



## Questions to Ask on a School Tour

### Things to Observe (what you see)

- Physical Environment
  - Do you feel safe when walking up to the school?
  - Is the building clean, inviting, and free from clutter?
  - Is it easy to find the main office?
  - How much outdoor space is available to the children during recess?
  
- Classroom arrangement
  - Do classrooms appear clean and engaging?
  - Are classrooms organized with clear signs and procedures?
  
- Technology
  - What technology is available in each classroom?
  - What technology is available in the building?
  - How often do students use technology?
  
- Cafeteria
  - Is it clean?
  - If observing during breakfast or lunch, what is the feeling you get while watching students eat? Is it orderly or chaotic?
  
- Library
  - Is the space filled with books that represent the identity of your child?
  - Are there places for independent reading?
  - Is there a staff person in the library and are they a full or part-time employee?
  
- Support staff (nurse, social worker, counselor)
  - Who is available to support your student outside the classroom teacher?
  - Are these staff members full or part-time employees?
  - How accessible are they to parents?

### Things to Feel (how the school environment makes you feel)

- Staff interactions with students
  - What is the tone staff use with students?
  - Does it seem appropriate for the age of the student?
  - Do you see evidence of care and compassion for students?

- Staff interactions with you as the parent
  - Are you welcomed by a specific person when you enter the doors?
  - Are your questions treated with respect and fully answered?
  - Are you given enough time to ask all of your questions?
  - How do staff make you feel?
- Visual feeling of the building
  - Is it clean?
  - Are there images that represent the identity of your child around the school?
  - Is there student work or art on the walls?

**Questions to consider asking school staff on a school tour**

- What supports are available for supporting student emotions?
- What is the goal, philosophy, or theme of the school?
- What are areas of growth for the school?
- What are areas of success for the school?
- How long have you been at the school?

**Questions for your child to consider asking if they are doing a shadow visit**

- How do your teachers treat you?
- How do you learn about grades in different classes?
- How challenging are your classes?
- Is there a culture of support between students?
- What do you like about the school?
- What would you change about the school?

**Questions to consider on a private school tour**

- What is the full cost to attend the school?
- What sort of scholarships or financial aid is available?
- How many students receive scholarships?
- For religious schools, if you are a member of the affiliated religious institution, is there a discount for tuition for my family?
- Do the scholarships renew annually or do you have to reapply?
- What is the process to receive financial aid? What documents are needed? How soon will I know if I will receive financial aid?