FERPA & your application

When it comes time to invite your counselor and recommenders, Common App will prompt you to complete the FERPA Release Authorization. FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) is a law that protects the privacy of your education records.

Completing the FERPA Release Authorization will grant your high school permission to send those records on your behalf. Here's a quick breakdown of how this process works in the Common App:

The release authorization asks you two questions about your education records under FERPA.

First, you must grant your high school(s) permission to release all requested records. Colleges you apply to may require documents like transcripts or letters of recommendation. Granting your high school(s) this permission allows colleges to receive these records and contact your school with questions.

Second, you will be asked to waive or not to waive your right to review recommendations and other forms.

Waiving your rights lets colleges know that you don't plan to read your recommendations. This helps reassure colleges that the letters are candid and truthful. Some recommenders may only write a letter if you have waived your rights. Check with your counselor or teachers to see if any of them follow such a policy.

What is an education record?

Education records are documents related to your attendance and performance in school.

For example: grades, transcripts, test scores, school discipline, etc.

Learn more

Talk to your counselor, another school official, or your parent/legal guardian. You can also visit the U.S. Department of Education Family Policy Compliance Office at **studentprivacy.ed.gov**.

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