

Tips on Securing Recommendations

1. Select teachers who know you well, normally from grades 10 or 11, so that your academic achievement and potential growth can be discussed intelligently.
2. In order to compose a thorough and thoughtful letter, give teachers a month to write the letter.
3. Seek a balance of recommendations, when possible, from teachers who represent a variety of academic disciplines. Colleges like to view their applicants from different perspectives.
4. Check to see if your college requires a guidance recommendation. If so fill out a Senior Brag Sheet and hand it in to your counselor at least one month before applying to college.

5. Suggestions:

- a. Near the completion of junior year or beginning of senior year select the teachers you wish to ask for letters. (The earlier the better since some teachers will only write a certain number of letters and some teachers prefer to write them over the summer)
 - b. Approach teachers with your Recommendation Form and Activity Resume and ask if they would be willing to write the letter.
 - c. Make sure to only ask teachers who you know will write a positive letter. You will not be able to read the letters so do NOT ask someone if you are unsure if they will write a positive letter.
 - d. It is recommended to ask two teachers for letters.
 - e. Write thank you notes for everyone who writes a letter for you once they are finished with the letter.
6. Some colleges (and the Common Application) supply specific recommendation forms for teachers. These often include a checklist along with space for comments. If this occurs after you have already asked teachers to write a letter you may ask the teachers to complete the form and remind them that their previous letter can be attached.
 7. Final thoughts:
 - a. Teacher and counselor recommendations do make a difference.
 - b. Select teachers thoughtfully and give them time to truly help you.