

What Do They Mean By Waitlist? by Sandy Eiges of LA School Scout

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**School Placement Consultant,
helping you navigate the bewildering
world of schools in Los Angeles**



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What Do They Mean By A Waitlist or Are They Just Shining Me On?

Hi everyone, This is turning into an annual ritual â€” the writing of the newsletter about the waitlist. But first, congratulations to all of you out there who received those coveted acceptances!

As most of you might already know, all of the private elementary schools send out their acceptance letters on an agreed upon date; this year it was March 15th. That means that Saturday was definitely D day for those of you applying to private schools.

To those of you with acceptance letters, congratulations! But whether youâ€™re dancing in the streets with letters of acceptance from all of the schools you applied to, or howling in pain from rejection letter after rejection letter, chances are that you also received at least one letter saying that they were happy to inform you that you were being placed on a waitlist. Yup, just like being cryogenically frozen in time, you were going to have to wait for some future time when you were suddenly going to be accepted into the school of your dreams. Ah, the future!

But thereâ€™s no guarantee of that rosy future, and by the way they didnâ€™t tell you when you might hope to emerge from said waitlist. So what exactly does that waitlist mean?

First, it is not a euphemism for â€œthanks, but no thanks.â€• Schools take applicants from their waitlist over time. Letâ€™s say an applicant applies to half a dozen schools and gets into all of them. This might seem like what is known as a good problem, but the reality is, they can only go to one school. So their spot at all those other schools suddenly becomes available to someone on â€” drumroll, please â€” the waitlist. Here, being waitlisted is a good thing.

In general, if youâ€™re on a Kindergarten waitlist at a school youâ€™re truly interested in, let the school know that you are interested in staying on the waitlist. You have no idea how many people donâ€™t bother to let anyone know. And while some schools will in fact keep that list, many will need that gentle reminder that this school is your first pick school, and youâ€™re holding out for it. If it is your first pick school, let them know that if offered a space, you will take it! I canâ€™t stress this enough.

Secondly, for those of you glass half fullers out there, the waitlist is a step up â€” it is not a euphemism for you are not getting into any school. Trust me, if they are not interested in you they will not offer you a space, period, not even a waitlist space. There are people who get that letter â€” sorry, but we are not going to be able to offer you a spot. Period. That is definitely a â€œthanks, but no thanks.â€• So now the waitlist is looking up, isnâ€™t it?

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