

Q and A: Emma Katznelson, Wildwood School's New Director of Admissions

Description



Emma Katznelson, Director of Admissions and Enrollment Management, Wildwood School

We're delighted to welcome **Emma Katznelson** to Beyond The Brochure! Emma is the new Director of Admissions and Enrollment Management at Wildwood School. Emma earned her B.A. from Columbia University and her masters in education from UC Berkeley. Emma began her work at Wildwood as a Division Three (9th and 10th grades) humanities teacher in 2009 and subsequently served as a division coordinator. She joined the admission team as associate director last year. I've written about Wildwood School's beautiful [outdoor space](#) previously on the blog. Congratulations on your new job, Emma! – Christina

Question: You have a very busy job that involves interviewing lots of families and deciding who to admit. How do you plan to approach your new job?

Answer: First and foremost, at the heart of my job, is doing what's best for students. I joined Wildwood four years ago as a 9th and 10th grade humanities teacher, advisor, and division coordinator (teacher leader). Each of these roles has allowed me to expand my understanding of how to prepare young people for today's world. As the director of admission, I continue to use my experience in the classroom to inform my approach to outreach, admission, and community building. Wildwood is a progressive, college-prep school. Our program is unique and a large part of my job is to ensure families understand the benefits of an education that is student-centered, project-based, and multicultural. As families go through our application process, my goal is to assess the best fit for students, especially considering if they will be and feel successful here—academically, socially, emotionally and including extracurricular activities. Part of what creates that success is our warm community. An important

aspect of my role is engaging current students and their parents in fostering an environment where all feel welcome.

Question: What are the most important qualities Wildwood looks for in applicant children for kindergarten?

Answer: At our elementary school, life skills are embedded throughout the curriculum. These include concepts of flexibility, perseverance, curiosity, and integrity, to name a few. These qualities inform our practice. Our admissions process for students entering kindergarten includes a school tour, parent interview, Saturday campus visit day to explore school readiness, and a recommendation letter from the child's current preschool director. Our evaluative approach is holistic, looking at the whole child.



Wildwood Elementary School: Big Yard

Question: Is there a certain type of family that Wildwood admits?

Answer: At Wildwood, we celebrate differences and value commonalities. The families who join us feel at home here, are eager to be part of an intellectually vibrant place, and want to connect through volunteering in the library, cheering our athletes at a game, or sharing expertise and insights. They believe in the power of personal discovery and the pursuit of passion. When parents are key collaborators in their child's education, their children thrive.

Question: Do you have any tips for parents who will be applying to Wildwood?

Answer: Admissions is a reciprocal process. Our intent is to get to know prospective students and parents as authentically as possible. We invite families to do the same: get to know our culture and program, visit our website, attend open houses, parent education evenings, and school tours, and,

most importantly, ask lots of questions. Take advantage of the many opportunities we provide to learn what differentiates Wildwood.

Question: If a child is wait-listed, is there any chance of being admitted at Wildwood? How does that work?

Answer: Every year, we have more students apply than the number of spaces available at each entry point. Our ability to accept children off the wait-list varies with each admission cycle. In any given year, if an opening presents itself, we look to our wait-list. We are intentional about considering the make-up of a particular class and the applicant as an individual.

Question: Can you give our readers a sense of the financial aid outlook at Wildwood for 2013-14?

Answer: Wildwood is committed to developing a multicultural school population that mirrors the broader Los Angeles community. Our endowment fund was established specifically for financial aid to provide students who could not otherwise afford a Wildwood education the opportunity to enroll in our school. We support the needs of as many families as possible and our fundraising efforts continue to allow us to uphold this important part of our mission.

For more information, please visit, www.wildwood.org

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Author

admin