



Is your Child's School (Black) Family-Friendly?

10 questions to ask at your child's school:

1. Is there an African-American Parent Advisory Council (AAPAC) or other Black family group at your school?

You don't need a large number of Black families at your school to form an African-American Parent Advisory Council (AAPAC)—it only takes two to three members to start one. In fact, in schools with a small percentage of Black students it is even more important for families to band together to ensure school policies create a welcoming and inclusive environment for all students.

2. SFUSD has a district African American Parent Advisory Council. Is your school represented?

Whether you have an official school AAPAC or not, it is important for each school to send a few representatives to district AAPAC meetings to share concerns, questions and ideas and bring back helpful information for families. **SFUSD AAPAC meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month from 5:30-8:00pm.** Talk to the principal for more information.

3. Are Black families represented in parent & student leadership and other decision-making groups?

How diverse are parent and student groups at your site? Are Black families encouraged to participate? Are Black families represented on the: School Site Council (SSC), English Language Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC), Parent Teacher Association (PTA) or Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), Student Council?

4. Is Black culture valued & visible?

Is Black culture visible in instruction and school-wide celebrations throughout the year—not just during African-American History Month? Are black authors and characters included in library shelves? Is Black culture visible in field trips, school events, and performances? Are Black faces evident on classroom and hallway walls? Do all students regularly learn about Black contributions in science, mathematics, literature and the arts? Are they represented in flyers, on the website and in other school promotional materials? Are there Black teachers, classroom aides and other staff members?

5. Are Black children represented equitably in enrichment programs?

Black students make up 9% of SFUSD's overall population. Are Black families encouraged to apply and enroll in your school? Are they equitably represented in Gifted and Talented Education students (GATE), Advanced Placement (AP), Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA), student clubs and other enrichment programs? What about after-school programming?

6. Is the school a safe space for learning?

Is your child's classroom safe (both physically and emotionally) for all children? What about before/after school, during recess, passing periods and free time? Does the school manage discipline in fair, transparent and equitable ways?

7. Do teachers clearly explain what your child is learning?

California Education Code states you have a right to understand what your child is learning. Are your child's teachers responsible when you ask questions about what is being taught? Do you understand teacher learning expectations and classroom management strategies? Do you know how teachers evaluate your child's learning?

8. Do your child's teachers welcome your involvement?

How welcome do you feel when visiting your child's classroom? Do you feel invited to participate as a volunteer? You have a right to be involved in your child's learning. **California Education Code states families have the right to observe their child's classroom** and SFUSD Family Engagement standards encourage schools to welcome families involvement. Many teachers encourage families to drop by if they have questions. To ensure your child's teacher is prepared, it is important to inform him or her at least one day ahead before you plan to visit.

9. Is your child's principal receptive and responsive?

Do you feel comfortable sharing feedback with the principal? Your child's teachers are the best folks to talk to about classroom issues. Nonetheless, you can also talk to the principal and other staff to share ideas or ask questions. Your experience is important as it may echo the experience of other families at the school. Principals should encourage families to speak up!

10. Do you feel encouraged to share both positive and negative feedback?

Do school staff, students and parents actively welcome your ideas, questions and observations? Or do you feel like your contributions are dismissed as those of an "angry" parent? Schools should ensure all families feel their contributions are welcomed.