

Questions to Ask About Your Child's School

New to the Country or Speak a Language Other Than English?

Welcome! Whether you are at a Family Welcome Center (to find a school) or visiting your child's new school (to enroll), **ask these questions to learn if a specific school could be a good fit for your child.**

Getting Started

- Get support in your language: "Can I please have an interpreter? I speak (your home language)."
- If you need help with finding a school:
 - "I am looking for a school for my child, who is (age) years old."
 - "I need a school for my child now—how do I enroll?" OR "My child is entering 3-K, pre-K, kindergarten, middle school (grade 6), or high school (grade 9) this or next fall—how do I apply?"

Language Supports

- What services are offered for students new to the country who are learning English?
- Does this school offer programs for students to continue to learn their home language, such as Dual Language (bilingual) programs? Do other students/staff in the school speak my/our language?
- Does my child have to take any tests or complete other assessments before enrolling here?
- Does this school have bilingual staff who can support students in applying to middle or high school, and with going to college or planning what they do after high school (called "school counselors")?

School Information

- How far away is this school from my home? Will my child be able to take a school bus to school?
- Does this school have summer programs? If so, what do the programs offer and what are the hours?
- Are extra educational programs offered after the school day? If so, what are the hours and cost?
- How many students go to this school? Are there other schools within this school building? Do students at this school interact with students from the other schools?
- Which meals does this school offer? Are uniforms recommended or required?
- Does this school help with finding internships, job placement, or other work experience?
- Does this school have advanced classes? Does it offer sports, music, and/or other extracurriculars?

Health and Support

- Where do I go for vaccines/immunization? Can you share a list of locations, even if I don't have health insurance?
- Does this school offer support for my child's mental and social-emotional health through bilingual dedicated staff (called "social workers")?
- What kind of family support services does this school offer?
- How does this school support students with behavior difficulties?

How to Get in Touch and Stay Involved

- What is the best way to contact this school if I do not speak English?
- Who are the important people to know at the school? Who is the Parent Coordinator?
- How can parents/guardians get involved at this school?
- How will I get information about how my child is doing at school?

Meeting Student and Family Needs

For Students with Disabilities

All NYC schools welcome and serve students who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP).

- My child has a disability. How do I make sure they get the right supports and services?
- What are the steps to request services and programs for my child with special needs?
- What is the process to get evaluated for special education services? How long should I expect it to take?
- When will my child start getting special education services?
- My child has an IEP from their last school. Will you provide similar services while we wait for new tests?
- My child used assistive technology before, how do we arrange for that again here?

For Students with Mobility Needs

- How do I find out whether this school is accessible for children with mobility needs?

For Students in Temporary Housing

If you are living in temporary housing, including in a shelter or the same apartment with people other than your immediate family, you can qualify for benefits such as a MetroCard. The Family Welcome Center or your school can explain which benefits apply to your situation.

- How do I enroll in school if I am living with another family or other people? What benefits or protections can we get?
- What happens if we move out of the neighborhood or we do not have a permanent address?
- Where can I get help if my family and I do not have a place to live?

For Families Seeking Early Education Programs and Child Care

- Does this school offer pre-K or 3-K programs? Am I eligible to enroll or apply for free or low-cost year-round pre-K or 3-K at a program with Extended Day and Year or Head Start seats?
- Does this program offer childcare and/or education programs for young children (ages 0-2), and am I eligible to enroll or apply for free or low-cost year-round child care?

For Students (Ages 14-21) Who Are Overage and Undercredited

- What are the diploma and graduation options for students at this school?
- Does this school offer afternoon or evening classes? If so, are they the same classes as during the day? Can students earn a regular high school diploma if they attend night classes?
- Does this school serve students who are older for their grade level? Can you give me information about transfer schools and how they can support my child?
- Does this school have any career and technical education (CTE) programs? If I need to find work, how can this school help me?

Need a Different School?

If you have not yet enrolled and would like to find another school, please talk to Family Welcome Center staff about your options: What are my other choices for schools? I need a school that (share what's most important to you).