

Many essays require recommendation letters from teachers, counselors, or significant people in your life. Recommendation letters usually determine whether you get a scholarship or not. See Ms. Stone in Office 115 for any questions. Use these tips below when asking for recommendations:

- Make sure to give your references at least one month before your earliest deadline to complete and send your letters. The earlier you ask, the better.
- Read each of your college applications carefully. Schools often ask for letters of recommendation from an academic teacher — sometimes in a specific subject — or a school counselor or both.
- Consider other adults — such as an employer, a coach or an adviser from an activity outside of school — who have a good understanding of you and your strengths.
- Perhaps most important, pick someone who will be enthusiastic about writing the letter for you.
- If you're unsure about asking someone in particular, politely ask if he or she feels comfortable recommending you. That's a good way to avoid weak letters.
- Remind them of specific work or projects you're proud of.
- Tell them what you learned in class.
- Mention any challenges you overcame.
- Give them the information they need to provide specific examples of your work.
- Whether approaching teachers, a counselor or another reference, you may want to provide them with a resume that briefly outlines your activities, both in and outside the classroom, and your goals.
- Make sure your references know the deadlines for each college.
- Follow up with your references a week or so before recommendations are due to make sure your letters have been sent.
- Once you've decided which college to attend, write thank-you notes. Tell your references where you're going and let them know how much you appreciate their support.