

Letters of Recommendation – a must

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Most colleges require a letter of recommendation (LOR) from a guidance counselor, and one from an English, Science and/or a Math teacher. Therefore, the importance of developing strong relationships with high school teachers and counselors as early as possible cannot be overemphasized. An extremely well written, all-telling LOR can absolutely make the difference of being accepted or rejected by any college. Submitting outstanding LOR's even improve the chances for students with less than superior numbers of being accepted.

Homeschool students should ask those who have expressed a genuine interest in their futures to write a great LOR. A warning bell should go off if anyone balks, or is the least bit hesitant or shows no enthusiasm at the prospect of writing such a letter. As a less than exemplary LOR is virtually worthless, only motivated enthusiastic teachers should be approached, and all others should be politely avoided.

Additional LOR's other than those requested by the school are also essential. Send no more than two, unless a third is absolutely extraordinary.

The following are excellent choices for homeschoolers:

- College professor
- High ranking military officer
- Member of the clergy
- Chairman or officer of a major corporation
- Member of a volunteer organization where the student participated
- Parent of a handicapped student from babysitting or volunteer work, i.e. Special Olympics
- Parent whose child the student tutored

If the student is an athlete, a coach will suffice. Some will actually ask the student for an outline of what they should write. It is here that a resume would be most helpful. Give them yours. (You do have one, don't you?) And here's another suggestion: if they meet the above criteria, obtain an LOR from a relative with a different last name.

LOR's not in English should have the translation attached with a preface stating, "For your convenience, the following is the English translation of the attached letter."

Students must be cautioned not to submit any sealed or unsealed LOR's they obtain on their own or outside of school. LOR's should be sent by the person who wrote it, not the student, and should be addressed as follows:

Date:

[Name of College]

[Director of Admissions]

[Attn: Director's name – personalize it]

[Street or P.O. Box]

[City, State, Zip, Zip+4 if available]

RE: Student's Name

Dear Director:

Follow these instructions and your student will surely gain an edge – valedictorians included! Never lose sight of the fact that even the best students need an edge as they are competing against other exceptional students.

For almost 35 years, noted financial advisor, Reecy Aresty, has helped thousands of high school and college families to obtain the American Dream; a superior education at a cost far less than they ever dreamed possible. He is the author of the highly acclaimed admissions and financial aid manual, ***How To Pay For College Without Going Broke***. For further information on admissions and financial aid, please visit: www.paylessforcollege.com.