

Southridge Tech Middle School

ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

The students and staff at Southridge Tech Middle School believe honesty and integrity are integral to the school culture and climate. We stand united with the International Baccalaureate Organization, and we believe that students must see academic honesty as a set of values and skills that promote personal integrity and good practice in teaching, learning, and assessment. To meet the standards of academic honesty, our school community is encouraged to embrace and exemplify the traits of the IB Learner Profile that demonstrate the academic honesty that we strive for at Southridge Tech Middle School.

Purpose

The purpose of the academic policy is to:

- define incidences of academic dishonesty and delineate student, faculty, and administrative responsibilities in the process.
- communicate the roles and responsibilities of each member of the learning process as it pertains to academic honesty
- communicate formal citation and documentation process to ensure that students recognize and I'm here to intellectual property rights
- share processes employed to help students reflect and correct incidences where students may need more support with their academic dishonesty.
- set the expectations for honest academic work and provide fair and equitable administrative procedures for addressing breaches of those expectations and include options for handling incidents.

What is Academic Honesty?

IB learners' work needs to exemplify academic integrity and honesty throughout their educational journey, as it is foundational to the learning process. Due to technological advancement, these policies help ensure that students are integral throughout the learning process, and they properly recognize the intellectual property of others as they develop their scholarship and innovation.

Academic honesty means students do their work. When students submit papers from older siblings or copy work from the Internet to get a better grade, they cheat everyone involved in the learning process. STMS expects that students recognize others' intellectual property and submit assignments that reflect their skills, knowledge, and ability.

Acknowledging Original Authorship

To ensure consistent and reliable conventions for citing resources in all eight subjects throughout the campus, Southridge Tech has adopted the Modern Language Association (MLA) format. The MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, now in its eighth edition (2016) is available in our Media Center. Online resources are available at www.mla.org or <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/11/>.

All teachers and staff members support the use of MLA and will provide necessary instruction to all students to make certain the format is being used with fidelity. The librarian provides resources for all teachers and students on issues of plagiarism, copyright and other ethical issues. Additionally, all parents are encouraged and expected to support their student and the teachers to maintain academic honesty. Students who have questions regarding whether something constitutes plagiarism have a responsibility to consult with the teacher prior to submitting the work/assignment.

Collaboration

Collaboration is a necessary 21st-century skill. Therefore, STMS desires that all students learn to collaborate ethically on intellectual projects. However, students must understand the difference between honest collaboration and dishonest collaboration. Southridge Tech defines collaboration as cooperative work with other students on academic tasks. In collaborative work, teachers assign students cognitive tasks with individual responsibilities to create interdependence and group accountability. Students are not allowed to collaborate

unless the teacher has given a collaborative task or has approved student requests for collaboration. Any behavior during collaboration that falls under the definition of cheating or accomplice to cheating will be handled as such.

Definitions

Intellectual Property

Intellectual property is defined as the ideas or work of another person, including professionals and students. The rights to intellectual property vary from patents, registered designs, trademarks, moral rights and copyright and are usually protected by law; however, all forms of intellectual and creative expression will be respected at Southridge Tech Middle School.

Authentic Authorship

Authentic authorship is when a student completes their work and uses their own intellectual and creative ideas. It is important to note that students may use resources that support their ideas, but they must also cite the source. It is expected that all work will be the student's individual and original ideas with the ideas and work of others fully acknowledged. All assignments and assessments must wholly and authentically use that student's own language, expression, and ideas.

Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is defined as using other words to restate another person's ideas. Paraphrased ideas usually have a sentence structure, style, and vocabulary different from the original author. Paraphrasing is an acceptable way to use a source. However, because paraphrasing still uses another person's ideas, students must acknowledge the author through citations.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonest includes cheating, plagiarism, forgery, fabrication, or misrepresentation. The following are examples of academic dishonesty:

- claiming the work or thoughts of others as your own
- copying the writing of others into your written work without appropriate attribution
- writing papers for other students or allowing them to submit your work as their own
- buying papers and turning them in as your own
- submitting the same paper for more than one study or class without explicit permission from the teacher
- making up or changing data for a research project

While we do understand that the given conditions of academic dishonesty may not always be deliberate, we also want our community to be aware and conscious of what constitutes 'dishonesty' in their academic life and the kind of consequences it entails.

Although the following list is not exhaustive, academic dishonesty can, in general, take several forms:

Plagiarism—Plagiarism is defined as "using words, ideas, or products which belong to another person or source, without giving credit to the source from which it was taken." Plagiarism can occur when a person tries to represent another person's work as their own to obtain some benefit, credit, or gain. However, plagiarism can also occur unintentionally if a person does not acknowledge the work of others that helped him/her complete the assessment task. Regardless of the motivation, plagiarism is unacceptable and can be avoided with proper teaching and learning.

