

# **THE FERPA**

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The Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (**FERPA**) gives **enrolled** students the right to view the contents of their academic files. If recommendations are part of your file, you are entitled to see them along with the rest of the information in your file **if you are admitted and enroll as a student at that school.**

The Counseling Department at Canyon Crest Academy strongly suggests that a student who seeks a letter of recommendation and his or her parent/guardian always waive access to read it. Please read the following excerpts from various sources regarding waiving access before you make your decision. The strong consensus is that you should waive your right of access to see your letters of recommendation.

It is common practice for a recommendation form or instructions to ask the applicant to sign a **voluntary** waiver of review rights, which means that you are giving up your rights to see the recommendations written on your behalf. The key word here is voluntary. If you feel strongly about it, you may refuse to give such a waiver. There are three good reasons to waive your rights to see recommendations:

1. It is commonly assumed that your references will be more candid in their statements about you if they know the recommendation will be kept confidential.
2. If you are not admitted to a given institution, you have no legal right to see the recommendations anyway, unless you are a currently or previously enrolled student at that university
3. If you have chosen your references carefully, there is little need to see the recommendation once you are admitted. Source <http://www.uwm.edu/~ccp2/work/recletter.html>

It is considered a sign of faith in yourself to trust that a recommendation writer will say good things about you. Some scholarships actually provide a waiver in which you are given the option to waive your right to see the letter. If you have this option, I encourage you to select that you waive your right to the letter. You will likely be perceived as overly controlling or doubtful of your own abilities if you do not waive this right. If such a form is not provided, and you are compiling the parts of the application, including the letters to mail in, your recommender may give you the letter in a sealed envelope. You should NOT open this letter. On the other hand, if a writer provides you with a copy of the letter, it is acceptable for you to read it.” From the University of Illinois <http://www.uic.edu/depts/oa/ssp/advice>

Harvard Careers in Law "recommend[s] that you waive your right to see the letter to ensure that there is no doubt in the minds of the admissions committees that the recommender wrote the letter without restraint.” From Prelaw Handbook at [http://www.prelawhandbook.com/letters\\_of\\_recommendations](http://www.prelawhandbook.com/letters_of_recommendations).

# Permission to Release Educational Records and Information

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Student ID \_\_\_\_\_

In accordance with the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974* (FERPA), the student and the parent or legal guardian of the student whose name appears above, authorize **(instructor/staff name)** \_\_\_\_\_ to write a letter of recommendation in which he/she may reference the following educational records and information:

Grades  GPA  Coursework  Extracurricular Activities/Awards  Other \_\_\_\_\_

The purpose of the letter of recommendation is

Scholarship(s)  Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
(please describe in detail)

Please list all **PROGRAMS** or **SCHOLARSHIPS** for which you are requesting a recommendation or form. Provide any required forms and stamped envelopes addressed with no return address.

PROGRAM OR SCHOLARSHIP NAME	Deadline <small>(1.earliest date to 10. Latest date)</small>	<i>Counselor Use Only Completed</i>
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		

*I understand that I have the right not to consent to the release of my education records; this consent shall remain in effect until revoked by me, in writing, and delivered to Canyon Crest Academy, but any such revocation shall not affect disclosures previously made prior to the receipt of any such written revocation.*

I waive my right to review a copy of this letter at any time in the future.

I do not waive my right to review a copy of this letter at any time in the future.

Student's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

This information is released subject to the confidentiality provisions of the FERPA and other applicable state and federal laws regulations, which prohibit any further disclosure of this information without specific written consent of the person to whom it pertains , or as otherwise permitted by such regulations.

Instructions for the letter writer: Retain a copy of this waiver for your personal files, and mail the original, along with the letter of recommendation.

## ***Final Check-Off List for Letter of Recommendation***

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**This packet may not be submitted to your counselor/teacher until all steps are complete.**

**Please read and mark each box.**

- I have asked my teacher or counselor for a recommendation in person.
- I have completed all applicable sections of the FERPA form.
- Both my parent/guardian and I have signed the FERPA form.
- I have included an addressed, stamped envelope and any paper forms or materials that are required from my teacher/counselor.
- If required, I have requested an official transcript from the registrar.

**Student Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_