees or diplomas or certificates, known as an Associate Degree. Variety of reasons to choose community college:

- students just out of high school
- students who want to study only for two years
- professionals who want to update their skills or change their careers
- **students who eventually transfer their credits to attend a university (more than half).**



# Undergraduate at a College/University

It generally takes four years to earn a Bachelor's Degree in the US. Each year has a word associated with it to easily identify the student's academic standing:

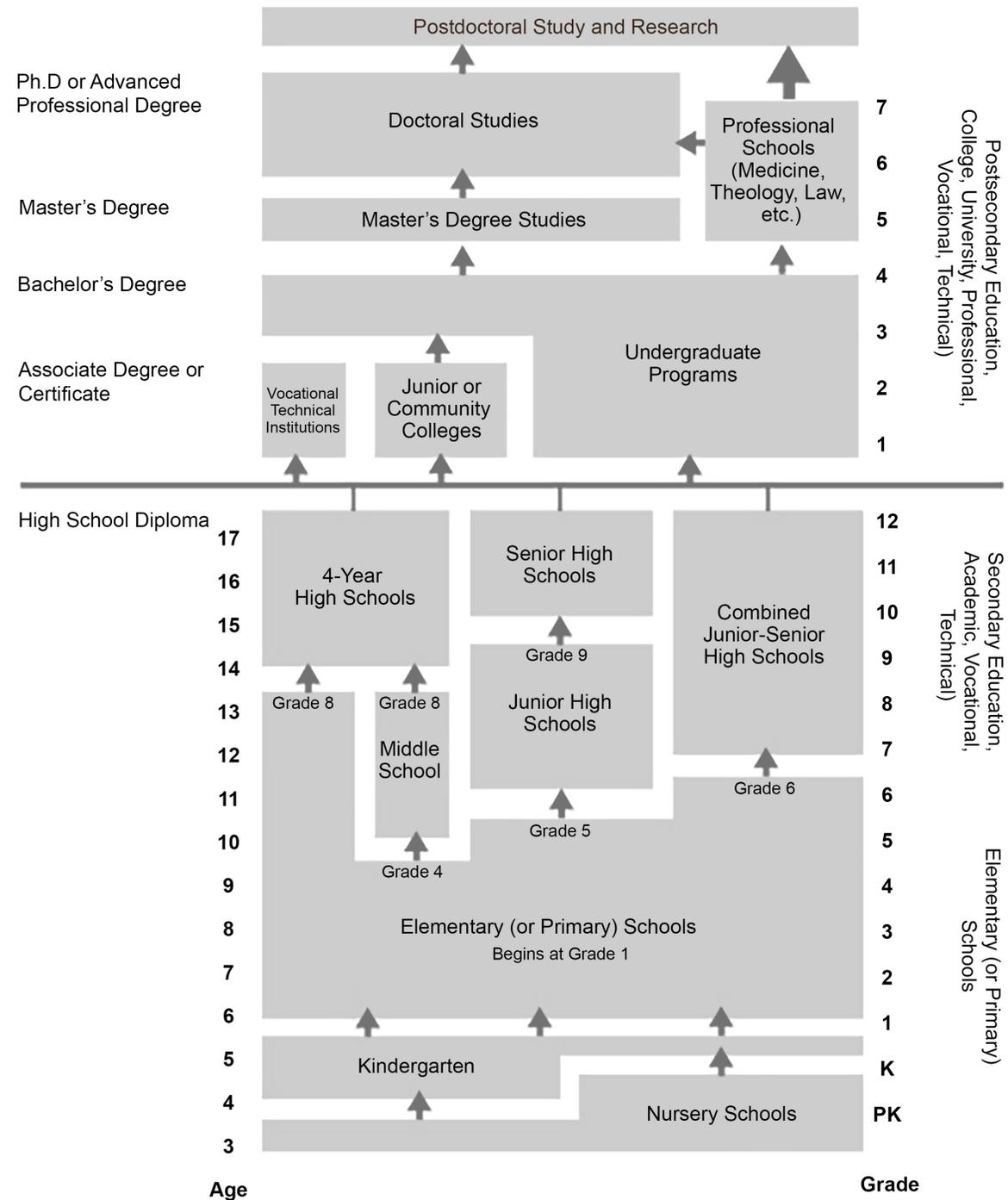
Year 1 = Freshman

Year 2 = Sophomore

Year 3 = Junior

Year 4 = Senior

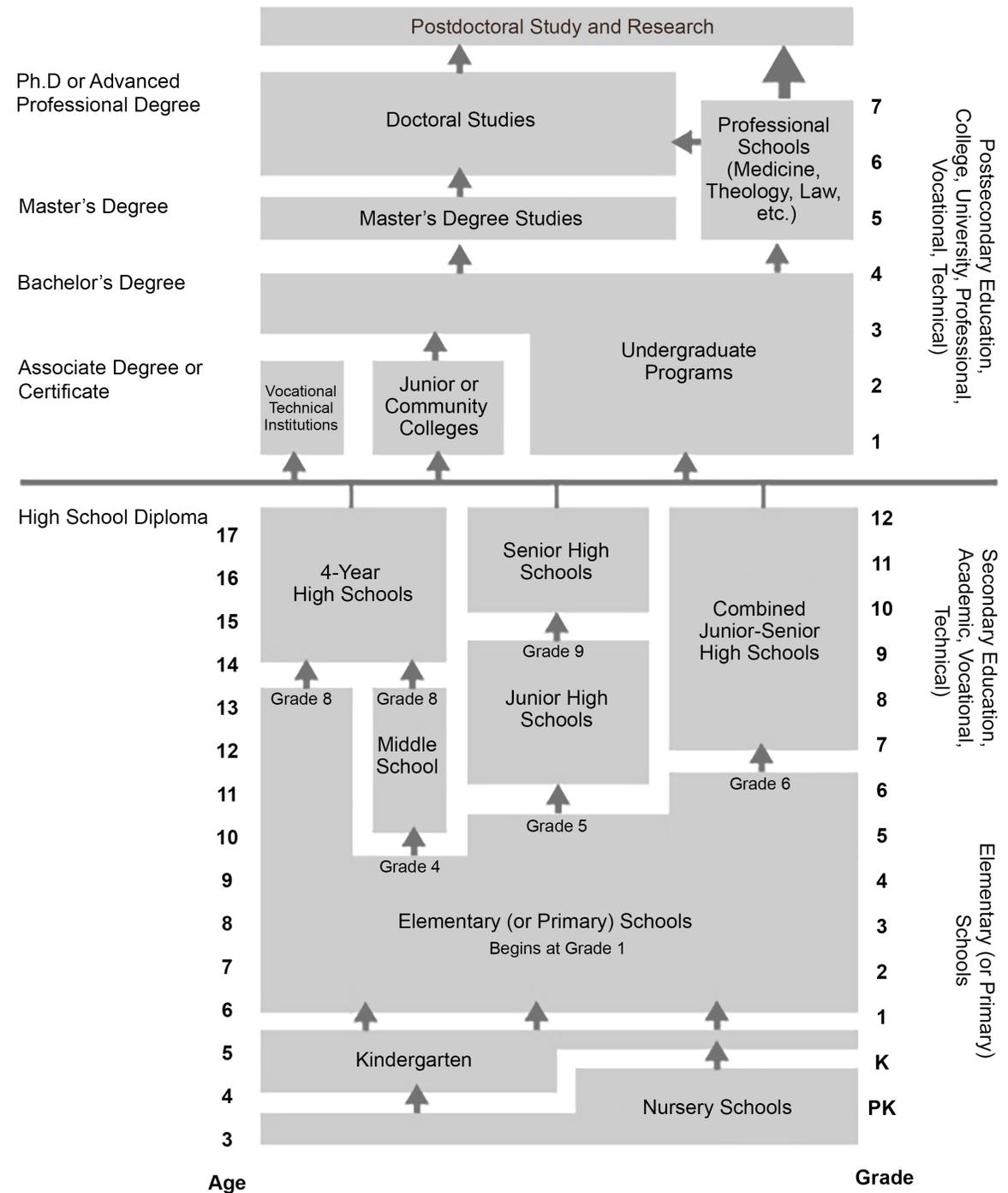
The two types of bachelor's degrees typically offered by these institutions are BA (Bachelor of Arts) or BS (Bachelor of Science). Students pick a "major" at a certain point as they are working toward such degrees; a major consists of the courses within a degree program that most interest the student



# Master's Degrees at a College/University

After completing a Bachelor's Degree, students with the necessary grades and/or experience can progress to a Master's Degree. Such a degree usually requires 1–3 years of coursework, and may also include a research component. Some require students to complete a thesis, and some do not. Some are academically oriented, and some are professionally focused.

