

# Applying to College with MEFA Pathway

This lesson is designed to help students understand how to apply to college using MEFA Pathway.

*Note: Utilizing MEFA Pathway's Common App & Parchment Integration is a requirement for this lesson.*

## OBJECTIVES

Students will...

1. Learn how to apply to college using MEFA Pathway
2. Connect their MEFA Pathway and Common App accounts
3. Evaluate who knows them well and would make a good recommender
4. Request letters of recommendation in their MEFA Pathway account

## ACTIVITIES

### PART 1

#### Content Knowledge

Explain to students that they will be utilizing their MEFA Pathway account to apply to college. While students will be submitting their college applications through Common App, directly to the institution, or on other platforms, all of their materials, such as transcripts and letters of recommendation, will be requested and sent to colleges via MEFA Pathway.

Familiarize students with the concept of letters of recommendation. Explain that as colleges try to assess students' abilities, work ethic, and personality, they rely on the perspectives of teachers, school counselors, and coaches. Most colleges require one or more letters of recommendation, and provide guidelines as to who can write the recommendation(s), and how each one should be structured.

Have students read MEFA's blog post, [Letters of Recommendation FAQs](#). Once students have finished reading, ask them to think about whom they would like to ask to write their letters of recommendation for college.

### PART 2

#### Applying Information

If students are applying to college using Common App, instruct them to connect their MEFA Pathway and Common App accounts by using the *Application Management Process for Students* handout.

Students should follow Step 1 to connect their MEFA Pathway and Common App accounts. Remember, students must complete the FERPA Release, add at least one college, and identify a deadline plan. Students should add any colleges they know they are applying to; they can always add to this list later.

Grade Level: 12

#### MEFA PATHWAY SECTIONS WITHIN THIS LESSON:

- My College Applications
- My Journal

#### DOMAIN:

- College & Career Exploration

#### TIME:

- 60 minutes

#### MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Internet connection to work with the MEFA Pathway website
- *Application Management Process for Students* handout (included)
- MEFA's blog post, [Letters of Recommendation FAQs](#)

#### FUTURE READY SKILLS:

- Communication
- Organization

#### VOCABULARY:

- Common App
- Parchment
- Letters of Recommendation

Email any questions to:  
[info@mefapathway.org](mailto:info@mefapathway.org)



# LESSON PLAN

Once complete, students should follow Step 2 to add any non-Common App colleges to their MEFA Pathway account.

Students should pay attention to the required number of letters of recommendation per school and begin thinking about who they would like to ask to write their letters.

### PART 3

#### Evaluating Information

Now that students have an understanding of how to request letters of recommendation, ask students to identify who should write a letter of recommendation for them for college and/or scholarship applications.

Students could ask the following individuals for a letter of recommendation based on the situation:

- Teacher
- Supervisor/ Manager
- Coach

*Note:* Only teacher letters of recommendation are requested in MEFA Pathway. If students would like to request a letter from someone who is not a teacher, they will request that through Common App. School counselors will automatically know to write a letter of recommendation, so no action is needed on the student side.

The recommender will want as much information as possible about the student in order to write a thorough and accurate letter of recommendation. When students request a letter of recommendation in MEFA Pathway, they may want to attach a resume to their email. They can create a resume in MEFA Pathway by navigating to *Resume Builder* under the *Create Profile* tab. Here the student can select the information to include on the resume, export the resume as a Word document or PDF, and attach it to the email. Students should use Step 3 & 4 of the *Application Management Process for Students* handout to request letters of recommendation in MEFA Pathway.

### PART 4

#### Critical Thinking/Creative Application

Have students write an entry in their *My Journal* under the *Create Profile* tab reflecting on the possible instances in which they might need a letter of recommendation. For those instances, have students identify who they might ask and why.

