

Twins: Will Schools Accept One Twin, But Not The Other?

Description

We received these two questions below from a reader. Anne Simon, Co-Author of *Beyond The Brochure* and the former head of Wildwood School, offers these answers:

Question: Will a private elementary school ever accept one twin but not the other?

Answer: In regard to the acceptance issue “the answer is yes. There are a couple of situations that come to mind. We actually did this at my school last year (Anne’s school is in Virginia). One of the twins in this pair is autistic, and while we consider ourselves very much a family school, we did not feel we could serve his needs in our program. We did consider having him repeat K and tried to see if that would work with a full time assistant with him at all times, but in the end he was not ready for our program emotionally “too much pressure” and we did not feel it fair. His sister is still with us and having an opportunity to be her own person, which in her case is very important given her brother’s challenges.

This brings me to the second point. Sometimes schools have a policy of not having twins in the same class, in order that they be able to develop their own identity. Sometimes this is what the parents desire. It is obvious, therefore, that small schools with only one class per grade level will not work for these families.

Question: If twins are VERY different, should the family apply to one group of schools for one twin and another group of schools for the other twin?

Answer: It is possible for twins to be so different that a family might think that different types of schools are appropriate. I return to one of our basic premise, which is that there is as much of a value in the *family* fit as there is in the *child* fit. This is a situation where the parents need to think long and hard about both the practical and philosophical differences of the schools they think are right for their children.

I think it’s preferable to find some middle ground and keep the family together in one school community if possible. If it is abundantly clear that one child thrives on structure and competitive challenge and the other is a free spirit, then the parents might need to make the difficult choice of looking at different sets of schools. In a school where there is a strong value in differentiation of instruction and methodology, it is less likely that this will be necessary. I would suggest that they look for a school with a strong academic program AND an exceptional arts curriculum and see if both children’s needs can be met there.

Category

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Date Created

May 5, 2010

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