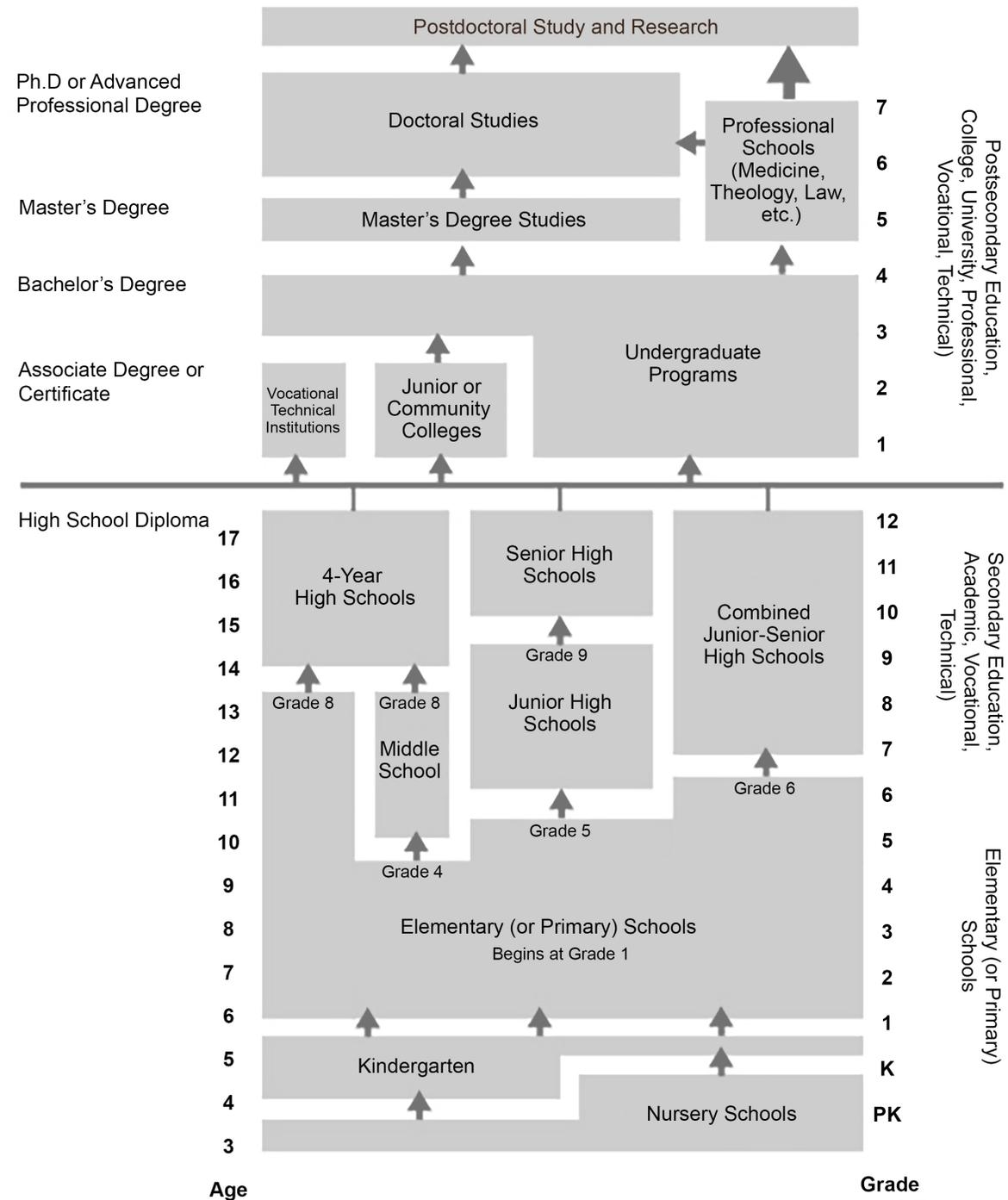
There are many types and titles of master's, but perhaps the most well known are the Master of Arts (MA), Master of Science (MS), and Master of Business Administration (MBA).



# Doctoral Degrees at a University

More than 35,000 doctorate degrees are awarded in the US every year by more than 500 institutions. Like master's degrees, doctoral degrees can be academic or professional in nature. To receive their degrees, students need to pass an examination and complete an original piece of research and submit a dissertation.

Doctoral degrees may require a master's degree for admission, and take from 5–8 years to complete. Some are offered at universities that also offer undergraduate degrees and some are offered at graduate-only universities.



Thank you!

Samantha Zoltanski

American Boarding Schools International – Booth 2

[samantha@schoolsboardingusa.com](mailto:samantha@schoolsboardingusa.com)

This presentation is available online at:  
[www.schoolsboardingusa.com](http://www.schoolsboardingusa.com)