

“Why Our School?” Essay

Like the personal statement, the “why our school” essay should focus on how you and your experiences fit into the school you are applying for. Admissions officers don’t want you to write about how awesome the school is. The school is not looking for an ego boost. Instead, admissions officers want to hear more about how you and your experiences fit into their school.

Unlike the personal statement and diversity statement, the “why our school” essay cannot be written once and then edited slightly before sending it off to each school. You will need to research and write these essays from scratch for every school that asks for one. But don’t worry! It’s easier than you think.

Why do you want to attend the school?

Think about why you chose to apply to this school. This will help admissions officers understand how the school is the right fit for you. Admissions officers want to make sure that they can help you achieve your goals and give you an academic experience that will align with your interests. Ask yourself: How will the school help me reach my goals? What skills will I learn? What qualities will I develop? How will attending this school affect my future?

What will you and your past experiences bring to the school?

Now that you have helped the school understand why it is a good fit for you, let’s look at the other side of the coin. Why are you a good fit for the school? Admissions officers want not only to make sure they can contribute to your goals but also that you can contribute to the school’s goals. Ask yourself: What will I be involved in on campus? What qualities do I have that will help me add to this research project? What skills do I have that will add to this club? What past experience will make me a good fit for this experience I will have on campus?

Research

First you will need to do some research about the school. You can look at the school’s website, read their on-campus newspaper, call a faculty member, or take a tour of the campus. Below are some topics you can research:

- Community Service Projects
- Research and Academic Projects
- Internship program
- Clubs and Activities
- Campus Events
- Academic Focus
- History of Campus
- Faculty and Staff
- Curriculum
- Facility
- Classroom Setting
- Mission Statement and Value

Avoid

Schools don’t want you to repeat information they already know. They also don’t want to know about personal conveniences. Instead they want you to focus on specific reasons for wanting to attend their school and specific ways that you would contribute to their campus. Below is a list of topics to avoid when writing your essay:

- Size
- Location
- Reputation
- Weather
- Fits your family’s needs
- Spouse’s job/school is close
- Sports
- Campus Scenery
- Rank