James Clemens High School Recommendation Packet

* During your senior year, some of you will complete The Common Application and will need a recommendation letter-usually about 15% of students.
  + Examples of The Common Application Colleges: Stanford University, Harvard University, Yale, University of Pennsylvania, Duke University, Brown University, California Institute of Technology, University of Notre Dame, Dartmouth College, Georgia Tech, Northwestern University, and Vanderbilt. Auburn University, University of Alabama, University of Alabama at Birmingham, and other state schools may also use the Common App, but don’t require a letter of recommendation.
  + If you plan to apply to several selective colleges that only use the Common Application, you will need to complete this packet.
* I will complete recommendation requests in the order I receive them. With over **500** seniors, it is VERY important that you give me 4 weeks to complete your recommendation.
* I HIGHLY encourage you to get your brag sheet completed by Wednesday, July 1st if you are using The Common Application. The more time I have to complete your recommendation letter, the more time I have to make it fantastic!
* Please email this form to llmeskunas@madisoncity.k12.al.us when it is complete. Remember to copy the form and put your name in front of it. Do not edit this form.
* Do not worry about writing perfectly-write from the heart! This is not for a grade! I need authentic, original responses. This should not take you a long time to complete-if so, you are OVERTHINKING!

The following must be completed before a recommendation letter is completed:

* Student BRAG sheet
* Parent/Guardian BRAG sheet
* Resume
* Summer College Conversation with Mrs. Meskunas! This 20 minute conversation is required for students needing The Common Application recommendation letter. Students are required to attend, parents are optional. Please have your brag sheet completed before the meeting.

**IF YOU ARE COMPLETING THE COMMON APP, YOUR DEADLINES ARE AS FOLLOWS:**

**If your recommendation DUE DATE is: Your DEADLINE to request/turn in brag sheet is:**

October 1st September 1st

October 15th September 15th

November 1st October 1st

November 15th October 15th

December 1st November 1st

December 15th November 15th

January 1st December 1st

January 15th December 15th

**STUDENT BRAG SHEET**

This is your time to SHINE! BRAG on yourself. Remember, I am not looking for a perfect textbook response-I am looking for authentic and unique responses! This should not take you long to fill out, if so, you are overthinking it!

NAME:

Personal Email Address:

School Email Address:

Students Personal Email Address:

Students Cell Phone:

Parents Cell Phone:

Parents Personal Email Address:

ACT Highest Composite Score: Math: Science: English: Reading:

SAT Highest Scores:

Intended Major:

TOP 3 Schools you would like to get accepted into:

1. Name THREE THINGS about you that a college admission representative should know above and beyond your GPA, class rank and test scores. THIS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT QUESTION TO ME!

2. List three activities that mean the most to you, explain your reasons, and list the responsibilities you had in the activities:

1.

2.

3.

3. Have you performed volunteer service in the community? If so, share any special anecdotes that may have been significant during these services (if not explained above):

4. Describe any summer and/or part-time jobs you may have held:

5. What would you like to study in college? If you are unsure of a specific major, what subjects do you enjoy most?

6. What three (3) adjectives would you say best describe you?

7. What sets you apart from your peers?

8. Describe your biggest challenge in an academic course and how you solved (or overcame) it.

9.. If you were in a college admissions interview and the interviewer asked you to name your greatest talent or asset, what would you say?

10. What else should I know about you that would help me promote your college application? (Colleges especially love volunteer services, summer travel, unusual school experiences, home projects, reactions to elections you lost or games you didn’t win, reasons for a poor grade, honors you may be too shy to brag about, family situations, special talents, etc.). This is the time to shine and make yourself UNIQUE. Remember, it is not about what clubs you are in, it matters what you do! Also, do not forget to book your college conversation appointment with Mrs. Meskunas.

Below is the full set of essay prompts for 2023-2024. You must include an answer to one question.

1. Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
2. The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
3. Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
4. Reflect on something that someone has done for you that has made you happy or thankful in a surprising way. How has this gratitude affected or motivated you?
5. Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.
6. Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?
7. Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design.

**PARENT BRAG SHEET**

As a parent of a rising senior, you know your student better than anyone else. Please complete this form and return to Mrs. Lana Meskunas, College Counselor. My goal is to have the *student brag sheet* and the *parent brag sheet* in BEFORE writing recommendations. Remember, I am not looking for a perfect textbook response - I am looking for authentic and unique responses! This should not take you long to fill out, if so, you are overthinking it! Thank you for your time.

STUDENT’S NAME \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

PARENT’S NAME \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

PARENT’S CELL\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

PARENTS EMAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. How does your student like to spend time outside of school?

2. What are your child’s outstanding personality traits?

3. What would you like to tell a college about your child that would set him/her apart?

4. Describe any unusual personal circumstances that have affected your child’s educational experiences or personal development:

5. What are your child’s greatest strengths? Weaknesses?

6. What do you hope your child will gain from his or her college experience?

7. Reflect on your child’s talents. If you could pick a major(s) for your child, what would it be?

8. If you could look into the future, where do you envision your child in ten years?

9. Please write any other Interesting characteristics that may illuminate my recommendation. Remember, when college representatives are going through hundreds of essays, they are looking for someone who stands out. BE SPECIFIC - I want to make your child SHINE! Examples: A story about when he/she made you proud. A story about a time he/she surprised you. A story about a time he/she made you laugh.