

Questions To Ask When Considering Changing Schools

There are many reasons why a parent might consider placing a child in a specialized school. Children with Learning Disabilities and those with AD/HD typically benefit from a lower class ratio and more specialized instruction to help them be successful. Children with emotional difficulties tend to more often thrive in academic environments where their emotional needs are considered just as important as their academic needs. There are some children who may appear to fall through the cracks in public school environments because they aren't "bad" enough to receive special services or they seem to pull grades up at the last minute with a lot of effort and energy.

Some things to consider if you are thinking about transferring your child to a specialized school:

- What is the teacher/student ratio?
- What services are available for individualized instruction?
- What is the discipline philosophy?
- What is the typical student profile?
- What is the main method of communication between parents and teachers?
- What services are available in the summer months?
- Does the school allow you to talk with current students and parents about their experience at the school?
- How does the administration support further academics beyond high school? Do most of the students go on to college?
- Do the students wear uniforms? Many times this is not the deal breaker but it is important to parents and their kids.
- What services are available for your child if he or she is struggling?
- Is the school "community" one you want to be a part of?
- What are the expectations in terms of missed work and tardies?
- Does the school provide services for social skill development or address the emotional needs of students?
- Are there after school activities?
- Are there organized sports?
- Is it possible for potential students to visit and talk with other students?
- What is the philosophy of the school concerning the transition back to public school? Is it the school's goal to help students return back to a home campus?

Many times only through an on campus visit can you know whether the school is one that you would choose. It is important to see how the promises of the school administrators match what you observe on campus. Don't choose a school on promises. Choose a school only after doing research using a variety of sources.