

The Masters School



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REQUESTING TEACHER LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION **Achievers' Program**

1. Colleges usually ask for one or two letters from teachers of academic subjects (math or science, English or history, foreign language from your junior or senior year teachers.
2. Limit yourself to one extra letter. Send two letters to a college that asks for one and three to a college that asks for two. If you wish to send an extra letter (from your advisor, a coach, club advisor, employer, or performing arts teacher), discuss it with your college counselor. Remember that these are not character references; teacher letters of recommendation are testimony to your academic abilities and potential. Your “extra letter” should come from someone who has observed you in a meaningful activity and who can write about your performance, motivation, and maturity.
3. After discussing the selection of teachers with your counselor, ask the teachers if they would write a college letter of recommendation for you. Give your teachers plenty of notice; plan to ask them after you receive your mid-term grades in the spring. This allows them time to observe you in class with an eye toward drafting the letter during the summer.
4. Offer extra information, e.g. a paper or exam from the course. This is an academic recommendation thus, writing about your afterschool activities may not be appropriate unless the teacher is also your coach.
5. Give each teacher one stamped envelope for each of the colleges to which you are applying and address each envelope to admissions office of the college. The return address should be the teacher’s name at your school. On the flap of the envelope, indicate your name and the deadline in pencil.
6. It is important that you give each teacher the “teacher recommendation form” from the common application or the college’s application (if it is not a common app college).
7. If you are asked whether or not you waive your right to see the letter of recommendation, please sign in the affirmative. Most colleges will assume that your counselor and teachers have not been candid if they see that you have retained your right to view the letter. No one will write a hurtful letter, your teachers may have to address “sticky issues,” but they will do so in a way that depicts you in the best light. { You are welcome to read the draft of my letter. }
8. Be sure to thank your teachers and remember to tell them when you are admitted to colleges and, in the spring, where you ultimately decide to attend.