Collusion—Collusion is defined as supporting malpractice of another student, as in allowing one's work to be copied or submitted for assessment by another. Collusion happens when more than one student contributes to a piece of work that is submitted as the work of an individual. Individual assessment work should be entirely the work of the student submitting that work. For example, supposed a group of students agree to divide different components of a research topic assigned by their teacher. To save time and lessen the workload, each prepare a well-researched summary of their theory, and then share the summaries among the others. Then they each write their own assignment alone. ***This is collusion and constitutes academic misconduct. Each student should do all of their own research and not use any work done by another student.***

Duplication—Duplication is defined as the student turning in the same work for different assessment tasks or subject areas. For example, suppose a student completed a research paper on the Dangers of Pollution for her English teacher the year before. For a writing task, her science teacher assigns a paper that requires the class to discuss issues affecting our ecosystem. Instead of writing a separate paper because the topics are similar, the student decides to change the title of the paper and the dates to submit it to their science teacher. ***This is duplication and constitutes academic misconduct. Each student work to submit current work and research to meet their requirements of an assignment or obtain permission from their instructor to submit the assignment for fulfillment of requirements.***

Falsifying data—falsifying data is creating or altering data to one’s advantage which has not been collected in an appropriate way. for example, suppose the student most complete research for an assignment. To ensure their hypothesis or assertions are correct, this student changes the data to reflect their desired outcome and results. ***This is falsifying data is constituted as academic misconduct as the information provided is inaccurate, biased, and false.***

Cheating

Cheating is defined as behavior that results in a student making a deliberate choice to gain an unfair advantage in an assessment situation. Cheating includes:

- Copying another student's work (with or without their knowledge)
- Using unauthorized notes or outside resources during an assessment
- Obtaining information from another student during an examination
- Communicating information to another student during an examination
- Using an unauthorized electronic device to solicit, transmit, or search for answers
- Taking a test for another student or having someone take an examination for oneself
- Sharing answers/solutions for a take-home examination unless authorized explicitly by the teacher
- Using unauthorized material during an examination
- Altering a graded exam or assignment and returning it for additional credit, under the pretense that the teacher made an error
- Having another person or a company do the research and writing of an assigned paper or report
- Misreporting or altering the data in laboratory or research projects

Cheating is an act of academic dishonesty and will be addressed in the same manner as the act itself.

Accomplice to cheating/collusion

Collusion occurs when any student knowingly or intentionally helps another student perform an act of academic dishonesty. This help includes:

- giving intellectual property (their own or others) to a student with intent to cheat
- providing information on how to obtain another student's intellectual property
- providing information on how to obtain assessment tasks (before examination)
- forging documents for another student
- helping copy documents for another student
- providing unauthorized notes to another student during an assessment

Collusion is an act of academic dishonesty, and the teacher or administrator will address the situation in the same manner as the act itself. Sometimes, students may misunderstand the difference between collaboration and collusion. The following chart below outlines the difference:

Collaboration

Collaboration means working together and sharing ideas and resources to achieve a common goal.

Group projects, tasks, and assignments can be a good way to help students develop these skills.

Collusion

Collusion means working together when the teacher did not allow or directed to do so.

A teacher assigns a task, and a group of students decide to work together on assignment though it was individually assigned.

or

When permitted, students have the right to learn collaboratively with their peers or other community members when learning is facilitated through group learning

Giving or receiving test answers to or from other students on a task intended for individual assessment

Consequences for Academic Dishonesty

Sometimes, academic dishonesty is intentional such as cheating on a test or cutting a pasting information from an article online; however, sometimes it is unintentional, such as the paraphrase of source material without attribution or the direct quotation of cited material without quotation marks. Either way, using of another's work without recognizing their work violates our academic honesty policy. If a student engages in any form of academic dishonesty, will address it in the following way:

First Offense: Upon the first offense of academic dishonesty, the teacher holds a meeting with the student. After the academic honesty meeting has concluded, the teacher notifies the student that he/she needs to complete an alternative assignment to demonstrate his/her understanding of the material so an achievement level can be awarded except in the case of individual exams and assessments (IAs). The teacher is also responsible for notifying the student's family of the nature of the offense and the details of the meeting and the consequence and documenting the infraction on "Visit Maintenance."

Second Offense: Upon the second offense of academic dishonesty, the student receives a zero for his/her work. The MYP/IB coordinator delivers this consequence and a meeting between a member of administration, the student, and the family is required. Depending on the severity of the circumstances, students may be removed from the MYP/IB programmes.

Roles of Stakeholders

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The education of students is a collaborative effort in which all stakeholders play an essential role. Therefore, each member of this collaborative team has duties to uphold.

