

Sample Interview Questions
For A Study of student engagement at Turin High School

What is Turin High School Like?

What has it been like for you to be a student at Turin High School?

Is Turin pretty much the same as other high schools you've heard about (or attended) or is it different?

How do you think Turin compares to other high schools in terms of academics? What about in terms of sports, clubs, and so on?

What difference did you notice at first between Turin and the junior high school you went to before coming here?

Take a look at this page (give Does/Should chart) and help me fill it out with you

To what extent does Turin already emphasize the following:

Preparing you for the world of work

Preparing you for college

Preparing you for everyday life

Helping you acquire academic knowledge

Helping you learn how to think

Developing your character and values

Teaching you to express yourself clearly

Helping you learn how to get along with people who are different from you

To what extent should Turin emphasize these different goals?

What times have you had when you really felt good about being a student at Turin?

Have you any times when you felt bad about that?

Other Students

Which students seem to have the best time here at Turin?

Which ones seem to work the hardest?

Is this the kind of school where if you work hard you can do well?

Are the students who do really well in school also the ones who work the hardest?

Which students have the hardest time succeeding at Turin?

How do you know which students are doing really well at Turin?

Do you think there are any particular ways in which Turin is harder for a girl?

Do you think there are any ways in which it is harder for a boy?

Is it any more fun for girls or for boys?

As you see it, how well do Turin students seem to get along with each other?

What kinds of groups do Turin students fall into?

How can you tell these groups apart?

How do students become members of these groups?

When you're a member of one of these groups, how does it affect the time you spend in school?

Does it also affect how you spend time out of school?

Do most of the students at Turin think of themselves as a member of one of these groups or is it just a few students that think that way?

Do students at Turin pretty much stay in their own groups or do they mix with other groups?

How about you? Which students do you spend the most time with?

Where did you meet these students?
What kinds of things do you do with these students?
Do you feel that the students you spend time with are some kind of group?
Are most of your friends in the same group?
Do you have friends in other groups?

Would you say that you have good friends at the school or that you don't have good friends at the school?
Do you see your friends from school before or after school as well?
During the time you've been at Turin, have your friends changed at all? If so, in what ways?
Do your friends make it easier or harder for you to do well at school?
Does school make it easier or harder for you to maintain your friendships?

Academics

What are the most useful or interesting courses you're taking this year?
What makes them useful or interesting?
Which courses are least useful or interesting? Why?
In each of the other years you have been in school, which courses were the most valuable? Which were the least valuable? Why?
Of the classes you have taken at Turin, which have you enjoyed the most?
What kinds of things did you do in those classes?
Of the classes you have taken at Turin, which have you enjoyed the least?
What kinds of things did you do in those classes?

Have you learned anything in your classes at Turin that you think might be useful to you in the future?
Have you learned anything that has been useful to you now?
What kind of teaching works best for you as a learner?
Since you've been at Turin, have you ever spent time working on a subject when you didn't have to?
Have you ever studied before or after school with other students for a test you knew was coming up?
Have you gotten much help from other students in learning different subjects?
What kind of help and for what subjects?

Are there subjects that are not offered at Turin that you'd really like to take?
If so, what are they?
If you could take courses in those subjects, how would you want to be evaluated?

How do you think you will feel when you graduate from Turin?
How do you think would you feel (and what would you do) if you didn't graduate?
How do you think other members of your family will feel about you when you graduate (or if you didn't graduate)?
What about your friends? How would they feel?

Teachers

In general, how effective have your teachers at Turin been?
Do teachers at Turin pretty much keep to themselves or do they work together?
Which of your teachers at Turin seemed to be the most excited about what they were teaching?

Of the teachers you've had, which seemed to care the most about how individual students were doing?

Do you think, on the whole, that the grades teachers at Turin give are fair?

How do you know?

What basis do you think the faculty here uses for assigning grades?

Can you trust the faculty to let you know when you are in trouble of not doing well in a course in time so that you could improve?

What about counselors? Have you found them to be helpful?

In what ways?

Trouble

What thing(s) about your work this year has given you the most trouble?

What was your biggest single problem during your first few months at Turin?

How did it work out?

Is that kind of thing a problem for new students at Turin? Why?

Was there any other time during high school when you had problems of this kind?

What other kinds of problems have you had during the rest of your years at Turin?

Did you ever seriously consider dropping out of Turin?

If so, what was going on at the time?

How'd you decide to stay?

Accomplishments, Change and Growth

Compared to your first year in high school, what do you feel you can do better now:

read

ask questions about something you have read

write

notice what's good and bad in your own school work --- in which subjects?

resolve conflicts

respect individuals who have different values than you have

communicated respect individuals ask questions about has changed for you in terms of the following:

Have you had any experiences of failure as a student at Turin?

If you had another year of school at Turin, what kinds of things would you do?

Family and Home Life

How far away from the school do you live?

How do you get to and from school?

What adults have you lived with for most of this school year? (e.g., father, mother, male guardian, female guardian, grandfather, grandmother, etc.)

If any of the adults you live with are working, what kind of work are they doing?

Are you currently employed, or have you been employed recently?

What kind of job do you (or did you) have? How many hours a week are you working?

What was the highest level of education that your father (male guardian, etc.) completed?

What was the highest level of education that your mother (or female guardian) completed?

How is your home set up for you?

Do you share a room or have a room to yourself?

Do you have a specific place where you do schoolwork at home?

What does a normal evening look like where you live? Who's doing what?

Do any of the adults read a daily newspaper, watch television, listen to the radio, listen to records or tapes, etc.

Which of these things do you do between the time that schools is out and you go to bed?

What other kinds of things do you do during that time?

On school days, how often do you spend most of the afternoon and evening with friends?

Have any of the adults you live with had any contact with Turin in the past few months? If so, what was this about?

How do other members of your family feel about how you've been doing at Turin?

What would other members of your family like you to do after you graduate from Turin?

Past present and future

Looking back over the years you've spent at Turin what stands out?

What kinds of things do you think about doing after you graduate?

Where would you like to be living after you graduate?

Is there anyone you know who has the kind of life you'd like to have as an adult?

If you had it all to do over again, and know what you know now, what would you do differently during your time at Turin?