

## Renfroe Middle School and Decatur High School Academic Integrity Policy

### RMS/DHS Honor Code

All students and teachers are expected to abide by the Decatur High School Honor Code below.

When we engage in scholarly activities, we strive to demonstrate our understandings and skills, to generate new ideas and explanations, and to build on the work of others. To act honorably, we pledge to be honest with our fellow students and our teachers about the sources of the ideas and explanations in the work we submit. We pledge to credit sources properly, give or receive assistance only when appropriate, and, above all, complete all work with integrity in accordance with the spirit and intent of the assignment. We recognize that ignorance is no defense for dishonest behavior. We pledge to familiarize ourselves with the Decatur High School Honor Code and to inquire about the code when we are uncertain. We believe that when we violate the Decatur High School Honor Code we should be held accountable to the penalties established therein.

In support of students' development as principled learners, Advisement, 9th grade Language and Literature classes and 6-8th grade Individuals and Societies classes will include explicit lessons on academic honesty and the Honor Code. See below for a sample lesson.

Additional instruction, especially related to acknowledging and citing the work of others, will be an important component of all research related learning experiences. All teachers will clearly communicate how a student might unintentionally violate the Honor Code on summative assessments.

Research indicates people are less likely to engage in dishonest behavior if they assert their intention to be honest **before** they complete a task.

One of the following statements will appear on every summative assessment given to students:

"On my honor, I will not cheat or plagiarize this work. I will not allow others to use my work to cheat or plagiarize." \_\_\_\_\_ (*student signature*)

OR

"On my honor, I have not cheated or plagiarized this work. I have not allowed others to use my work to cheat or plagiarize." \_\_\_\_\_ (*student signature*)

## **Consequences of Academic Misconduct**

If a student commits an academic integrity infraction, the teacher should:

1. Talk to student
2. Contact parent and document in PLP
3. Initiate appropriate make-up work
4. Complete behavior referral in SWIS

*Academic misconduct includes:*

- plagiarism—the representation, intentionally or unwittingly, of the ideas, words or work of another person without proper, clear and explicit acknowledgment that includes, at a minimum, the name of the author, date of publication, title of source, and page numbers, as applicable.
- collusion—supporting academic misconduct by another student, as in allowing one’s work to be copied or submitted for assessment by another
- duplication of work—the presentation of the same work for different assessment components
- any other behaviour that gives an unfair advantage to a student or that affects the results of another student (falsifying data, misconduct during an examination, creating spurious reflections).

*(From Principles Into Practice, 2015)*

### *Cell Phones*

Any use or display of a cell phone or other unapproved electronic device (tablet, unauthorized calculator, etc) by a student during a test will be considered cheating and result in a referral, regardless of evidence found on the phone.

Teachers should offer students the opportunity to store their phones during all major in-class assessments and warn them that any sighting of a cell phone will be treated as an academic honesty violation.

### *Penalties for Academic Dishonesty*

Any act of cheating will be handled with a behavior referral and will be subject to behavior consequences and notation on a student’s permanent record. When a student cheats, the student should still be assessed against the standards via an alternate assessment. A guilty student should be given a reasonable, but firm, timeline to submit a new out-of-class assessments. Alternate assessments should be of equivalent difficulty and assess the same standards as the original assessment. Alternate formats are allowed as long as they meet these requirements. The grade book should show the lowest possible grade for the affected assignment until the alternate assessment is graded.

*City Schools of Student Code of Conduct*

Rule 18: Academic Dishonesty

Acts such as, but not limited to, looking at another person's paper during a testing situation, taking unauthorized notes to a testing situation, plagiarizing another's work, or engaging in or permitting any other unauthorized access of information during a test or other graded assignment are considered cheating and will not be tolerated.

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|------|--|-----------|
| 18a. | General violation  | Level I   |
| 18b. | Plagiarism or cheating on a minor classroom assignment or project          | Level II  |
| 18c. | Cheating on College Board, IB, and statewide assessments, or major project | Level III |

Administrators must report violations of Rule 18 to the State of Georgia – State Code 32

**Honor Code Advisement Lesson**

**Learning Target: I can make academically honest decisions**

Discuss the focus of today's lesson with students. You may choose to use the following script:

*Over the past several years, Decatur High has worked hard to make teaching academic honesty a priority in our school. Sometimes students intentionally cheat on tests and essays and are aware they are behaving unethically and immorally. Often, however, students may be unaware of behaviors that are academically dishonest. These behaviors, things like plagiarism and accepting unauthorized help, are also grounds for academic and disciplinary consequences. All of us, teachers and students, must be aware of the line between acting honestly and acting dishonestly, so that we can behave with integrity in all situations. Our learning target for advisement today is "I can identify whether behavior is academically honest or dishonest." We'll read the Honor Code and then discuss several examples of behavior that may or may not be honest behavior to improve our understanding of how to act with honor in all situations.*

Step One

Give students a few minutes to read the Honor Code and underline any statements they have questions or concerns about.

Step Two (scenarios are described, below)

Ask students to read the first vignette and decide whether the behavior violates the Honor Code. Have them discuss their responses in small groups (no more than four) and share out with the entire class. Discuss the "right" answer:

**What's the right answer?** It's unlikely that Dante or Emily behaved dishonestly. While Mr. Wat certainly wishes he'd paid better attention in class, the purpose of a homework assignment like this is typically to practice skills learned in class. Dante's behavior would only be considered dishonest if Mr. Wat specifically asked the class to work without assistance or if Emily completed the assignment for Dante, rather than serving as his tutor.

