## When your child has intensive learning interests

## Tips for your school visit

- Check out the resources: Make sure the school has whatever resources are required to stimulate and challenge your child in their areas of interest. These may include a computer lab, an arts studio, an expansive library, a physics club, or a robotics class.
- Observe a class in action: Ask if you can sit in on a class. If your child is old enough, ask if they can as well and whether they can have a shadow day (where they go through a full day at the school). Here are some things to look for: How do teachers interact with students? Do they offer whole-class instruction, and if so, how much? Do they differentiate instruction, tailoring it to each student's unique learning needs? Is independent learning encouraged? Is there much interaction and collaboration between students? Is there a lively and dynamic "vibe" in class?
- Talk to students: Ask them what classes are like and if they find them engaging. Do they have ample opportunity to pursue their learning interests in class and out? 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?
- **Differentiated instruction:** Do you offer differentiated instruction? To what extent do you prioritize independent learning?
- In-class adaptations: Do you offer custom in-class adaptations, and if so, which ones? For instance, do you offer differentiated instruction, independent studies, subject streaming, cyber learning, or career exploration?
- Enrichment and acceleration: Do you offer opportunities for acceleration and enrichment? If so, what kinds of opportunities and in what subjects?
- Class sizes: 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 motivate and challenge them?
- Academic focus: Do you have a particular academic focus, such as science, STEM, or the arts?
- Extracurriculars: Do you have after school classes or academic clubs? If so, which ones?

Notes	

