

English teacher. Take advantage of the expertise around you to write an essay that will make the admissions office remember you!

To preview some sample essays, check out the online applications of some of your schools of interest or at www.commonapp.org. Go to the “download forms” tab on top and click “Application” to preview the entire application. Essay topics are at the end. You may find that you are able to use the same essay for more than one college application. It’s never too early to start working on your essays so give some thought to starting sooner rather than later!

Recommendations

Who Do You Ask?

Recommendations are another piece of the admissions picture that can help tip the scales in your favor if they are good. Students should ask teachers, counselors, coaches and club advisors from their junior and senior year. The people that you ask should be the ones who saw your excellent work ethic or major investment in their class or activity. Were you a leader in the class or sport? Was it an area in which you worked very hard to be successful? Did you put in extra time after school? If the answer to these questions is yes, then consider asking this person to write a recommendation for you.

When and How Do You Ask?

The time to ask is early in your senior year. Teachers may be asked to write recommendations for many students so they will need at least three weeks notice. As a rule, students are encouraged to ask their recommenders by the end of September. Students need to research how many and from whom the recommendations are required for each of their school choices. For instance, if you are applying to West Point, a recommendation from your physics teacher will be required. Students should complete a Mohonasen Recommendation Request Form (*) for each person they intend to ask, attaching a copy of their Activity Sheet (*) to the request form. Sometimes the college will have a specific Teacher Recommendation/Evaluation Form (*) that they would like filled out. This should also be attached to every request form. Each recommender should be asked in person first and then given the paper or email request soon after. Each recommender should be asked if they would like the paper forms to complete and mail in to each college or if they would prefer to complete their recommendation and required forms online (if applicable) before the Recommendation Form is given to them, as the attachments vary depending on the answer. If the recommender opts to complete their recommendation via paper, then, in addition to the Recommendation Request Form, you must also give them a stamped and addressed

(*) = document available in Appendix

envelope for every school to which you would like them to send your recommendation. If you decide to apply to additional schools after you've given out your requests, you must follow up with additional stamped and addressed envelopes and another Mohonasen Recommendation Request Form for each teacher. If they opt to complete the online recommendation and upload their letter, then you give them the Recommendation Request Form and your Activity Sheet.

Don't forget to write and send a **thank you** note to everyone who you have asked to write a recommendation on your behalf!

Counselor Recommendation

Many of your colleges will ask for a Counselor Recommendation or Secondary School Report (*) as well as a teacher recommendation. Counselors are happy to write on behalf of their students! When you ask your counselor for a recommendation, the same rules apply. Submit a Mohonasen Recommendation Request Form (*) with your Activity Sheet (*) and the Secondary School Report Form (*) attached. **In addition**, counselors need a Parent Brag Sheet (*) as well as a Student Brag Sheet (*) from each student requesting a counselor recommendation. Copies of any college essays are also appreciated so we know what information about yourself you have already provided. The Parent Brag Sheet (*) is an opportunity for parents to inform/ remind counselors about circumstances that may have positively or negatively impacted their child's academic performance (for example, an illness that caused the student to miss school excessively). It's also a chance for parents to write about their child's strengths and interests. Counselors use this valuable feedback to write a more in-depth recommendation for each student. The Student Brag Sheet (*) is written by the student, again to help the counselor highlight student strengths and interests within the counselor recommendation. Students **need not** give their counselor the stamped addressed envelope for each college because counselors will be including other materials such as the transcript and postage will vary or, if applicable, we will be uploading your transcript, test scores and our recommendation to the appropriate website and will not need postage at all.