Students should ask people who really know their talents, strengths, and capabilities. They can ask non-traditional people as well, though they will want to have teachers from their core subjects write their letters of recommendation for college. For example, if you are passionate about volunteering, you might want to ask an organization you volunteer for to write a letter for recommendation for a scholarship application.

Email any questions to:

[info@mefapathway.org](mailto:info@mefapathway.org)

# Application Management Process for Students 2022-2023

Some high schools have elected to integrate MEFA Pathway with the Common App and Parchment. Confirm that your school participates in this option before following these instructions.



## STEP 1

### Register for and connect your MEFA Pathway and Common App accounts

#### Already have a Common App account?

- 1a. Log in to your Common App account at [apply.commonapp.org/login](https://apply.commonapp.org/login)
- 2a. Check your school information. If missing, see Step 4b below
- 3a. Do you have at least one college on your *My Colleges* list? If not, see Step 5b below
- 4a. Have you completed your FERPA Release? If not, see Step 6b below

#### Need to create a Common App account?

- 1b. Go to [apply.commonapp.org/createaccount](https://apply.commonapp.org/createaccount)
- 2b. Click on *First year student*
- 3b. Create your account by providing the requested information. Be careful to enter the correct date of birth. It must match your MEFA Pathway account date of birth.
- 4b. Add your school information
  - a. Go to the *Common App* tab
  - b. Click on the *Education* screen
  - c. Add your current high school; be careful to add the correct school as it must match your MEFA Pathway school
  - d. Click the *Continue* button
  - e. This is all the basic info needed at this time. You can go back to finish the *Education* section later
- 5b. Add at least 1 college to *My Colleges* list
  - a. Go to the *College Search* tab
  - b. Search for colleges and add at least one college to your *My Colleges* list (you can add additional colleges at any point)

- 6b. Complete FERPA Release—answer all questions before saving and closing
  - a. Go to the *My Colleges* tab
  - b. Click on one college in your list
  - c. Click on *Recommenders and FERPA*
  - d. Click the *Complete Release Authorization*
  - e. Review and check the box for “I have read and understand the FERPA Release Authorization explanation above”
  - f. Click *Continue*
  - g. Review and check the box for acknowledging FERPA
  - h. Review and select “waive right” or “do not waive my right” and check the box and sign by typing your name and the date. This will provide authorization for all colleges on your list
  - i. Click *Save and Close*

You have now completed all of the required basic information within the Common App to connect your MEFA Pathway account. You can go back to the Common App later to finish your applications.

#### Connect your Common App and MEFA Pathway accounts

7. Log in or register for an account at [mefapathway.org](https://mefapathway.org)
8. Click on the *Manage Applications* tab
9. Click the *Connect Accounts* button

#### Accounts Not Connecting?

Does your high school in the Common App match your high school in MEFA Pathway?  
Did you add at least one college in the Common App?  
Still having an issue? Contact your school counselor.

# Application Management Process for Students 2022-2023



If you have created a Common Application account, please click the button below to link your account and authorize release of your information to this MEFA Pathway account.

CONNECT ACCOUNTS

- You will see the Common App log-in page. Log in to the Common App.
- You will be prompted to agree to share your data with MEFA by clicking the *I Agree* box and then the *Connect* button
- You will be redirected back to MEFA Pathway to the *My College Applications* page. The page will refresh to display your colleges from the Common App

## STEP 2

### Add all non-Common App colleges to MEFA Pathway

It's important to add all your colleges to MEFA Pathway, not just your Common App colleges

- On the *Manage Applications/My College Applications* page, click **ADD APPLICATION**
- Choose the college from your *My College List*, by browsing the list of colleges presented, or by typing the college name into the search box
- Enter in the details of the application and click **SAVE**

## STEP 3

### Add/Edit Teacher Recommenders

To add or edit your list of teacher recommenders:

- On the *Manage Applications/My College Applications* page, click **ADD/EDIT RECOMMENDERS**
- Click *Add Recommender* to add a new teacher recommender or *Edit* next to a recommender's name to edit that person's information or *Delete* next to a recommender's name to remove a recommender
- Click **SAVE**

Note: You may edit a recommender's information or delete a recommender up until you have submitted a request to that person. Once you have requested a letter from a recommender, you can no longer edit that person's information.

