



Dear Member of the Class of 2021,

It is easy enough for colleges and universities to get a sense of your academic achievement through grades and test scores, but it is harder for them to know your character and how you might contribute to their campus. Admissions folks want as honest and robust a picture of you as they can get. The counselor recommendation is one of the most effective and trusted ways to deliver the holistic image that they are looking for. As your counselor, I will write a recommendation for each of you; an overview of your unique academic and extracurricular achievements. I will share insight into who you are as a student and community member. Having written my fair share of counselor recommendations, I will tell you that the best letters come out of the details that you share in this brag sheet. The more honest and specific you are, the better the letter, so please take the time to tell me more about yourself. Do not limit yourself to only discussing what has happened to you at school. Please feel free to describe experiences and activities from any part of your life.

Hopefully the act of completing this “brag” sheet gives you a chance to reflect positively on your growth and to clarify what matters to you. Knowing what you value is an important and empowering tool to hold onto throughout the college process. By focusing on what you know you want, you are more likely to engage with school reps confidently and authentically; viewing visits and meetings as a way to test whether or not a school’s values and programs match up with your interests and ambitions. And whether you are hoping to get into a music conservatory, a liberal arts college, or an Ivy, they all want to get to know the real you. There is no magic formula or particular thing you can do to be accepted at a specific school, but being self-assured and genuine is the best crack at magic you will get.

Sincerely,

~Mrs. Durland

List the honors, prizes, or awards (scholastic or not) you have received in order of importance to you, and the approximate date on which it was received:

List any activities that you participate in outside of SEM:

Summer Experiences Junior Year:

Summer Experiences Sophomore Year:

Summer Experiences Freshman Year:

Describe the most significant experience (work, study, travel, fun with friends) that you have had during the summer? What did it look like, sound like, feel like?

PART B

This section is confidential and will not be shared. Portions may be used by your college counselor in writing your recommendation.

ACADEMIC SKILLS - SELF ASSESSMENT

How do you rate your reading skills? _____ Above Average _____ Average _____ Below Average

How much time do you spend studying on weeknights? _____

How much time do you spend studying on weekends? _____

Describe where you study and how you study

What are your favorite subjects?

1.) _____ 2.) _____ 3.) _____

Why are these your favorite subjects?

What are your least favorite subjects?

1.) _____ 2.) _____ 3.) _____

Why are these your least favorite subjects?

How would your classmates describe the role you play in a class? Are you an active participant, do you have a hard time concentrating, are you a quiet listener?

What do you love to learn about? Consider interests you pursue beyond class assignments like independent projects, reading, or volunteer work. Why?

What is the most intellectually stimulating experience you have had in recent years? What did it look like, sound like, feel like?

Have you worked up to your potential in high school? Is your academic record an accurate measure of your ability? Why or why not?

What skill or quality about yourself will you rely on in order to be successful in college?

Are there any circumstances (in your recent experience or background) which have interfered with your performance in school?

INTERESTS AND ATTITUDES

Whom do you most admire most (living or dead)? Why?

What is your favorite book? What do you love about it?

If you could invite three people, dead or alive, to a dinner party, who would they be, and why?

What do you do for relaxation and fun?

How would someone who knows you well describe you? Would you agree with their assessment?

Describe something you've done that made you feel extreme happiness?

How would you describe your role at SEM?

Who is (are) your best friend(s)? What do you admire most in them?

Describe the groups at SEM. Which one(s) do you belong to? Describe what the group cares about /values?

What do your parents expect of you? Have they expressed specific plans/goals/ambitions for you?

How have their expectations influenced the goals and standards you set for yourself?

STRENGTHS / WEAKNESSES / CHALLENGES

What is your greatest strength?

What is your greatest weakness?

How have you grown or changed during high school?

If you could have one 'do over' in your life, what would you do differently?
