

# Checklist for choosing an International School

The following checklist is designed to help you make an informed decision about the right school for your child.

## CURRICULUM

- Is the approach child-centered and challenging enough to develop each child's strengths and love of learning?
- Are the course offerings extensive enough to meet your child's needs?
- At what age are students offered modern languages?
- How many co-curricular activities (arts, sports, clubs, community service) are offered?
- What documentation does the school provide that the curriculum reflects the latest in content?
- What types of standardized tests are offered, and how do the students perform?
- In the last year, what universities accepted the school's graduates?
- Does the school restrict students from trying advanced courses in high school?
- Is the curriculum broadened with "best practices" around the world, so students can be well prepared for their next school?

## STAFF

- Are all the teachers certified, including ESL teachers?
- What are the expectations for staff about students of high ability, special needs, ESL, other areas?
- How long on average does the school retain its teachers?
- What percentage of teachers has earned advanced degrees?
- What percentage of instructional assistants holds university degrees?
- Does the school support professional development, so teachers learn and apply "best practices"?
- Is time dedicated for teachers to meet as teams to jointly plan curriculum and assess each child's needs?
- Does the staff seem happy?

## COMMUNITY

- What security precautions is the school taking?
- What is the quality of air, water, and noise around the school?
- Is the community surrounding the school residential or commercial or inner-city?
- What types of field trips are available for students?
- Does the school offer after-school/weekend activities for the community?

## FACILITIES

- Are all facilities state-of-the-art and well maintained?
- Are the computer resources adequate and up-to-date?

## YOUR CHILD

- Does the school have planned activities to assist your child in a positive start to school?
- Are new students assigned "buddies"?
- What is the student-teacher ratio?
- Does the school allow parents to volunteer in the classrooms or to eat lunch with their children?
- What programs are in place for drug and alcohol prevention?
- What student-support services are available for individual counseling or university acceptances?
- Do the students look actively engaged in learning?
- How often will you receive information concerning your child's progress?
- Are the students happy at school?

## THE SCHOOL

- How many years has the school existed?
- Is the school a full member of an internationally recognised accreditation institution?
- What is the reputation of the accrediting institution(s)?
- What is the duration for the current school accreditation?
- Is the campus a safe, supportive, and nurturing environment?
- What is the "feeling" or "tone" of the staff? Are they friendly and professional?
- Were all questions answered in a straight-forward manner with documentation readily offered for claims?

Take time to make the right decision--the quality of your child's education WILL impact his/her future. It is important to ask questions and to ask for documentation to back up claims. You will never regret the time you invested in making the right decision and providing the very best education for your child.