### Step Three

Ask students to read the second vignette and decide whether the behavior violates the Honor Code. Have them discuss their responses in small groups (no more than four) and share out with the entire class. Discuss the "right" answer:

**What's the right answer?** While Lindsey and Zack may not have had cheating in mind when they started their conversation, Lindsey has definitely behaved dishonestly and Zack probably will. Lindsey has violated the Honor Code by offering unauthorized assistance and Zack is only in the clear if he does NOTHING with the information offered by Lindsey. If he decides to devote extra lunch study time to the differences between the three religions, he has behaved dishonestly. Talking about the content of a test with someone who has not taken but will take the test is always dishonest behavior, whether we intend it that way or not. In response to Zack's question, Lindsey could have said, "Let's talk after you take it" or something similar.

### Step Four

Ask students to read the third vignette and decide whether the behavior violates the Honor Code. Have them discuss their responses in small groups (no more than four) and share out with the entire class. Discuss the "right" answer:

**What's the right answer?** Asking for editing help from our parents and peers is one of the toughest situations we can be faced with as students. In this case, Deandre has probably violated the honor code, even though he had no dishonest intent. Your parents are an important part of your educational process and asking them for help is often a great idea. Your teacher will help you understand when getting help from a parent is acceptable, but it's usually best to think of final drafts as take home tests. Sometimes your teacher needs to know what you're able to do by yourself to help you

identify next steps for improvement. Please respect this need by avoiding asking another person for help. This is the part of the policy we've gotten the most feedback about. Students are telling us they're confused by when they're allowed to get help and when they aren't. To help students and teachers navigate this challenge, teachers can use an Academic Honesty Checklist to help students understand what kinds of assistance they're allowed to seek on an out-of-class assignment.

#### Step Five

Have students return to the anticipation guide and fill out the "Should you?" column. Have a closing discussion with students about why some of their answers on the right might be different from their answers on the left (either because they learned or because they're willfully breaking the honor code) and make sure to direct their attention to the final note. Hopefully, all of these differences are because they've learned something today. Ask students if they have any questions and answer those you feel comfortable handling. If you get a question you're not sure of the answer to, please send it to an IB Coordinator or Assistant Principal for follow-up.

#### Scenario One

While working on his Chemistry homework, Dante realizes he zoned out during a particularly important part of class and can't figure out how to find the molar mass of a chemical compound. Confused, he grabs his phone and calls Emily, who explains how to calculate the molar mass of a compound and walks him through the first couple of problems. Dante thanks Emily and spends the next 20 minutes completing his homework alone. The next day in class, Dante presents his completed homework to Mr. Watkinson, who checks it off as complete. Did Dante or Emily behave dishonestly?

#### Scenario Two

Lindsey has just completed her World History test fourth period and is walking toward the cafeteria when Zack approaches her to ask how the test went. Lindsey responds that it was pretty tough, but if he just makes sure he knows the main differences between Judaism, Islam, and Christianity, he should be fine. Did Lindsey or Zack behave dishonestly?

#### Scenario Three

Deandre has just spent two hours on a Thursday night finishing up the final draft of his English paper for Ms. Shakir. Before submitting the paper to Turnitin.com, he decides to ask his dad to look it over. Deandre's father reads the paper and suggests several changes, including the removal of a couple of commas and a rearrangement of his

conclusion. Deandre makes the changes and submits his paper. Did Deandre violate the honor code?

#### Scenario Four

Calvin's APUSH teacher has given his class an opportunity to complete test correctives in order to be eligible to retake the test next week. On the way home from school Calvin is doing his usual amount of Facebook stalking and notices that someone in his class has created an APUSH group. He joins and sees that people have started posting the test correctives for different questions of the test. When he gets home, he reads through the correctives for the ones he needs to do, summarizes them in his own words, and turns them in the following day. Did Calvin behave dishonestly? Did his classmates?

#### One Final Note

Ignorance is no defense for unethical or immoral behavior. If you're unsure of appropriate behavior on an assignment, you should always ask your teacher for guidance.

Would You....	Yes/No	Should you....	Yes/No
<p><b>1. If someone</b> in your class took a test in advance and talked to you before you took the test, would you ask questions about the test?</p>		<p><b>1. If someone</b> in your class took a test in advance and talked to you before you took the test, would you ask questions about the test?</p>	
<p><b>2. If you</b> ran out of time and hadn't begun your math homework, would you copy a classmate's homework and turn it in?</p>		<p><b>2. If you</b> ran out of time and hadn't begun your math homework, would you copy a classmate's homework and turn it in?</p>	
<p><b>3. If your</b> parent read your paper for your writing intensive class, would you let that parent correct your punctuation?</p>		<p><b>3. If your</b> parent read your paper for your writing intensive class, would you let that parent correct your punctuation?</p>	
<p><b>4. If you</b> had a research paper that you wrote for a sophomore history class that would be suitable for a</p>		<p><b>4. If you</b> had a research paper that you wrote for a sophomore history class that would be suitable for a</p>	

senior year history class, would you recycle it?		senior year history class, would you recycle it?	
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Sources

“From Principles Into Practice.” *International Baccalaureate Organization*, Apr. 2015, [resources.ibo.org/dp/resource/11162-33702?c=295b8f8b&lang=en](https://resources.ibo.org/dp/resource/11162-33702?c=295b8f8b&lang=en).