

## Getting to Know the High Schools

### **Websites**

Spend time looking at the pages other than the admissions page. View the school's website as yet another way to get to know a school and assess what it can offer you. Schools' websites can easily be located by doing a Google search.

### **Brochure**

Wait until later in the summer to request brochures as some schools may be redoing their packets over the summer. Please read the school's brochure when you receive one. There is tons of useful information in the admission packet; it is a vital starting point.

### **High School Events**

*Shadow visits:* Arranged through a school's admissions office, visits during the school day allow girls to see school in action. This is one of the best ways for girls to determine their interest in a school. The shadow visit may also include an interview, although some schools will do interviews at later dates. Some schools will also give students a brief writing assignment during a shadow visit.

Note: Burke's schedules three days off for 8<sup>th</sup> graders to use for high school visits. These dates will be announced at the end of the school year. We also encourage girls to use conference days or other days when Burke's is not in session to visit high schools. Our goal is to minimize the amount of class time they miss.

*High School Fair:* In September, there will be two fairs, the San Francisco High School Fair and the Town School Boarding School Fair. The San Francisco High School Fair includes independent, parochial, and public schools located in the Bay Area. Save the date: Sunday September 13<sup>th</sup>. The Boarding School Fair, hosted by Town School, includes boarding schools from California and around the United States. This year, the fair will be on October 18<sup>th</sup>.

*Open Houses:* These are admissions events designed for parents and students when school is not in session. Great effort is made to show all aspects of the school on a weekend or weeknight. Programs vary from school to school. Some schools require reservations to attend an open house, so check their websites at the beginning of the school year to learn dates and attendance policies.

*Invitations to general school events:* As a prospective family, you may be invited to attend sporting events, performances, or other events sponsored by high schools. These are designed for their current families, but will help you get a feel for the school community.

### **Word of Mouth**

You will find that almost everyone you know has an opinion on many of the schools you will be researching and visiting. In some cases, friends, relatives and acquaintances may

be able to provide you with useful information. In other cases, they may only be passing along gossip or biased opinions. Keep in mind that they are looking at schools through their own lenses, and what they have to offer may no longer be accurate, or it may not apply to your child.

Always keep your daughter's needs in the forefront. It is imperative that you begin this process with a clear open mind, knowing that our objective is to find the appropriate high schools for your daughter. Every family will make choices that are right for them; no choice is right for everyone. Please remember this as you talk to your daughter, friends, relatives, or your daughter's friends. Allow everyone to have an individual experience!

