

PREPARING FOR YOUR CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL INTERVIEW

Mrs. Rachel
Gonsalves

8th Grade Teacher

St. John Catholic
School, San
Lorenzo

BEFORE YOU GO ...

■ Dress Appropriately

- No jeans, tennis shoes, athletic attire, sweatshirts, clothing with words
- CLEAN school uniform is acceptable, although not ideal
- Avoid jewelry and accessories that are distracting
- Leave electronics at home or in the car – no iPods or Beats, etc.
- Slacks, polo or dress shirt for young men
- Skirt/blouse, dress, or dress slacks/blouse/sweater for ladies

■ Arrive early

- Plan for traffic and parking issues

■ Know WHO you are interviewing with

- Look up the person on the school's website and learn about him/her

DO YOUR HOMEWORK!

- Know the history, philosophy and mission of the school
- If it is a Catholic school, be sure to know about the founding order of priests, brothers or sisters, and how the charism contributes to the school's atmosphere today
- Be prepared to ask questions. Interviews are DIALOGUES
- Examples of questions YOU can ask:
 - What is a typical day like at _____ High School?
 - Can you tell me more about _____ (counseling, athletics, laptop/technology, tutoring, theater/arts, clubs, etc.)
 - What do your current students say about _____ High School?
 - What are your service program requirements?

INTERVIEW NORMS

- **Most important – BE CONFIDENT**
 - Shake hands with the interviewer with confidence
 - Don't squeeze his/her hand, but don't be limp either
 - Speak clearly and enunciate appropriately – they don't speak mumble!
 - Maintain eye contact
 - look at the speaker
 - speak TO the person you are addressing
 - don't look at the floor, the ceiling, or the people outside the door.

- **SMILE**
- Don't fold your arms across your chest – shows arrogance
- Use *all* your ACTIVE LISTENING SKILLS here!

QUESTIONS YOU MAY BE ASKED:

■ Silly questions

- If you could be an animal, what would you be and why?

■ School Knowledge

- What do you like most about _____ High School?

■ Personal Style

- Are you a leader or a follower? Why?
- What is your study style?

■ Opinion

- Do you think science is more important than art? Why?

OTHER QUESTIONS YOU MAY BE ASKED:

- What personal accomplishment has meant the most to you?
- What have you learned from a personal experience that you can apply to your experience at ____ High School?
- What is your favorite subject and why? (Note: please be prepared to state an *academic* subject)
- What is a lesson you have learned from an extracurricular activity?
- Tell me about yourself (*here's where you discuss your skills, talents, and interests as they relate to school*)
- What courses/electives at ____ High School are you interested in?
- How will you use your skills and talents to benefit the community of ___ High School?

COMMON INTERVIEW MISTAKES TO AVOID

- Lack of confidence
- Lack of competence and enthusiasm
- Not understanding the school's mission and philosophy
- Mentioning and/or comparing other high schools to which you are applying
- Avoid using the following phrases:
 - *I guess*
 - *I think*
 - *Probably*
 - *Pretty good*
 - *Um, ah*
 - *You know*
 - *Like*

YOU WILL BE SUCCESSFUL IF ...

- You do your homework ahead of time
- Arrive well dressed and on time
- Answer all questions honestly, do not fabricate or embellish
- Be positive
- Be enthusiastic
- Be poised
- Be confident
- SMILE
- Maintain good posture, eye contact, and proper body mechanics
- Shake hands and show gratitude

FOR PARENTS

- Interviewer will speak with applicant first, and then speak with parent
- Parents should follow same interview norms as student with regard to dress and interview behaviors
- Parents should research the school and be prepared to ask at least one question during the interview
- The interview is a chance to learn about each other and it is not the time to discuss finances
- Avoid asking questions about discipline, attendance/tardies, or other things that are negative in nature
- Do your best to attend your interview on the date and at the time you've been scheduled; avoid requesting new times if at all possible (requesting a change demonstrates inflexibility)

POST-INTERVIEW TASKS

- Reflect on the questions you were asked and how you responded. Be positive about your interview!
- Send a *handwritten* thank you note to the person who interviewed you. Check the school's website to get the correct spelling and title of the interviewer.
 - Thank the interviewer for his/her time
 - State one thing you learned or point out one topic of the interview that you are most proud
 - Restate your enthusiasm for wanting to attend ____ High School
 - Express excitement about receiving notice of acceptance
 - Use a salutation and sign your first and last name
- Use a thank you note or blank card
 - Don't use a piece of binder paper or scratch paper