



Navigating School Visits

Visiting a school is an exciting step in the school search process. It is a great way to get a sense of what the school culture is like and you'll have the opportunity to ask specific questions. It's also important to make observations about what you see and hear while on the visit. Use this tool kit to help you brainstorm the question(s) you want to ask, as well as record your observations while on the visit.

Step 1: Brainstorm Your Own Questions

List your "must-haves" from the Values worksheet .	Questions to ask on the visit based on your must-haves: 1. 2. 3.
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Step 2: Questions to consider asking during the visits

Academics

1. My student is interested in _____, do you offer elective classes that would be a good fit for them?

Answer:

2. How would a typical student describe your school?

Answer

Student support

1. Do you have tutoring opportunities for students that need extra support?

Answer:

2. What kinds of systems are in place for social-emotional support?

Answer:

Student life

1. Can you tell me about your school-wide discipline policy?

Answer:

2. How do you prevent bullying?

Answer:

Family Involvement

1. What are the expectations for family involvement? Is there a PTA?

Answer:

2. How are families informed about important events and dates?

Answer:



Step 3: Observations During the School Visit

Consider as you are on the Visit	Write your thoughts in this column
<p>Is the building clean, inviting, and free from clutter? This could be an indication of how invested the students/staff are in the school.</p>	<p>Yes or no? Observations:</p>
<p>Do classrooms appear clean and engaging? A clean classroom environment is conducive to learning and students that are invested will be more engaged.</p>	<p>Yes or no? Observations:</p>
<p>Are classroom doors mostly opened or closed as you walk around? This could be an indication of how well their classroom management is as well as how much student trust there is.</p>	<p>Mostly open or mostly closed? Observations:</p>
<p>If observing during breakfast or lunch, what is the feeling you get while watching students eat? Is it orderly or chaotic? This can tell you about the school culture as well as how smoothly procedures run</p>	<p>Orderly or chaotic? Observations:</p>
<p>Do you see evidence of care and compassion for students in student/adult interactions? Part of good school culture is the respect adults have towards students.</p>	<p>Yes or no? Observations:</p>
<p>Do you see student work celebrate on the wall? This can be an indication of how organized most teachers are as well as how invested they are in their students.</p>	<p>Yes or no? Observations:</p>
<p>Are your questions treated with respect and fully answered? This can be an indication of staff that value the families they serve.</p>	<p>Yes or no? Observations:</p>

Step 4: Use the space below to record your final thoughts on the school after visiting: