

TIPS ON EVALUATING SCHOOL OPTIONS

Selecting the right school for your child is one of the most important decisions that a parent will make. Parents can choose from various schooling options, including public, private and charter schools. It makes sense to explore these options by visiting school campuses and asking similar questions at each site. Comparing each school's offerings in this manner is the best way for a parent to arrive at a decision that is informed and not based on hearsay or marketing efforts.



Not all schools are the same, and visiting is the best way to get a true feel of the school's campus and facilities, academic program and the teachers and staff to which you will be entrusting your most precious resource – your child.

Here are a few tips for **collecting information on the schools** that interest you.

Questions to ask the school

- Can I meet with the principal?
- Can I have a tour of the school when teachers are present?
- Does the school provide transportation?
- What after-school and before-school programs, sports and clubs are offered?
- How do you provide for the safety of the students?
- What is the focus of your curriculum (STEM, college prep, etc.)?
- If my student starts to struggle or needs help, what intervention and tutoring programs do you have in place?
- What curriculum do you have that will challenge my child (gifted, AP, etc.)?
- Can you support my child's IEP (for students with disabilities)?
- What is your expectation/requirement for parent involvement?
- What is your school grade and graduation rate?
- Are you accredited (high school)?

Questions to ask myself as a parent

- What feeling did I get when I first came into the school?
- How was I greeted?
- Can I provide transportation every day if required?
- Do I feel my child will be appropriately supported and challenged at this school?
- Can I meet the expectation for parent involvement with my work schedule?
- Does the school have the correct supports and curriculum for my child? (ESE/gifted)
- What if my child gets sick? Is there a clinic?
- Based on the information gathered and the visits to the school locations, what is the best fit for my child and our family?



**Orange County
Public Schools**

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