

State College Area School District
Draft
Proposed Middle- and High-School Academic Integrity Policy
(to be inserted in Faculty Handbooks after approval)

I. Introduction

The State College Area School District's Academic Integrity Policy emphasizes the importance of the faculty's role in educating our students about plagiarism. To that end, teachers are asked to teach students about plagiarism and their ethical responsibilities **on an annual basis**.

Following the Scope and Sequence of Plagiarism Instruction as well as the Scope and Sequence of Research and Writing Skills, all teachers will provide the instruction and scaffolding necessary for students to use research ethically in all formats (written, oral, or visual) regardless of how the information is used (summary, paraphrase, and/or quotation). Teachers should actively involve students in exploring the following immediately before undertaking a research project:

Definitions of Plagiarism
Forms of Plagiarism
Examples of Plagiarism
How to Avoid Plagiarism

Resources, including lesson plans, for teaching these plagiarism concepts are available online on each library's web site under "Teacher Resources."

II. Definitions of Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined as the unauthorized use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one's own original work. **Intentional plagiarism** occurs when a student knowingly submits someone else's words or ideas as if they were his/her own. **Unintentional plagiarism** occurs when writers and researchers use the words or ideas of others but fail to quote or give credit (perhaps because they don't know how). When in doubt, students must check with a teacher or librarian.

A. Examples of plagiarism may include but are not limited to

1) direct copying of another person's work (homework, reports, take-home exams, tests, research papers, music, art, images, etc.)

2) allowing false assumptions of authorship by failure to document sources or documenting inaccurately.

- 3) working together on an independent assignment and then submitting individual copies of the assignment as one's own individual work.
- 4) missing or incomplete documentation and/or missing or incomplete citation of a direct quote or paraphrase.
- 5) failing to document the use of charts, graphs, diagrams, statistics, or other materials not created or compiled by the student.
- 6) submitting an assignment for two courses without permission of both instructors. (The assignment will count for one course only.)

III. Faculty Responsibility for Prevention

In addition to explicitly teaching students how to avoid plagiarism before presenting a research assignment, faculty will strive to do the following:

- 1) follow the guidelines for preparing a research assignment that are available online on the library web sites under "Teacher Resources."
- 2) create low-probability-for-plagiarism assignments that require process checkpoints along the way.
- 3) take students to the library and provide opportunities for students to ask questions and seek help from teachers and librarians during the research process.
- 4) acquaint students with the Research Guide available online on the library web sites where they can find information about MLA documentation format, Works Cited, and Works Consulted pages.
- 5) teach students to handle their research projects through Noodlebib, where teachers can monitor their progress.
- 6) follow the Scope and Sequence of Plagiarism Instruction and the Scope and Sequence of Research and Writing Skills and teach the concepts and skills outlined for specific grade levels.
- 7) handle plagiarism offenses in a consistent and uniform way, following the process and consequences outlined in this document.

IV. Consequences of Plagiarism: An Opportunity for Learning

The following lists of grade-level consequences represent an effort to recognize the distinct developmental differences among our students. Inherent also in these consequences, at least at the earlier grade levels, is the opportunity to educate our students about what plagiarism is and how to avoid it.

A. 7th-8th Grades

- 1) The teacher will review the skills of documentation with the student.
- 2) The student will redo the assignment.
- 3) The grade will be reduced by one letter grade or the student will receive 60% of the highest grade possible on the resubmitted assignment, depending upon the extent of the plagiarism and the degree of intentionality.
- 4) The grade-level administrator will be notified.
- 5) The parent will be contacted.

B. 9th-10th Grades

- 1) The teacher will review the skills of documentation with the student.
- 2) The student will redo the assignment.
- 3) The grade will be reduced by one letter grade or the student will receive 60% of the highest grade possible on the resubmitted assignment, depending upon the extent of the plagiarism and the degree of intentionality.
- 4) The grade-level administrator will be notified.
- 5) The parents will be contacted.