## STEP 4

### Request Recommendations

You can request all teacher recommendations, both for Common App and non-Common App schools, within MEFA Pathway. Note that you never have to request a counselor recommendation, as your assigned counselor will know to write one for you for each school.

If you want to submit a recommendation from someone other than a teacher or counselor, such as a coach, you'll need to make that request in the Common App Portal for Common App schools and in person for non-Common App schools.

Recommender	Common App	Non-Common App
Counselors	No action needed: Counselor will automatically write	No action needed: Counselor will automatically write
Teachers	Request in MEFA Pathway/ <i>Manage Applications/My College Applications</i>	Request in MEFA Pathway/ <i>Manage Applications/My College Applications</i>
Others (coach, boss, etc.)	Request in Common App Portal	Request in person

- To request a teacher recommendation, on your *Manage Applications/My College Applications* page, find and expand the college for which you want to request a teacher recommendation
- Choose the teacher from your list of recommenders and click **REQUEST**

- A draft email request message will pop up. Edit the message as you wish, include any pertinent attachment, and click **SEND**

Note: Make sure to check each college's admissions webpage for the number of required/optional recommendations you should be submitting.

# Application Management Process for Students 2022-2023



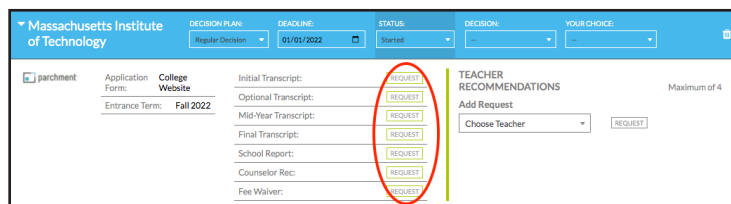
STEP 5

## Request Transcripts and Other Forms

The requirements for transcripts and other forms for each of your Common App colleges will automatically show in MEFA Pathway. You do not need to request transcripts or any other forms for your Common App colleges unless one reaches out to you directly with a special request. If that happens, work with your counselor directly to send the college the requested form. You *will* need to request transcripts for your non-Common App schools.

To request transcripts/other forms for non-Common App schools:

1. On your *Manage Applications/My College Applications* page, find and expand the college for which you want to request a transcript or form
2. Click the *REQUEST* button next to the documents you would like to request.



STEP 6

## Check Application Statuses

Make certain to periodically check the status for each of your college application(s) in the Common App, MEFA Pathway, and, if applicable, the college’s student portal. It is your responsibility to confirm that each college has successfully received all of your application materials.

# Applying to College with MEFA Pathway Grading Rubric

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CATEGORY	EXCELLENT 4	GOOD 3	SATISFACTORY 2	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT 1
Sequencing of Information	The information is organized in a clear, logical way.	Most information is organized in a clear, logical way.	Some information is logically sequenced.	There is no clear plan for the organization of information.
Effectiveness	The entry includes all material needed to give a good understanding of the topic.	The entry is lacking one or two key elements.	The entry is missing more than two key elements.	The entry is lacking several key elements and has inaccuracies.
Font Choice & Formatting	Font formats (size, bold, italic) have been carefully planned to enhance readability and content.	Font formats have been carefully planned to enhance readability.	Font formats have been carefully planned to complement the content. It may be a little hard to read.	Font formatting makes it very difficult to read the material.
Conventions. Student uses proper grammar, punctuation, and spelling.	The entry has no misspellings or grammatical errors.	The entry has 1- 2 misspellings, but no grammatical errors.	The entry has 1- 2 grammatical errors but no misspellings.	The entry has more than 2 grammatical and/or spelling errors.