

OBTAINING LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

Winston Churchill High School

Recommendations are often required as part of college and scholarship applications. Some applications have a specific form for a teacher or counselor to fill out, while others want a written letter of recommendation about the student. These recommendations can significantly impact your application. Recommendations provide colleges and scholarship selection committees with another perspective of you, the applicant.

Here are some things you can do to ensure the best possible recommendations:

Think about who would provide you with a positive recommendation:

Request a recommendation from someone who knows you well and has seen you perform at your best academically or in extracurricular activities. Select someone who has known you over a period of time and can add a personal dimension to your application. If multiple recommendations are needed, ask people who can show different aspects of your personality and strengths.

Ask the person to write your recommendation early:

Politely ask the person you select if they would have the time and be willing to write you a recommendation. Ask if they feel they could write a positive recommendation for you. Let the recommender know why you have chosen them.

Etiquette matters:

Give the person writing your recommendation plenty of time- a month is best and two weeks advance notice should be the minimum. Teachers and counselors do not have a lot of free time, and most good recommendations take one to two hours to write. Show that you have an understanding of this time commitment. Volunteer one or two hours of community service to repay them for the time they will spend working on your recommendation. Send a thank-you letter the week before your recommendation is due. Not only is this the polite thing to do, but it will remind them to get the recommendation off on time.

Provide additional information about yourself:

Provide the person who will write your recommendation with the following items, completely and carefully filled out. Place all forms in a folder or envelope, marked clearly with your name, phone number and the application deadline:

1. "Recommendation Request" form*
2. "Self Assessment College Recommendation" form*
3. "Parent Recommendation" form*
4. A personal and updated copy of your resume
5. A stamped and addressed envelope, if they are to send the recommendation directly to the college or scholarship committee.

**These forms are available in the Churchill Career Center.*

Waive your right of access:

This shows confidence in your recommender and adds credibility to the recommendation letter.

Make sure the recommendations are sent in on time:

Check in with the persons you have asked to write recommendations from time to time, and give them a gentle reminder if needed.

Finally:

Let the person writing your recommendation know the results of your college search. Thank them for their help in your application process!

Parent Signature _____ Date _____

WINSTON CHURCHILL HIGH SCHOOL
Self Assessment College Recommendation

Name: _____ Student ID: _____

Colleges are looking for a challenging academic curriculum, evidence of creativity, energy, curiosity, and commitment. Be specific when providing the following information. The individual writing your recommendation will need this information in preparing your college recommendation.

List the major extracurricular activity that is the most meaningful to you. (school or non-school)
Explain why it has been important.

How have you spent your last three summers?

Describe two valuable experiences that have contributed to your growth and development since entering high school.

Describe your strengths: personal, academic, athletic, social, etc.

Describe your future goals

List your two favorite courses in high school and explain why you enjoy them.

Provide evidence of your creativity and/or intellectual curiosity:

How are you unique? Why should an admissions or scholarship committee choose you over others with a similar academic record?

Is there specific information that you wish to have included or highlighted in your recommendation?

WINSTON CHURCHILL HIGH SCHOOL
Parent Recommendation

Name of Student: _____

In order to help the individual who will be writing a college recommendation for your son/daughter, please provide the following information.

What are four adjectives you would use to describe your son/daughter? Please provide an example to illustrate your description.

Adjective	Example

What do you consider to be his/her outstanding personality trait?

What do you consider to be the outstanding accomplishments of your child during the past three or four years? Why did you select these as most important?

In what areas has your child shown the most development and growth during their high school years?

Are there any unusual or personal circumstances which have affected your child's educational or personal experiences?

Describe your child's personal values and academic goals.

Please feel free to use another piece of paper if your comments do not fit into the space provided.