

# Instructions for Letters of Recommendation

## **1. Identify which teacher will write your letters.**

The most effective recommendation will come from someone who knows you well and can speak to your character on a personal level. ***\*Please be aware that many high schools will require specific teachers to write letters for you.***

## **2. Prepare a brag sheet.**

One of the best ways to get a strong recommendation is to make it easy for the person doing the writing to highlight your accomplishments and personal strengths.

A brag sheet is a concise list that highlights your qualifications and best characteristics. Make sure to include:

- One or two of your top attributes with examples of how you've demonstrated them.
- Extracurricular activities or volunteer work you've done (short list)
- A few sentences about your goals

While it might feel a little awkward to brag about yourself, remember that this is the time to show off your hard work and celebrate your wins.

## **3. Ask in person first.**

***Before*** you give the recommendation form to your teacher or put their email address in your online application, speak with each individual ***in person***. Preparing what you'll say ahead of time can help you feel more calm and confident. Explain what it is you're applying for and why you're asking this person to recommend you.

You're asking for a favor, but the people who know you well probably want you to succeed and will gladly do what they can to help.

## **4. Do not wait until the last minute!**

*Be aware of your deadlines and be courteous by giving the recommender enough time!*

***You should ask BEFORE Christmas break.***

## **5. Follow up before the due date.**

Follow up with a polite reminder a week or two before your letters are due. This is a good opportunity to thank them for writing the letter and offer to send any additional information they may need.

## **6. Say a final thank you.**

It's common courtesy to send a short thank you note to each individual who wrote a letter on your behalf. Express your appreciation for their support with a mailed handwritten note or email. And be sure to update your recommenders with the good news when you're accepted to the high school that you have applied for.

## **6. Talk to Mr. O if you have any questions.**

My email address is [molmstead@urbancommunityschool.org](mailto:molmstead@urbancommunityschool.org), or ask your teacher if you can go to the office and ask for Mr. O.