

An "Insider's" Perspective On Private Elementary School Admissions

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Are a few letters of recommendation and a phone call really all it takes to get in? It depends on who you ask.

Recently, I had an interesting conversation about our book with a private school mom. She is successful and accomplished, with Ivy League degrees. She and her husband live in one of the toniest neighborhoods in Los Angeles. She has successfully navigated the private elementary school admissions scene at several top schools, including John Thomas Dye. She is funny and nice.

The conversation turned to *Beyond The Brochure* when this mom asked me what my book was about. I told her it was for any parent who plans to apply to private elementary schools. I explained the thesis of our book, which is that private school admissions is an insider's game, but anybody can play the game if they first understand its hidden rules.

This mom and her husband are the quintessential "insider" family. Therefore, she had difficulty understanding why we would write a book like *Beyond The Brochure*. With her family's connections, there would be no need for anything more than a few well placed phone calls and letters of recommendations to make the application process a mere formality. Acceptance letters for this family have always been forthcoming. The idea of receiving a rejection letter simply never occurred to her.

I pointed out that for many families, rejection from top schools is a reality. The competition is fierce and parents don't always understand what's happening behind the scenes in the admission offices. The application process for many parents (including me) can be very stressful.

The topic turned to "feeder" preschools i.e. those preschools that send lots of kids to specific elementary schools. See our blog posts about "feeder" schools: [Feeder Schools To Harvard-Westlake](#) and [Feeder Preschools To Private Elementary Schools](#) and [Westside Feeder Schools](#)

We also discuss "feeder" schools in the book.

This mom pointed out that parents pay tuition to get access to the preschool director's contacts at "feeder" preschools so again, why would they need a book or an education consultant to help them? Did she realize, I asked, that even at "feeder" preschools families get rejected from competitive private elementary schools? But, they are buying entree into top elementary schools by attending these preschools, she reiterated. I thought to myself, what if your child doesn't get into one of the "feeder" preschools?

This, my friends, is the "insider" parent perspective on private elementary school admissions. We wrote *Beyond The Brochure* to give every parent the same information as the "insider" family. It doesn't really matter where you get the information about private school admissions, from a friend or a book, the point is to get it and use it!

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Category

1. Beyond The Brochure

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