

Nuts & Bolts of the College Application Process

A college application is made up of several components and sometimes it becomes confusing. The purpose of this handout is to give an overview of how students should go about seeking teacher letters of recommendation, counselor reports or secondary school reports, transcripts, mid-year reports, and how to send standardized test scores.

Letters of Recommendation:

There are two types of academic letters of recommendation. One is from a teacher(s) that addresses what the student is like in the classroom and the other is from the counselor which describes the student as a person.

- **Teacher:** Students can get the two forms required to request teacher letters of recommendations: "How to Obtain a Teacher Letter of Recommendation" and "Letter of Recommendation Checklist for Teachers" from their counselor or on the GPA (Guidance) website. These two forms give specific directions in seeking a teacher letter of recommendation. Students should also give all "Teacher Recommendation" forms to ONE TEACHER even if they are applying to multiple colleges.
 - *If you are applying early action or early decision, you must submit your request by Tuesday, October 16, 2007. Otherwise, all recommendation requests must be submitted by Monday, November 12, 2007.*
- **Counselor:** Counselor letters of recommendation are generated through the Counselor Report or Secondary School Report. Students should thoroughly complete a "Counselor Questionnaire" and "Letter of Recommendation Checklist for Counselors" before a counselor letter can be written. Also, please return the "GPA Parent Reference" form (highly recommended). "Counselor Questionnaires" and "Letter of Recommendation Checklist for Counselors" are available in the counseling department and on the GPA website.

- *If you are applying early action or early decision, you must submit your request by Tuesday, October 16, 2007. Otherwise, all recommendation requests must be submitted by Monday, November 12, 2007.*

Midyear Reports: Most private and some out-of-state public colleges request a midyear report or 7th semester transcript. The midyear report/7th semester transcript is mailed to the colleges in February. Midyear reports/7th semester transcripts will automatically be sent to colleges **IF** the student informs the counselor using the "Letter of Recommendation Checklist for Counselors" (no additional forms or envelopes are necessary). Otherwise, the student needs to request the transcript from the registrar, allowing plenty of time for it to be mailed to the college.

Test Scores: Students are responsible for sending their SAT Reasoning, SAT Subject Exams, and ACT test scores to their colleges. For more information on sending scores, go to the following web pages:

- SAT Reasoning or Subjects:
www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/sat/scores.html
- ACT: www.actstudent.org/scores/send/index.html

Official Transcripts: An official transcript is a record of every class and semester grade a student has earned while at Guajome Park Academy. An official transcript is generated from the registrar's office and is stamped with an official seal and placed in a sealed envelope. Not every college will want an official transcript and it is important that students follow the directions on the college applications.

- Step 1. Go to the Registrar's office or counseling department.
- Step 2. Fill out the "transcript request form."
- Step 3. Go to the Registrar's office to pick up transcript 2 days later.

Note: Upon request seniors will be given an unofficial "working copy" of their transcripts for use in completing college applications. UC's and CSU's do not require transcripts with their applications. They may request them at a later date.

Senior Grades: It is important to maintain a consistent level of grades during senior year. While you do not have a senior record until seventh semester is completed, your acceptance into college is based on a pattern of grades up to that time. Colleges may withdraw acceptances if the grade point average upon which the acceptance is based is not maintained.

If you are applying to the University of California:

- Remember that they require an SAT Reasoning Test or the ACT with Writing and two SAT Subject Tests.
- They will accept scores through the December test date if there is no delay (late registration, changes between registering and the test date).
- If they do not receive your scores, they will NOT notify you. They will simply not factor them into your academic index. In other words, they will add a 0 when they should be adding a number in the thousands.