

## Parent Pitfalls to Avoid

Here are some of the common parent pitfalls to avoid when researching, exploring, and enrolling your child(ren) in school.

### **DOING NOTHING!**

Now is not the time to sit back and let things happen. Your child needs your help, knowledge, and expertise in finding a place they will thrive and be happy. Taking some time to explore your options can make all the world of difference in your child's academic and social development. You wouldn't buy a house or a car without research or assistance. Treat school exploration similarly. Help your child find a place where they can be successful.

I know it is easier said than done, and the school exploration process takes valuable time. If it seems overwhelming or you need help - we gotcha! Email us at [fse@cictucson.org](mailto:fse@cictucson.org) and we will assist you in this process. You can do this - and "yes" - it is important.

### **LOOKING FOR THE "PERFECT" SCHOOL**

No school will have everything you are looking for. Keep in mind that each school will have some pros and cons. Expecting a school to check ALL of your family's boxes is simply unrealistic. Your job as a family is to weigh out the options and be willing to follow your intuition. Be willing to accept and tolerate a few imperfections or things that might not seem ideal - as getting stuck on trying to find the "perfect" school will leave you frustrated. Not to say you need to "settle" for something - but just know that you will be hard-pressed to find a school without any flaws.

### **CHOOSING A SCHOOL SOLELY BASED ON REPUTATION, PRESTIGE, OR NAME**

World-of-Mouth is the most common way families gather input and information on schools. While asking family and friends can be a valuable tool for you as a parent - you must keep in mind that those are the opinions and experiences of a different child and different family. Reviews from those you trust are priceless - but take it with a grain of salt and allow your family to form their own independent opinion.

We highly encourage you to take a deeper dive into school data, take a school tour and ask questions. The more you engage, the more prepared you will be when it comes time to choose a school.

### **SELECTING A SCHOOL WITHOUT ACTUALLY TAKING A VISIT OR TOUR OF THE SCHOOL**

A school tour is perhaps the most important tool in a parent's pocket. Getting on the school campus and allowing your child to also do so, will give your family the best indication as to whether that school will be a good fit.

Find time to explore the schools you are seriously considering. Take a guided school tour and have some questions thought through ready to ask. Another great learning opportunity is to visit schools at community school fairs, district enrollment info nights, or open houses. Many schools have a strong social media presence and virtual open houses that make it easier for families to get an overview. However, nothing replaces a good ol' fashion school tour.



### **NOT BEING AWARE OF ADMISSION AND ENROLLMENT DEADLINES**

**THIS INCLUDES PUBLIC MAGNET AND PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS!**

It is essential for parents to understand that certain schools may be in high demand and will require an application be submitted in the Fall. This applies to all school types (District Public Schools, Charter Schools, and Private Schools). With limited seats available at some schools, it can be difficult to enroll if deadlines have been missed. Some parents think that public schools are always available for admissions, or the dates to apply are much later than Charter or Private schools. However, that isn't always the case. There are many public options that are competitive, highly desired, and simply don't have enough room for all students who want to attend. Many admissions can be early November-December. Many schools will have first round admission deadlines and then if there is still capacity - they will offer a second round in early spring.

We encourage parents to explore schools and apply in the Fall in the case they desire a school with more applicants than they have seats. Be on the lookout for community school fairs or school/district open houses to learn more and speak to schools regarding enrollment and any other questions you may have.

### **FINDING A "FOREVER" SCHOOL MAY NOT BE POSSIBLE.**

Children grow and change and families also evolve over time. Just as families change - schools also can experience great improvement and in some cases declines. Don't obsess about looking too far down the road. You never know what life has entailed. Best to stay focused on the present and choose for now. Find a place that everyone can agree with now - reassess down the road.

### **WE ARE HERE TO HELP YOU ALONG THE WAY!**

Email our Family and School Engagement Team at [fse@cictucson.org](mailto:fse@cictucson.org). We would be happy to help you!

OR

Call our nonprofit partners (Families Empowered) for one-on-one bilingual support 520-900-0224