

## **THE PURPLE PACKET**

Your counselor uses this packet to help write your letter(s) of recommendation. Information gathered is confidential and will be used in-house only. It will not be seen by students, parents, or colleges. *Completing this packet is not the same as asking your counselor or a teacher to write a letter of recommendation for you.*

### **Please follow these directions carefully:**

1. Be sure that your name, date of birth, address, and social security number are complete and legible on the first page of the packet. Write legibly throughout the packet!
2. When you respond to the questions, please be specific, thorough, and write legibly. The more information you give, the more informed and complete your counselor's assessment can be. **REMEMBER:** the purpose of a counselor recommendation is to explain to the college what makes you special! It is perfectly acceptable (and even preferred) for you and your parents to answer these questions on the computer and attach the pages.
3. Please provide the names of four teachers who know you well and who would be able to provide additional information about you if necessary.
4. Give ample time for your counselor and/or teachers to write your letter of recommendation. Allow at least two weeks notice when you need a letter of recommendation, whether you are requesting a letter from your counselor or a teacher.

### **APPLICATION TIMELINE:**

#### **Junior Year / Spring Semester**

- Begin to research colleges and universities to which you would like to apply.
- Register for and take the SAT and/or the ACT in the spring semester of your junior year. Register online for the SAT at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) and the ACT at [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org). List the colleges to which you would like to have your SAT and/or ACT scores sent.

#### **Senior Year / Fall Semester**

- Retake the SAT and/or the ACT in the early fall of your senior year.
- Complete the Student and Parent sections of the Purple Packet Student Profile and turn in to the counselors' office. Sign-and have your parent sign-to waive your access to these documents and letters of recommendation. Failure to sign will result in no letters written on your behalf.
- Begin to fill out online applications in early September. The Apply Texas application is available online at [www.applytexas.org](http://www.applytexas.org). Common applications for private colleges become available online at about the same time.
- If applicable, download the Counselor Recommendation/School Report and Teacher Recommendation from individual college websites. Be aware that many schools do not require letters of recommendation.
- Organize your Counselor Recommendation/School Reports. Give these forms to your counselor so that your counselor can write a complete and effective letter on your behalf.
- Plan ahead! Allow at least two weeks for your counselor and/or teachers to write your recommendation.
- Be aware of deadlines. Make note if the deadline is a "postmark deadline" or a "received by" deadline. Do not wait until the last minute.
- Aim to have your college applications completed and submitted by October 31.

#### **Senior Year / Early Spring Semester**

- Give your counselor the mid-year report form in January (if your college requires a mid-year report)
- Wait for the **fat** envelope to arrive!

**PLEASE REMOVE THIS PAGE AND RETAIN FOR YOUR RECORDS.**





7. What has been your most rewarding experience?

8. Where do you see yourself in ten years?

9. Describe the role of character and integrity in the choices you make. Please offer specific examples.

10. Please consider any additional information: What has been your most rewarding experience? Are there extenuating circumstances in your life, which have affected your grades? (illness, death in the family, divorce, move, family problems, etc.)

**PARENT INFORMATION—PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING**

*To help the college admissions committee get to know your child better, your input is very important to complete the counselor recommendation letter. Please share anecdotes, which would illustrate any (or all) of the following:*

1. Tell what you would like the admissions committee to know about your son/daughter regarding:

Unusual talents: \_\_\_\_\_

Academic strengths: \_\_\_\_\_

Worthwhile community activities: \_\_\_\_\_

2. What are the first two words you would use to describe your son or daughter?

3. What is the one thing you would like to change about your son or daughter?

4. What motivates your child? How would someone notice this?

5. Explain how your child reacted to any unusual circumstances or situations in the family.

6. List one or two of your child's significant qualities/characteristics, then briefly describe an incident, event, or situation which illustrates these strengths.

7. Please provide any other information about your child that you would like to share.