

2200 - ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The Wauwatosa School District regards academic integrity and honesty as vital to the academic, social, and emotional development of our students. All work submitted by students should be an authentic reflection of their effort and ability.

“To foster student learning, risk taking, creativity, trust, and respect for others, the classroom environment must be one in which cheating is defined, identified, and condemned. What is needed to deter cheating is a healthy awareness, not an atmosphere of anxiety, suspicion and mistrust” (Cizek, 2003; O’Connor, 2009, p. 94). The best remedy for cheating is for students to have an active voice in the learning process and receive consistent and effective feedback from the teacher on how to meet the academic performance benchmarks. Students are less inclined to resort to academic dishonesty when they are engaged in high quality teaching and learning activities that allow for student choice and differentiated assessment practices. Therefore, the first step in remediating academic dishonesty is a proactive, preventative approach. Teachers must ensure that students understand what constitutes academic dishonesty and must support them in teaching explicit strategies that generate authentic student work.

Definition of Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to the following behaviors:

- A. Cheating on a test (giving or receiving unauthorized assistance)
- B. Plagiarism (using the ideas of another as one's own without acknowledgement of the source)
 - a. Downloading information from other sources and presenting it as one's own
 - b. Submitting work that is not original, including copying, "borrowing" from another source and submitting it as one's own work
- C. Forgery
- D. Providing access to materials or information so that credit may be dishonestly claimed by others
- E. Creating and distributing copies of one's own work so that credit may be dishonestly claimed by others

Academic Performance vs. Academic Behavior

In a Grading for Learning model academic performance and academic behaviors are two distinct aspects of a student’s overall learning profile. This is represented in our use of a Responsibility for Learning score to report academic behaviors, such as homework completion, participation, respect, timeliness, adherence to class rules, and academic integrity separate from the academic grade. When there is evidence of a lack of academic integrity, such as

cheating or plagiarizing, the response must be made considering these two aspects separately: academic performance v. academic behavior.

Academic Performance: When there is evidence that academic dishonesty has resulted in work that is not an authentic representation of a student's academic performance, the student should be required to do the work again. For example, if a student has plagiarized on an essay, they should be required to rewrite the essay without any plagiarism. If a student has copied another student's work on an assessment, they should be required to take an alternative assessment covering the same material. Academic performance should represent a student's learning; what they know and are able to do in relation to the expected benchmarks.

Academic Behavior: When there is evidence of academic dishonesty, the student's behavior should be reported to the administration for appropriate behavioral consequences. Academic dishonesty should be taken very seriously. If it is the first offense, minimally the administration should refer the student to the school counselor and the Responsibility for Learning grade should reflect the offense. The parent should be notified of the offense and consequences. If the offense is repetitive or of unusual magnitude then the administration should respond with a more comprehensive plan to address the behavior. Most importantly the academic performance grade should be separated from the academic behavior and its consequences.

It is an expected practice for the teacher to notify a parent and administration when academic dishonesty takes place.

Parents/students have the right to ask administration to reconsider a determination of academic dishonesty.

- A. If a parent/student disagrees with the determination of academic dishonesty they may appeal to the building principal or designee.
- B. If a parent/student disagrees with the decision of the building principal, they may appeal the decision to an appeal panel through the Director of Teaching and Learning for Student Services.

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