

3 Things I (Unexpectedly) Found Challenging About L.A. Kindergarten Admissions

Description



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If you talked to me the summer before we applied to kindergarten for my daughter, I would have told you certain things I was predicting would go smoothly and other things I was worried about. (I use “we” because schools are evaluating both [your kid and your family](#).)

As with so many things in life, I got it only partially right. The stuff that was easy (in retrospect) wasn’t the stuff I thought would cause me to stumble. The things that I expected to go smoothly didn’t for one reason or another.

The private school admissions process in L.A. is very unpredictable. We all know that, but until you have the admissions letters in your hand, or an email in your inbox, you just don't know how erratic it can be.

My kids have been accepted, wait-listed and in one case, we withdrew our application because the parent interview went so badly we knew the school would never admit our family (I write about this in the book). We were so appalled at the way the admissions director handled the interview we lost interest in the school.

Here are 3 things I (unexpectedly) found challenging:

1. **Getting to the school on time at the correct location.** Actually, I went to the wrong location at one school, completely stressing me out and leaving me a frazzled wreck. The school has two separate campuses and I went to the high school, not the elementary school. With L.A. traffic, the drive time is so unpredictable, it's not even slightly humorous to discuss what it feels like to be running late to a school interview. Just leave even earlier than you think is super-early.
2. **Sitting in a room with prospective parents while our kids were being tested for kindergarten.** Listening to the conversations happening around me made me want to exit the room through a secret back door, if only one existed. "Kate is hosting Board Member X at her Aspen house and we'll be there in a few weeks so I'm not worried," says one mom to another. "Alex tested off the charts gifted so Mirman is always an option for us," says the other mom. "Ava's soccer coach says he's never seen a kid with so much talent." "Ben's writing his first book. So adorable!" And so on and on and on and ON AND ON. BLAH BLAH BLAH. Bring a book or a magazine or a Kindle or something so you can block out all this chatter.
3. **Realizing that the mom giving the tour isn't always the best reflection of the school.** Yes, she may be an ambassador for the school since she's holding a very visible volunteer position. But, if her behavior is rude, disinterested or cluelessly uninformed, it doesn't always mean the school is all of those things. Parents can be selected to lead [tours](#) for various reasons (\$\$\$ donations) and now I know these volunteers are just one out of many parents at the school. Unfortunately, they just happen to be showing you around that day. Instead of focusing on her, [here's what you should be looking for](#).

Beyond The Brochure, [the book](#) and the blog contains all the information I wish Iâ€™d had before we applied to Los Angeles private elementary schools. Itâ€™s the issues, big and small, Iâ€™d tell you about if we were having coffee, just the two of us.

Coming Soon: Things I Thought Would Be Difficult, But Were Not So Bad

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