

Selecting The Right School For Your Child

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Selecting the right school for your child can be as exhilarating as it is overwhelming. Here are some things to consider as you tour prospective schools, thumb through brochures, and peruse websites.

- 1. Observe and Report.** Start with a school tour, but don't stop there! Stop by during their next book fair, see a school play or attend a sporting event. Are there on-campus volunteer opportunities? You want to meet as many families as possible to get a broader sense of the school and the community.
- 2. Inside Scoop.** Talk to the parents of students currently enrolled and of those who have already graduated. Get a sense of the school beyond the entry grade level. The elementary school years are the foundation years; they play a key role in how your child develops academically and socially and what kind of student (and person) they become.
- 3. Learning Styles.** Parents – time to do your homework. Read up on multi-age grouping, looping, progressive, developmental and traditional approaches to learning and consider which environment your child will thrive in.
- 4. Know the Teachers.** Having a stellar teacher is instrumental to any child's success. Great teachers have strong bonds with their students and always encourage them to step up to the plate.
- 5. Extra-Rich Curriculum.** If you have a highly active child, find out how much emphasis the school places on physical education. If he or she is a music, dance or drama lover, be sure to ask about their arts curriculum. If learning a foreign language is a priority, find out what languages the school offers and whether it is an immersion or enrichment program.
- 6. Consider the Commute.** We live in a city ruled by traffic, and pick-up time usually coincides with rush hour. Are there other families in your neighborhood that attend the school? You'll probably want to coordinate local play dates and split carpooling responsibilities.
- 7. The HW Question(s).** At what grade level does the school begin to give letter grades? At what point do they assign homework? Most importantly, how much time will students spend on homework each night?
- 8. Personality is Priority.** Don't listen too closely to your friends. When the time comes to make a decision, focus on your child's needs, personality and learning style.