



7 Questions to Ask When Looking for a Private School

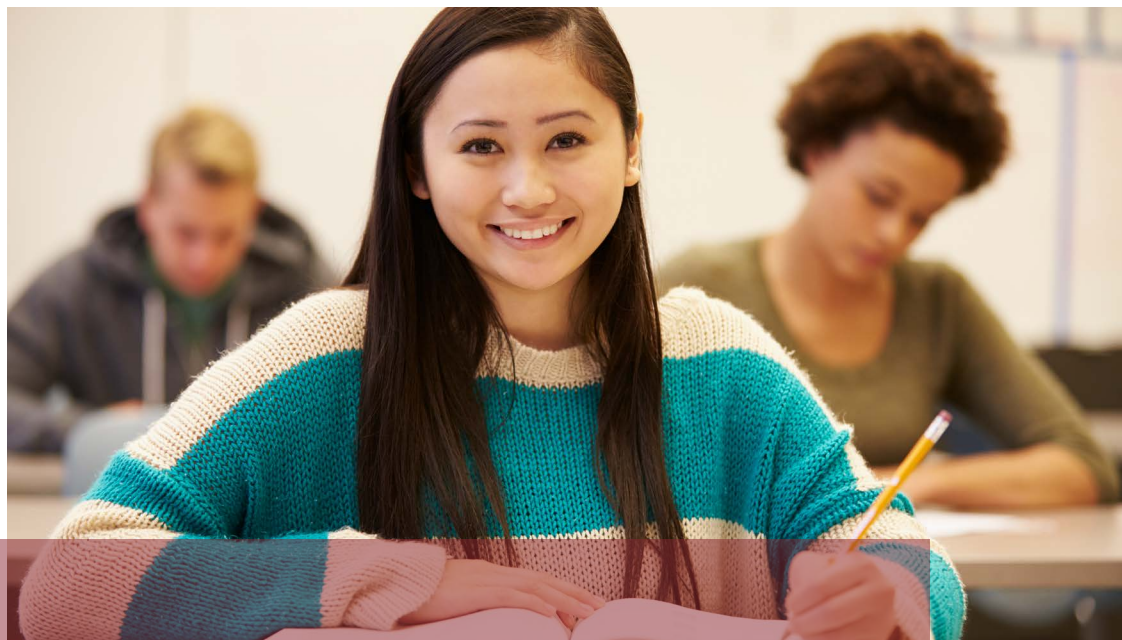
Finding the right school doesn't have to be difficult.

Choosing a school for your child is a highly personal decision. What works for one child may not work for another, even with children in the same family. Students may also start in one type of school and find they need a different option later.

Finding the right school doesn't have to be difficult. **Evaluate the school options by considering the following categories.** Narrow your school options down to the three choices, listing the pros and cons of each.

As you do your research, remember no school is perfect. You need to prioritize what are the "must-haves" versus "nice-to-haves" and make your decision from there.

There are seven areas to consider when selecting a private school for your child. **Use the following questions to take notes as you start investigating the pros and cons.**



1

What goals do you have for your child's education?

- ✓ How does your child learn best? What is their primary learning style?
- ✓ Does your child thrive with extra support? Do they have the personality to ask for help when needed?
- ✓ Do you want a faith-based education? If so, determine if faith is integrated into the curriculum or ask if they offer a secular curriculum taught by faith-based teachers with a chapel each week.
- ✓ Is your child planning to attend college or take a different direction? Would they benefit from internship opportunities to explore future career choices?
- ✓ Does your child have sizable time obligations outside of the school day?

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How is the school organized? What is their philosophy?

- ✓ What is the vision and mission of the school? Why does the school exist?
- ✓ Who makes the decisions? Is the school governed by a board of trustees or run by a for-profit, non-profit, or a church, diocese or some other non-governmental organization?
- ✓ Is the school accredited by a recognized accrediting agency?
- ✓ Many private schools do not require teachers to be certified so they can hire industry experts. What qualifications do they expect from the teachers they hire?

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What type of structure does the school provide for students?

