HOW TO CHOOSE A SCHOOL · STEPS 1–2

Choosing a School: Family Worksheet

Your child's profile, your family's practical needs, and your priorities, all in one place.

Child's name _____ **Current grade** _____ **Date** _____

There's no single "best school," only the best fit for a particular child at a particular time. Fill this in before you look at schools, and revisit it each year.

Step 1: Start with your child

How they learn best (check any that fit)

☐ More structure ☐ More flexibility ☐ Hands-on ☐ Reading-heavy ☐ Small groups
☐ Large groups ☐ Quiet spaces ☐ Lots of movement

Academic needs

☐ Working ahead ☐ Catching up ☐ Right on track

Subjects to strengthen or stretch: _____

Support needs

☐ IEP ☐ 504 plan ☐ English language development ☐ Health needs ☐ Social-emotional support
☐ None right now

Notes: _____

Interests

☐ Arts ☐ Music ☐ Sports ☐ STEM ☐ Languages ☐ Career pathways ☐ Other: _____

What our child says they want in a school

_____
_____
_____

What we've noticed helps them thrive

_____
_____
_____

Options we want to look at

☐ Our assigned district school (guaranteed, and often a strong option)
☐ Other district programs (magnets, transfers, dual language)
☐ Charter schools
☐ Private schools
☐ Homeschool or independent study

Schools on our list

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Step 2: List your family's practical needs

Need	What works for our family
Location and transportation How will they get there and back every day?	
Schedule Start and end times, before- and after-school care	
Budget Tuition, fees, uniforms, supplies, activities, transportation	
Siblings Same school, or compatible schedules?	
Values and community Size, culture, religious or secular, family involvement	

Our priorities

Rank your top 5 (1 = most important)

_____ Academic program and rigor
_____ Support for learning needs
_____ Location and commute
_____ Schedule and child care
_____ Total cost
_____ Class size
_____ Culture, values, and community
_____ Safety and school climate
_____ Arts, sports, and activities
_____ Keeping siblings together
_____ Communication with families
_____ Special programs (language, STEM, career)

Other priority: _____

Must-haves, nice-to-haves, and deal-breakers

Must-haves	Nice-to-haves	Deal-breakers

Next: Use the School Visit Checklist on each visit, then put your top schools side by side on the Options Comparison Grid.

General information only, not legal, tax, or placement advice. Rules, dates, and requirements vary by state, district, school, and program. Always confirm details with each school, district, or official source.