

FERPA & YOUR APPLICATION

WHAT IS FERPA?

FERPA stands for the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. It's an expansive law that protects the privacy of your education records.

WHAT IS AN EDUCATION RECORD?

Grades, transcripts, test scores, discipline history – just about anything related to your attendance and performance in school.

HOW DOES FERPA RELATE TO A COLLEGE APPLICATION?

Schools need permission to send transcripts and other records to a college admission office. The FERPA Release Authorization in the Common App gives you an easy way to grant this permission.



HOW DOES FERPA RELATE TO LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION?

Letters of recommendation are generally considered confidential, but they can also be considered part of your Education Record. Since FERPA gives you the right to review your Education Record after you enroll in college, it might be possible for you to read your recommendations under certain circumstances **if** the college you attend saves those letters.

WHY AM I ASKED WHETHER OR NOT I WANT TO WAIVE MY RIGHT TO SEE LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION?

Waiving your right lets colleges know that you do not intend to read your recommendations in the future, which helps reassure colleges that the letters are candid and truthful. In addition, some recommenders may refuse to write a letter for you unless you waive your right, so make sure you check with your counselor or teachers to see if any of them follow such a policy.

WHAT IF I HAVE MORE QUESTIONS?

Talk to your counselor, another school official, or your parent/legal guardian. You can also visit the U.S. Department of Education Family Compliance Office at: familypolicy.ed.gov/ferpa-parents-students

Watch our video "Completing the FERPA Release Authorization" for more info!