C. 11th-12th Grades

We expect our 11th and 12th-grade students to understand and know how to avoid plagiarism. As a result, consequences at these grade levels will vary depending upon the extent of the plagiarism and the degree of intentionality:

Level	Consequence
Level I: Small-scale plagiarism <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inaccurate paraphrasing or direct borrowing of others' words (without quotation marks) that affects a small portion of the paper, but the source is cited in the bibliography and/or in the body of the paper.• Unauthorized collaboration when the work is a small percentage of the quarter grade.• Copying daily classroom assignments (homework, quizzes, etc.)	Who handles: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• classroom teacher Grading Consequences: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• grade reduced by one letter grade if resubmitted or• "zero" on the work with the possibility of resubmitting it for 60% of the highest grade possible Disciplinary Consequences: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• grade-level administrator contacted

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • parent contacted
<p>Level 2: Medium-scale plagiarism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inaccurate paraphrasing or direct borrowing of others' words (without use of quotation marks) that affects a large portion of the paper, but the source is cited in the bibliography and/or in the body of the paper. • Direct borrowing of others' words (without use of quotation marks) that affects a small portion of the paper, and the source is not cited in the bibliography or in the body of the paper. • Inventing or falsely attributing the sources used in a paper or other work. • Unauthorized collaboration when the work is a large percentage of the quarter grade. • Submitting one assignment for two courses without permission of both instructors. (The work will count for one course only.) • A second Level I offense. 	<p>Who handles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • classroom teacher and grade-level administrator <p>Grading Consequences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • grade reduced by one letter grade for the work or • "zero" on the assignment with the possibility of resubmitting it for 60% of the highest grade possible <p>Disciplinary Consequences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • student conference with grade-level administrator • parent contacted • office assigns 2-hour detention
<p>Level 3: Large-scale plagiarism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct borrowing of others' words (without use of quotation marks) that affects a large portion of the paper, and the source is not cited in the bibliography or in the body of the paper. Little or none of the paper is the student's original work. • Submitting a paper as one's own that has been wholly or mostly written by someone else whether that paper has been purchased, borrowed, found, stolen, etc. • A second Level II offense 	<p>Who handles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • classroom teacher and grade-level administrator <p>Grading Consequence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "zero" on the assignment without the possibility of resubmitting it for a replacement grade or • possibility of resubmission of assignment for maximum 60% of the highest grade possible <p>Disciplinary Consequences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • student/parent/grade-level administrator conference • office assigns 4 hours of detention or office assigns one-day, in-school suspension • no competition or participation in extracurricular activities for one week. Attendance/practice are permitted.

At the grade-level administrator's discretion, more serious plagiarism offenses (large-scale, intentional plagiarism, for example) and repeat offenses will be subject to additional consequences such as after-school detention and in-school suspension.

V. Procedure for Handling Consequences

When a teacher has reason to believe that plagiarism has occurred, the following steps will be taken:

- 1) The teacher will investigate the matter with the student(s) involved. The teacher may use an "Assignment Explanation Form" to clarify any misunderstandings about the sources and/or the process used to create the assignment.
- 2) The teacher communicates the outcome of his/her investigation and the appropriate consequences to the grade-level administrator and the parent.
- 3) The principal has the discretion to apply additional consequences for the offense or repeated offenses.

If a parent and/or student wishes to appeal the teacher's consequence, the Academic Integrity Committee may be convened to review the matter.

VI. Academic Integrity Committee

Each school will create an Academic Integrity Committee to review plagiarism cases that are brought before it. The committee will consist of a librarian, a grade-level administrator, a teacher, and a student.

A. Reasons for Referral

The teacher, in consultation with the principal, may refer the incident to the Academic Integrity Committee for the following reasons:

- 1) The student and/or parent denies the charge of plagiarism or challenges the accusation or consequences.
- 2) Several students are involved in the plagiarism incident, and the teacher does not have the capacity to perform a comprehensive investigation.
- 3) Other criteria may warrant a broader investigation of the charge.

The teacher will submit to the grade-level administrator a written request for a hearing, specifying the scope of the investigation and the offense. In addition, the teacher will forward copies of all information and written work to the Academic Integrity Committee prior to the hearing.

The Academic Integrity Committee will make the final decision concerning consequences on any case brought forward. Decisions of the committee may be appealed to the Superintendent and may be appealed only on the basis of new evidence.

B. Formation of the Academic Integrity Committee

The committee will be formed in the fall of every year to begin its service in September of the current year. The committee shall consist of a librarian, a grade-level administrator, a teacher, and a student. The committee shall convene on an as-needed basis.