

Teacher recs: juniors, don't wait, ask now!

Written by Jack Delehey on 2021 January 21st



Here is how a typical high school student approaches their teacher recommendation letters:

- They don't even think about them until the summer between their junior and senior year. But, it's summer. So they stop thinking about them and go about their summer.
- In the fall of their senior year, they return to school (in-person? Fingers crossed...) and are overwhelmed with all the "college talk." Amidst talk of taking final SATs, writing Common App Personal Statements, and finalizing the Target schools on their college list, their friends continue to whisper about "teacher recs."
- After the 5th time a friend asks "have you asked your teachers yet?" they decide to muster up the courage and ask their two favorite teachers.
- After class, they ask their teachers. Unfortunately, their favorite teachers happen to be a lot of students' favorite teachers. The teacher is flattered, but has too many letters to write and, unfortunately, cannot write theirs.
- The student feels dejected
- They eventually muster up the courage to ask their 3rd, 4th, or 5th favorite teachers. They don't have a fantastic relationship, but the teacher will probably say "yes."
- The 2nd choice teachers say yes, even on a now short-deadline
- The 2nd choice teachers provide a basic, generic, teacher recommendation letter that gets the job done, but isn't special. It does not improve the child's applications, but probably doesn't hurt it.

Here is how every student in my program approaches their teacher recommendation letters:

- They ask early...in the winter of junior year...before their peers have even thought about college application teacher recs. They then sit back and relax!

Asking early solves all problems. The best teachers who write the best, most thoughtful, application-improving recommendation letters will be asked by many students to write their teacher recs. And they only have a limited amount of time.

So how do you get around this issue?

Be the **very first student in your grade to ask the teacher!**

Not only will this make sure you have your recs written by the best of the best...and the teachers who respect the student the most...your teacher will be incredibly impressed with your proactive nature.

Ask early, lock up the very best teacher recs, and feel great about the fact that at least this one aspect of your college application will be tremendous. That is a fantastic feeling as you head into the most difficult semesters of high school.

Of course, college recommendation letters are just one component of the college application process. There are many other components (several of which are deemed even more important by college admissions)!

Do you need help navigating these other college admission components (or know someone who does)? Or perhaps you and your child still need help with just initiating the college search and getting organized once and for all? [Click here](#) to see if and how I can help (or pass the link along to your fellow parent that might be able to use it)!

Happy college-searching,
-Jack