# When your child needs more academic challenge

## Tips for your school visit

- **Check out the resources:** Make sure the school has the resources required to stimulate and challenge your child. These may include a computer lab, an arts studio, expansive library, a physics club, or a robotics class.
- **Look at what's on the walls:** Are there posters for academic clubs or study groups in the hallways? Is plenty of student work posted in classrooms? What does this work look like? Is it indicative of high academic standards or creativity? You can also ask teachers and school reps to look at student work.
- **Talk to students:** Ask them what classes are like and if they find them engaging. Inquire about independent learning and enrichment opportunities. Try to learn about the academic culture at the school: For instance, are most students more competitive or collaborative?

## Questions to ask schools

- **Curriculum:** What curriculum do you use? Is it mainstream or alternative? What subjects do you teach and how do you teach them? Do you offer independent and collaborative learning?
- **Academic standards:** What are your academic standards? How do they compare with your province's curricular standards? How do they compare with those of IB, AP, and other highly academic schools?
- **Class size:** What are your class sizes and student-to-teacher ratios?
- **Teaching approach:** What is your teaching philosophy? How do you engage your students? How do you try to motivate and challenge them?
- **In-class adaptations:** Do you offer custom in-class adaptations, and if so, which ones? For instance, do you offer differentiated instruction, subject-specific acceleration and enrichment, independent studies, subject streaming, cyber learning, or career exploration?
- **Gifted support:** Do you offer full-time dedicated gifted classes or part-time withdrawal gifted classes?
- **Academic focus:** Do you have a particular academic focus, such as science, STEM, or the arts?
- **Extracurriculars:** What extracurricular activities do you offer? Do you have after-school classes, programs, or academic clubs?

## Notes