

## CHOOSE-BY-NUMBERS SCHOOL CHOICE WORKSHEET, 2004-2005

### INSTRUCTIONS

- To complete this worksheet, you will need the book *Picky Parent Guide: Choose Your Child's School with Confidence*, available from [PickyParent.com](http://PickyParent.com) or your favorite bookseller.
- Use a calculator or a pencil if completing the paper version on the final page. Or use the spreadsheet version, downloadable from [PickyParent.com](http://PickyParent.com). The spreadsheet version has space to compare five schools; the paper version has space to compare four schools.
- Walk through the FIT and QUALITY steps described below.
- When you are done, compare your results to your school ranking based on the *School Comparison Worksheet* in Chapter 16 of *Picky Parent Guide*. Use the DECISIONS, DECISIONS section below to reconcile differences and make a final ranking of your Target Schools.
- Overall numbers may not tell the real story. To get the best results for your child, pay attention to the specific quality and fit strengths and weaknesses of the school your child ultimately attends.

### FIT

“Fit” is the term that describes how well each school meets the most important particular needs of your child and family. Fit is described by the four Fit Factors discussed in *Picky Parent Guide* Chapters 2 – 10.

1. **List Your Must Have Fit Needs:** In Column A of the Choose-by-Numbers Math Station, list the Must Have fit needs you have recorded on your Personalized Great Fit Checklist in the book. (If needed later, you may add Nice to Haves to distinguish between schools similar in quality and fit).
2. **Grade Importance of Needs:** In Column B, indicate on a scale of 6 to 10 the importance of each child and family Must Have need. (If needed later, you may add and rate Nice to Haves in the 1 – 5 range.)
  - Use the scale to distinguish the importance of your different child and family needs.
  - However, two or more needs may have the same importance.
  - Think about this when rating: How much better would *my child's or family's life be* if this need were well met than if it were not well met?

1 – 5: Nice to Haves					6 – 10: Must Haves				
Least Important				Most Important	Least Important				Most Important
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	<input type="checkbox"/> 9	<input type="checkbox"/> 10

3. **Grade Difficulty of Meeting Need Outside of School:** In Column C, indicate on a scale of 1-5 how hard each need would be for you to meet outside of school if a school did not meet the need well.

No Extra Effort Required			Some Extra Effort Required			Extremely Difficult or Impossible to Meet
<input type="checkbox"/> 1		<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3		<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

More help:

**No Extra Effort Required** for you to meet this need outside of school regardless of the school your child attends. Or you already meet this need outside of school and plan to continue meeting need regardless of school chosen.

**Some Extra Effort Required** for you to accommodate this need outside of school, but it is feasible for you to spend time (parent's and child's) and money required. Meeting need will require changes, some inconvenience, your child's time, your time, or expense that would not be required if need were met fully at school.

**Extremely Difficult or Impossible to Meet** this need outside of school due to constraints on time (parent's or child's) or money or lack of other resources (available tutors, activities, etc. in your local community).

4. **Give Each Fit Need a Total Score:** In Column D, write the sum total of columns B and C for each fit need. This is the Total Weight you've assigned to each fit need.
5. **Grade Your School Options:** In the columns labeled "Grade," transfer each school's grade for each fit need from your Personalized Great Fit Checklist. Convert letter grades to numbers:
 

A+ = 4.3	C+ = 2.3
A = 4	C = 2
A- = 3.7	C- = 1.7
B+ = 3.3	D+ = 1.3
B = 3	D = 1
B- = 2.7	D- = .7
	F = 0
6. **In the columns labeled "Weighted Score,"** multiply the Total Weight for the fit need (Column D) by the school's grade. This is the school's Weighted Score for each fit need.
7. **Total each school's Weighted Scores** in the row labeled School Raw Fit Score. Include only Must Have needs in your addition the first time. You may include Nice to Haves later if needed.
8. **Calculate the Total Possible Fit Points:** the number of fit needs times the total possible weight (15) times the best possible grade (4.0). For example, if you listed 5 needs, your total possible points would be  $5 \times 15 \times 4 = 300$ . Place this number in the Total Possible Points for Fit row under each school.
9. **Calculate the School Fit Score** by dividing the Raw Fit Score by Total Possible Points. This calculation will give you a percentage between 0 and 100%.

### QUALITY

"Quality" is the term that describes how well a school demonstrates the characteristics of Great Schools. In Great Schools, *children of all types and abilities learn dramatically more and perform better in core academic subjects than similar students in other schools*. Repeated, unbiased research over thirty years has shown that these schools adhere to seven principles called the **Great School Quality Factors**.

1. **Column B has already been filled in** for you.
2. **Repeat Steps 3 - 7 above for each Great School Quality Factor** and school. Include all Great School Quality Factors. Do not repeat Step 8: the total possible point score is always 420.
3. **Calculate the School Quality Score** by dividing the Raw Quality Score by the Total Possible Points. This calculation will give you a percentage between 0 and 100%.

### DECISIONS, DECISIONS

1. Calculate the School Total Score for each school at the bottom of each school column.
2. Indicate each school's rank, from highest to lowest, in the last row underneath each school.
3. Compare your school ranking here to the ranking you made with your School Comparison Worksheet in *Picky Parent Guide*. In many cases, the Choose-By-Numbers approach will confirm your earlier judgment. If two schools are very close, re-calculate including your Nice to Have needs.

