

Real Scenarios of Visitor Experience at Mia

When schools come for a tour, often a teacher will say to the volunteers, and within earshot of the students, "I've put all the difficult students in this group, and I'll be going with you." The group is often boys of color.

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Mia has received at least three messages from schools (in the last 5 years) with predominantly Black or Indigenous students that tell us they felt like they were getting extra attention from security staff while at the museum.

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A group of Black students with teachers and chaperones entered the "wrong" entrance. (We ask school groups to enter at 3rd avenue.) They were not greeted warmly and were instead instructed to walk around the outside of the museum, instead of walking through the museum because they had backpacks and coats.

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Mia has a Somali Wedding Basket on view in the galleries. The Twin Cities has one of the largest populations of Somali refugees and immigrants in the U.S. Volunteers might identify students they thought were Somali and ask them specifically to talk about this cultural belonging with their class.

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Volunteers witnessed a group of students that is predominantly white clearly picking on and bullying the one Black student in the group.