



CHOOSING FROM AFAR

4 MUST-DOS TO HELP YOU CHOOSE THE RIGHT SCHOOL

**CRUMBINE EDUCATION
CONSULTING**

www.crumbineed.com

CHOOSING FROM AFAR

a letter from Aisha

I am so happy to be able to help you choose your child's next school. I know the thought of packing up your life and moving to a new place can feel overwhelming. There are tons of things to do, arrangements to be made, and at the center of it all is your desire to make sure your child and his/her education isn't lost in the transition.

I get it.

After years of working with parents to help them navigate schools in Houston, I realize there are thousands of parents who are moving with their children, and they have very little guidance for how to choose the right school for their child from afar. In some cases, parents get lucky and their children end up in schools that work. But let me tell you, when a parent comes to me 3-4 months into the school year because the school is not a good fit for their child, the hurt they feel is real. I don't want that for you, and I surely don't want that for your son or your daughter.

Choosing From Afar includes four must-dos that help you explore your school options in your new city without completely losing your sanity. You should be able to look at these and take at least 2-3 concrete steps in the right direction. My hope is that **Choosing From Afar** helps make your move feel smoother for your child and for you.

Cheering you on,



Aisha Crumbine

Crumbine Education Consulting

CHOOSING FROM AFAR

4 must-dos to help you choose the right schools

Step 1: Schedule a conversation with your child's teacher.

Two of the most important factors in your child's education are continuity and forward progress. Both of these are at risk when you move to a new city. How long will it take for the people in the new school to *know* your child? Will your son or daughter move with the same momentum? How can you make sure nothing is lost in the transition? Those are all valid worries, and the best way to proactively address those concerns is to take what matters with you.

Your child's teachers will have spent nearly 2,000 hours over the school year learning your son or daughter. They'll be able to talk about your child's academic strengths and challenges, the teaching strategies that were effective, and they can help you think through what kind of support might help your child transition. This information can both help you nail down what to look for in the next school, and it can provide a source of information for the new teacher.

Bonus: If you have a great relationship with the teacher, ask if they know any parents in your new city who might be able to talk to you about the schools.

Step 2: Ask your employer for help.

Most of the families I work with are relocating because of their jobs, but many of them never ask their employer for transition support for their children. As a result, moms and dads spend hours trying to go at it alone, and we know how stressful that is. Instead, ask to be connected with the head of the company's Working Parents Resource Group. That person is bound to have a pulse on education in your new city. If your company doesn't have such a group, ask if education support is a part of their relocation package. Most major relocation companies have this in their fine print but don't offer it unless you ask.

CHOOSING FROM AFAR

4 must-dos to help you choose the right schools

Step 3: Make visiting the schools on your list a priority.

The moment you find out you'll be moving to a new city, book a flight and plan to stay 2-3 days. This would be during the school year. Visiting a school during the summer is like buying an unfamiliar brand of shoes without trying them on—you're more than 50% likely to return them. Changing schools mid-year is hard. After moving to a new city, it's infinitely harder. To know if a school is right for your child, you have to experience it with students and teachers in the building. So take the recommendations from your conversations with PTO parents and any employer provided assistance, and arrange to visit as many schools as you can. Don't forget to ask the school representative about other schools you could be considering. You'd be surprised how honest they'll be if you just ask.

Bonus tip: Don't just visit the school. Drive around the neighborhood to get a feel for the community. Better yet, have dinner there. Nothing will tell you more about the community than dinner at a neighborhood restaurant.

Step 4: Talk to the people who know the school best – parents with children who currently attend the school you're considering.

You might be thinking to yourself, "That would be great, but how do I do I find those parents?" Great question. On just about every school's website, there's a link for the PTO that often includes an email address for the PTO president. There's no one who loves to talk about the school more and has exclusive insights than the PTO president. Another option is to ask the admissions officer or counselor to be connected with 1-2 parent ambassadors. You want to know what the school is like right now. Relying on websites isn't going to give you that.

Way to go taking the first step! Now take another. And remember, I'm here to help. If you have any questions or want to let me know how this worked out for you, email me. I'd love to hear from you! Keep going.