- ✓ Does the school offer a concentrated core academic curriculum or a schedule of academics mixed with breaks throughout the day?
- ✓ What is the average class size? The student/teacher ratio is often reported by calculating the number of students divided by # of teachers in the school. Instead, ask how many students are in a classroom with one teacher?
- ✓ Are co-curricular opportunities (sports, fine arts, clubs, community service) available during the day or after school? Is membership in the group open to all or limited by tryouts?
- ✓ What part does technology play in the school day? Are students permitted to have unlimited access to devices or are there designated times/purposes?
- ✓ Is there any flexibility in the school schedule? This is an important question to ask if your child is involved in elite level training, internships, or activities requiring travel.
- ✓ If the school doesn't meet on a traditional schedule, is the curriculum delivered in take-home packets for parents to monitor or does the bulk of the learning take place during school hours?
- ✓ What is the purpose of homework? Is it to reinforce what was learned at school or a time for self-taught instruction?
- ✓ What type of accountability do students have? Is there a high expectation for the quality of work and interactions with other students and staff?
- ✓ Does the school offer a welcoming environment in which students feel encouraged to speak up, are recognized for their individual talents, and are accepted as a valuable member of the school community?

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What is the ideal student profile?

- ✓ What type of students does the school serve? Do they work with college-bound students only? Does the school have resources to support students with learning challenges?
- ✓ Where do the majority of students live? You may be providing transportation when your child needs to meet with classmates who don't live in your neighborhood.
- ✓ Does the school offer transportation? Do the costs include both morning and afternoon options?
- ✓ What is the composition of the student body? Is there economic and cultural diversity?
- ✓ What do students do after completing the school program? If they move on to further education, what type of schools do they attend?
- ✓ What is the retention rate of students? What are the reasons students do not re-enroll?

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What are the financial obligations?

- ✓ Analyze costs. When comparing the cost of schools be sure to calculate the cost of tuition versus the cost of attendance. Additional costs may include books, uniforms, lunch, activity fees, class trips, supply fees, participation costs, technology fees, etc.
- ✓ Is there financial aid or scholarships available? What type of documentation is required to qualify?
- ✓ Is there any type of financing or referral fee available?

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How are parents involved in the school?

- ✓ What are expectations for parent participation?
- ✓ Are volunteer opportunities available?
- ✓ How often does the school communicate updates? Is there an online parent portal?
- ✓ How often are parent teacher conferences scheduled?

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What are the steps in the enrollment process?

- ✓ What are admission requirements for acceptance? (academic level, co-curricular participation, attendance, discipline)
- ✓ Are the steps of the application process clearly outlined? Is there an application fee?
- ✓ Is there an interview, writing sample, or school visit required?
- ✓ How long does it take to receive a decision once an application packet is submitted? Is there a common admission notification date if applying to more than one school?

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Narrow down the options.

Choosing the right private school for your child requires narrowing down the options. It starts by looking at the goals for your child's education as the filter. Understanding how a school is organized, the type of structure provided for students, the ideal student profile, financial obligations, the type of parent involvement and steps in the enrollment process will give you a comprehensive overview to make a decision

Students need a school that not only works for them today, but also helps them reach their long term goals too. Finding a quality school is possible when students are immersed in an environment offering quality instruction, focused learning and intentional connection.



One option to consider:

There are many quality private schools across the nation. If you are near north Atlanta looking for a private school in the Alpharetta area, you are invited to consider William & Reed Academy, a college preparatory school for 6th - 12th grade students.

The school offers both the flexibility you want and the focused learning students need. With a compressed Monday - Thursday schedule it is an ideal school option for:

1 | Elite level student athletes, artists and career-minded students whose schedules require sizable time commitments throughout the week. *Finding the time to balance your education and developing your talent shouldn't have to be a struggle.*

2 | Academically accelerated students who don't want to be held back in their learning. *All students should have the opportunity to be inspired by knowledge.*

3 | Underestimated students who have the potential to do more but have been flying under the radar in larger schools that don't have the time or resources to connect and encourage students. *School should be a place to ignite learning and make you feel a valued member of the community.*





1

Check It Out

Schedule a tour and follow-up with a Shadow Day experience.

2

Commit

Complete the application packet for enrollment consideration.

3

Prepare For Your Future

Discover how knowledge connects to your world. Identify your strengths and practice interpersonal skill development.