

Four Steps to Exploring School Options:

Teaching and Education are not “One Size Fits All” - it is important to explore the educational options within your community. Exploring your options will give you the best chance of finding the most ideal learning environment for your child. Here are some of the steps families can take as they navigate the school options in Southern Arizona.

Why You Should Explore Your School Options:

- Arizona is lush with great Traditional Public, Magnet, Charter and Private School options.
- Exploring the school choices and learning your options - is the best way to find the school that best fits your child.
- Just like each child is unique - each school is unique as well.

STEP 1: EVALUATE YOUR FAMILY’S NEEDS AND WANTS

- Determine what your CHILD needs and wants are from a school:
 - Does your child have specific needs?
 - What does the ideal learning environment look like?
 - Does your child thrive in a smaller school setting?
 - What kind of extracurricular activities are important?
- Determine what your FAMILY/PARENTAL needs are from a school:
 - Location - is the campus convenient to home or work?
 - What are your transportation options?
 - Drop off and Pick up times. Do they have before and after school care?
 - School demographics (ethnicity, race, etc)
 - How do the students perform on state testing and progress?
 - Do they offer extracurricular programs that meet your child’s interest/needs?
 - How well will the school prepare my child for their next step?
 - Does your child have any special needs - and can the school accommodate those?

STEP 2: RESEARCH SCHOOLS

- Understand the different types of schools in Southern Arizona
 - Traditional Public District Schools
 - Open Enrollment in Arizona - allows any students to apply for admission to any public school as long as there is classroom space.
 - Public Charter Schools
 - Magnet Schools
 - Private Schools (Religious and Secular)
 - Online School
 - Homeschools
 - And more
 - [Click here to learn more about the different types of schools](#)
 - [Click here to learn more about the different types of teaching methodologies](#)
- Research Schools in your area
 - Word of Mouth: Ask friends and family about their experiences. Word of mouth is a common way to learn about school options. Just remember that each child and each family are unique and different.



STEP 2: RESEARCH SCHOOLS continued . . .

- Search Tucson Schools Online: Here are some helpful online school search tools.
 - [GreatSchools.org](https://www.GreatSchools.org)
 - [Pima County Schools](https://www.PimaCountySchools.org)
 - [Niche.com](https://www.Niche.com)
 - [PrivateSchoolReview.com](https://www.PrivateSchoolReview.com)
- Make a list of schools YOU are interested in
 - Start Big: At this point - don't eliminate any schools because you think it might be hard to get into or too expensive.
 - Narrow down to a Short List of Schools: Based on what you see or hear, start to narrow down your options. Then get ready to dive deeper into those schools.
 - [Worksheets: School Research – Big List and Short List](#)

STEP 3: VISIT SCHOOLS

- Attend any School Open Houses
- Attend Community of District School Fairs
- Take School Tours: Online search is a great way to start - but the best way to get the “feel” of the school is to visit in-person and take a TOUR. Ask questions on the tour and take notes.
 - You can set these up by contacting the individual school.
 - Things to ask yourself while on a school tour/visit:
 - Can I see my child learning?
 - Can I see my child succeeding?
 - Can I see my child being respected?
 - Can I see my child being safe?
 - Can I see my child being happy?
 - [Click Here for Key Questions to ask and observations to make on a School Tour](#)
 - [Worksheet: School Tour Worksheet and Checklist](#)
 - [Video: 12 Questions to Ask During a School Tour](#)

STEP 4: APPLY

- Evaluate and narrow down your options after visiting the schools
 - Sit down as a family and decide which school best meets the needs of the child and family.
 - This is a very personal decision - each family will go about this in it's own manner.
 - Trust your instinct! Once you have done some research you will have a better sense of what will be a good fit for your child. Remember - there may be many schools that would make great choices.
- APPLY
 - SUBMIT Applications
 - FILL out any necessary registration paperwork
 - Pay attention to any school application deadlines