Role of Leadership Team

Education: Most acts of academic dishonesty are not intentional. With that understanding, the first offense of academic dishonesty is used as a teachable moment, in which the student meets with the teacher. In this meeting, expectations regarding academic Honesty are clarified for the student. The teacher ensures that the student:

- understands what constitutes academic Honesty, an authentic piece of work, and intellectual property
- receives guidance on how to acknowledge sources
- understands what constitutes malpractice (academic dishonesty) and the consequences of being found guilty
- knows and understands STMS's Academic Honesty Policy

Role of Teacher

Awareness: All subject areas must contribute to the development of academic Honesty. Therefore, each teacher is responsible for helping students gain the skills necessary to complete the assigned summative task. Needed skills may include, but are not limited to:

- conducting research
- writing academically to fulfill the expectation of authentic authorship
- acknowledging sources using citations
- working collaboratively
- establishing timelines so work can be proof-read and edited by knowledgeable sources before the assessment submission deadline

These skills can be promoted in a variety of ways, including, but not limited to:

- direct instruction of research steps and citation procedures

- thorough assessment explanations including preferred citation formats
- informal reminders
- list of conventions for acknowledging sources or a list of helpful resources that can aid students in creating accurate and consistent documentation of sources used

Detection and Reporting: Since teachers are responsible for administering their own assessments, they are also responsible for detecting and reporting incidences of academic dishonesty. Upon evaluating each student's assessment, teachers need to pay close attention to any work that seems misaligned with that student's level. Given STMS's practices with frequent formative assessments and summative assessments that the teacher closely monitors, these incidences are often easily detected.

When a teacher detects academic dishonesty, he/she should report the issue to the respective coordinator and provide adequate evidence of the malpractice. After the teacher has counseled the student and discussed the evidence with the coordinator, the teacher has completed his/her reporting responsibilities, and further action is pursued by the respective coordinator, as needed.

Following Policy: Teachers are expected to uphold this policy and report incidents of academic dishonesty, whether detected or suspected. Suspicion of malpractice without sufficient evidence does require careful consideration. However, not all reports lead to consequences for students, as some are unsubstantiated. Therefore, teachers should not feel nervous when reporting their suspicions to their coordinator.

In addition to supporting student practices related to academic Honesty, teacher should also model the policy. Acting as strong examples of ethical behavior, teachers should demonstrate appropriate collaboration and use of intellectual property throughout the year.

Role of Family

Families are expected to support STMS's Academic Honesty Policy. Therefore, families must come to requested meetings to discuss their students' academic honesty. Families can also encourage academic Honesty by helping students understand the expectations related to authentic authorship, thereby preventing malpractice.

Role of Student

Giving Credit: Each student is responsible for ensuring that all work submitted for assessment represents authentic authorship, with the work or ideas of others fully and correctly acknowledged. Even if the intellectual property is summarized or paraphrased, it requires proper MLA citations or another authorized format. Parenthetical citations should be used in all essays, and a work cited page is needed for multi-source research and/or analytical writing.

Clarification: If, at any point, a student is concerned that his/her behavior may be interpreted as malpractice, he/she needs to seek clarification regarding STMS's academic honesty expectations from any programme teacher or coordinator. Attempts to gain clarification before submission of work will never be penalized, as this demonstrates the student's desire to act in a principled manner and serves as a learning opportunity. Therefore, students should feel comfortable asking for clarification and remember that all questions concerning academic Honesty are welcomed.

Principled Action

Reporting

Students who may know of a potential act of academic dishonesty or an act that has already occurred must report it to a teacher immediately. Students who report these incidences maintain STMS's policy, act with integrity, and helping their peers see the importance of academic Honesty. The names of students who bring forth information regarding situations of academic dishonesty will remain confidential.

Accepting Consequences

Students must bear the consequences if they submit work for assessment that is not their own, regardless of whether the plagiarism was deliberate or the result of poor research skills. STMS hopes to avoid malpractice

situations, but should a problem arise, we expect students to cooperate with staff, take responsibility for their actions, and use the experience as a learning opportunity for the future.

Policy Creation Process

The Academic Honesty Policy was created by the Instructional Leadership Team and ratified by the site council. The ILT met several times, following an agenda aligned with the MYP Standards and Practices tied to academic Honesty. Staff members were made aware of the policymaking process through regular updates of the meeting agenda items.

Communication of Assessment Policy to STMS Community

The Academic Honesty Policy is shared with staff, families, and students in various modes of communication. Staff members learn about the Academic Honesty Policy during specific collaboration times set aside for policy study. We also review the Academic Honesty Policy at the beginning of the school year with staff and students to reinforce the expectations regarding ethical academic conduct. In addition, the Academic Honesty Policy is highlighted during the IB/MYP Informational Night and throughout other meetings throughout the academic year. The policy is available on our website in written English form. Within the next few years, we will translate the policy into Spanish and place it on our website. This will allow our Academic Honesty Policy to be accessed by all families, including those who are not proficient in English and not literate in their native language.

Review Process

Every three years, a committee will be assembled to complete the Academic Honesty Policy examination. The committee will include but is not limited to the ILT and a member of the Academic Administrative Team. The committee's purpose will be to study the current document to ensure its accuracy toward meeting STMS and IB/MYP standards. If changes arise in the years between formal reviews, a committee can be formed to amend the policy. The School Site Council will ratify any changes.