

Selecting an Elementary School in School District 196

The 20 elementary schools in District 196 have much in common – but there are some differences, as well. Each school community has its own personality, its own learning environment, its own team of caring adults.

While all 20 of our elementary schools are a great choice for your child, you may find one to be a better fit than another. Here are some ways you can learn more about our elementary schools.

1. Attend an open house or schedule a school tour.
 - a. How does the school demonstrate the importance of children and learning?
 - b. Is the environment inviting?
 - c. What special offerings does the school have and are they of interest to you or your child?
 - d. How will the school meet any special learning needs that your child has?
 - e. Ask staff what they enjoy most about teaching at the school.
2. Read printed materials the school provides.
3. Read the school and district web pages (www.district196.org)
4. Talk with other parents - but remember that your experience, or your child's experience, may be quite different than someone else's.

Other things to consider as you select an elementary school.

1. Will bus transportation be provided (if you need it), and how long will the bus ride be?
2. What opportunities are there to be involved as a parent?
3. What types of communication between school and home are there (newsletters, emails, conferences)?

Four of our 20 elementary schools have a magnet theme. All students throughout the district are eligible to apply to any of the four magnet schools. A magnet school is one that offers the standard curriculum offered at all District 196 schools, but has a theme-based learning environment. This theme might be woven into how most classes are taught, or it might be expressed through specialized classes at the school.

Magnet school themes:

- Cedar Park Elementary Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) School
- Echo Park Elementary School of Leadership, Engineering and Technology
- Glacier Hills Elementary School of Arts and Science
- Oak Ridge Elementary School of Leadership, Environmental and Health Science

The four elementary magnets offer parents increased choice in their child's education, while helping the district achieve state-required integration goals. Magnet schools can draw students from all parts of the district and are part of the effort to provide racial balance in our schools.

District 196 offers many excellent school choices for your child. Reviewing your options is one way to decide if a particular school seems most appropriate for your child.