If your Choose-By-Numbers result differs from your School Comparison Worksheet result, consider this: A quality or fit item that is truly essential (9 or 10) *and* very hard for you to accommodate outside of school (4 or 5) may be more important than even a very large collection of less important or easier to accommodate needs.

Therefore, if:

- You would find it very hard to make up for a school weak in **Great School Quality Factor 2 or 3, or**
- You have a **Fit Need rated 9 or 10 in importance** that would be **very hard** to accommodate,

then you should avoid any school that would not meet these needs well, even if the school is strong on *several* less important, easier to accommodate factors. Carefully consider the impact on your child and family of choosing a school that has a lower score on your *most important* fit and quality needs.



## Choose-By-Numbers Math Station

A CONFIDENT CHOICE Tool

A	B	C	D	School 1:		School 2:		School 3:		School 4:	
	Importance (1-10)	Difficulty of Accommodation (1-5)	Total Weight	Grade	Weighted Score	Grade	Weighted Score	Grade	Weighted Score	Grade	Weighted Score
<b>Fit Needs*</b>											
1											
2											
3											
4											
5											
6											
7											
8											
9											
10											
<i>*Include Must Haves only at first; add Nice to Haves if needed later.</i>											
<b>School Raw Fit Score</b>											
<b>Total Possible Fit Points</b>											
<b>SCHOOL FIT SCORE</b>											
<b>Quality Factor</b>											
Clear Mission	5										
High Expectations	10										
Monitoring, Adjusting	10										
Focus on Effective Learning	8										
Home-School Connection	5										
Safety and Order	5										
Instructional Leadership	8										
<b>School Raw Quality Score</b>											
<b>Total Possible Quality Points</b>											
<b>SCHOOL QUALITY SCORE</b>											
<b>SCHOOL TOTAL SCORE</b>											
<b>SCHOOL RANK</b>											



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A	B	C	D	School 1:		School 2:		School 3:		School 4:	
				Grade	Weighted Score	Grade	Weighted Score	Grade	Weighted Score	Grade	Weighted Score
<b>Difficulty of Accomodation (1-5)</b>											
<b>Importance (1-10)</b>											
<b>Total Weight</b>											
<b>Fit Needs*</b>											
1 Basic Learning Cap: Gifted	10	5	15	4.0	60.0	4.0	60.0	3.3	49.5	2.7	40.5
2 Strong Auditory Learner	8	3	11	3.7	40.7	3.0	33.0	3.0	33.0	3.0	33.0
3 Strong Motivation	9	2	11	3.3	36.3	3.0	33.0	2.3	25.3	2.0	22.0
4 We value well-rounded ed'n	9	1	10	2.0	20.0	2.7	27.0	2.7	27.0	3.3	33.0
5 We prefer race/\$ diversity	6	4	10	4.0	40.0	3.7	37.0	3.7	37.0	1.0	10.0
6											
7											
8											
9											
10											
<i>*Include Must Haves only at first; add Nice to Haves if needed later.</i>											
<b>School Raw Fit Score</b>				<b>197.0</b>		<b>190.0</b>		<b>171.8</b>		<b>138.5</b>	
<b>Total Possible Fit Points</b>				<b>300.0</b>		<b>300.0</b>		<b>300.0</b>		<b>300.0</b>	
<b>SCHOOL FIT SCORE</b>				<b>65.7</b>		<b>63.3</b>		<b>57.3</b>		<b>46.2</b>	
<b>Quality Factor</b>											
Clear Mission	5	3	8	3.7	29.6	2.7	21.6	3.7	29.6	3.7	29.6
High Expectations	10	2	12	3.7	44.4	3.0	36.0	3.0	36.0	2.3	27.6
Monitoring, Adjusting	10	4	14	4.0	56.0	3.7	51.8	2.0	28.0	3.0	42.0
Focus on Effective Learning	8	2	10	3.0	30.0	3.0	30.0	3.0	30.0	3.0	30.0
Home-School Connection	5	4	9	3.3	29.7	3.3	29.7	2.3	20.7	3.0	27.0
Safety and Order	5	1	6	3.0	18.0	3.3	19.8	4.0	24.0	3.0	18.0
Instructional Leadership	8	2	10	3.7	37.0	3.0	30.0	2.7	27.0	2.7	27.0
<b>School Raw Quality Score</b>				<b>244.7</b>		<b>218.9</b>		<b>195.3</b>		<b>201.2</b>	
<b>Total Possible Quality Points</b>				<b>420.0</b>		<b>420.0</b>		<b>420.0</b>		<b>420.0</b>	
<b>SCHOOL QUALITY SCORE</b>				<b>58.3</b>		<b>52.1</b>		<b>46.5</b>		<b>47.9</b>	
<b>SCHOOL TOTAL SCORE</b>				<b>124.00</b>		<b>115.40</b>		<b>103.80</b>		<b>94.10</b>	
<b>SCHOOL RANK</b>				<b>1</b>		<b>2</b>		<b>3</b>		<b>4</b>	