

Academic Integrity Policy

Purpose

Riverwood International Charter School and Ridgeview Charter Middle School are dedicated to the development of the whole student and believe in fostering academic integrity as a foundation for life-long learning. Academic honesty is a set of values and skills that promote personal integrity and good practice in teaching, learning, and assessment.

As a community of IB learners, it is our desire that each student value and uphold the principles of honesty, trust, responsibility, respect, fairness, and personal honor. Students, faculty, staff and parents strive to make these principles evident in all aspects of their lives.

Definitions of Academic Misconduct

Adhering to high standards of integrity, Riverwood & Ridgeview consider academic misconduct to be any act that can give unfair academic advantage to a student, a student's grades, or a student's academic record. Such acts include academic fraud, plagiarism, offering or using unauthorized assistance or resources in the completion of class-related work, refusal to comply with the school's testing environment expectations, and cheating. Cheating is any dishonesty, written or verbal, tacit or implied and includes collusion, sabotage, falsification, or involvement in giving or receiving unauthorized help.

To make students and parents aware of the school's expectations regarding academic integrity, the following specific acts are considered infractions of academic honesty. Please keep in mind that acts of academic misconduct are not limited to the list below:

Plagiarism

An act or instance of using or closely imitating the language and thoughts of another author without authorization and/or the representation of that author's work as one's own, by not crediting the original author.

Plagiarism equally applies to work other than text (i.e. art, music, etc.). It is important for students to understand how to appropriately use another author's work in their assignments to avoid both intentional and unintentional instances of plagiarism.

Examples:

- Any representation of others' work as your own
- Nonoriginal work that is not cited and appropriately referenced in submissions.
- Copying information from a book or a website.
- Misuse of quotation marks, paraphrasing, and in text citations makes authorship unclear.
- Failure to identify source of elements of nonverbal work (i.e. painting, dance, photo, proof, musical composition, etc.)

- Using online language translators unless explicitly allowed.

Collusion

Supporting misconduct by another student, including allowing one's work to be accessed or copied or submitted for assessment by another student.

Examples:

- Helping someone else cheat both deliberately and through support.
- Allowing your work to be copied and/or submitted by another student.
- Divide and conquer approach where you are not the author of the entire assignment given by the instructor (if not part of assignment).
- Representing significantly unequal work as an equal collaboration.
- Writing a paper or doing homework for another student, both at the time as well as sharing completed work with students who take a course in the future.
- Sharing information about assessment content with other students. This includes any form of communication during testing times including (passing materials, whispering, talking, signaling, or mouthing words to other students).
- Taking a test or assessment for another student.

Collusion is to be contrasted with collaboration. We define collaboration as multiple students actively engaged during the course as well as in the creation of a product per the assignment guidelines. It is important to note that teachers must be clear with assignment guidelines to specify what is collaboration versus collusion on any given task.

Duplication of Work

Submission of work from a previous class in a current class (old essays, old lab reports, old projects, old notebooks, past tests, etc.). All assignments should be created newly for the course or assessment unless discussed with the instructor in advance.

Unfair Practice

This is defined as any action that gains a student an unfair academic advantage.

Examples:

- Falsifying records
- Manufacturing or falsifying data
- Sharing passwords, using unauthorized material
- Altering grades
- Phony citation
- Impersonation

- Misconduct during testing times such as using notes or information from any unauthorized source, including but not limited to information written on desks, person, pieces of paper, water bottles, backpacks, graphing calculators or other devices.
- Refusing to comply with the conditions of the testing environment

It is the understanding of all school personnel that when a student puts his or her name on any assignment, they are submitting it as their own and acknowledging original ownership.

Roles and Responsibility in Supporting Academic Integrity

Teachers, school staff, students, administrators, parents, guardians and outside support are responsible for supporting academic integrity.

Teachers & School Staff

- Communicate appropriate collaboration versus collusion with each assignment.
- Teach a recognized citation convention for written and nonwritten works.
- Demonstrate and model academic honesty in presentations, etc.
- Report and record academic dishonesty through a referral.
- Assure students in your class understand that when they submit a task as their own, they are representing that have not received nor given aid on assignments or assessments. Teachers can opt to ask students to use their signature to explicitly assure this point if needed.
- Minimize temptation for misconduct in assignments/assessment situations.
- Communicate with students, parents, counselors, administrators, with concerns and offenses.
- Teachers, administrators, and counselors involve students in reflection/discussion in the instance of misconduct.

Students

- Confirm understanding of academic honesty by signing the Code of Conduct form (RICS) or Academic Honesty Pledge (RCMS) each year.
- Report violations to a trusted school employee.
- Work to produce authentic work.
- Understand that putting your name on assignment certifies it as your own work.
- Minimize temptation by balancing time appropriately.
- If an incident of misconduct occurs, complete the reflection process with the teacher.
- Understand proper citation expectations for assignments (MLA or APA).
- Ask for guidance when you are unsure.

Administration

- Support academic honesty policy and investigate all reports of misconduct.

- Ensure that all staff, students, and parents understand definitions, responsibilities, and repercussions.
- Ensure the academic honesty policy is applied consistently throughout the school.
- Riverwood maintains an account with Turnitin.com, a plagiarism detection service.
- Investigation of misconduct.
- Make parent and student contact to reflect on incidents.

Parents, guardians, and/or outside support

- Read the policy and sign a pledge to uphold the principles of the policy.
- Encourage your child to cultivate a culture of academic honesty in school.
- Address concerns of academic misconduct with your student and school personnel if necessary.

Teacher Reporting (Ridgeview Charter Middle School)

Within 24 working hours of identifying an instance of academic misconduct, the teacher shall conference with the student to ascertain the validity of the potential violation and to ensure that facts align. If the instance is a likely issue of alleged academic misconduct, the teacher will notify the parent/guardian and the administrator. All violations will be investigated by administration.

Consequences:

A. On major and minor assignments, defined by the teacher, the student may receive a zero on the assignment, may have a chance to resubmit the assignment without penalty, or may have a chance to resubmit the assignment with a penalty, which will also be determined by the teacher.

B. An administrator will document the incident in Infinite Campus as an academic offense on the discipline record.

Appeals

A student who feels wrongly accused of academic misconduct may appeal and must complete and submit a written appeal within five school days. Written appeals must explain, in writing, and provide evidence that the student has been wrongly accused. The school administration will collaboratively evaluate the appeal and determine whether misconduct occurred.

Student Reporting

Students may report academic misconduct to teachers, a counselor, or an administrator and may anonymously report through FCS quick-tip reports. Anonymity and confidentiality cannot be guaranteed but will be protected to the maximum extent possible. All incidents of academic misconduct will be investigated by an administrator. Appeals can be submitted to the principal.

Communication Plan

This academic honesty policy will be published on the school website, discussed with each student at the beginning of the school year, and published in student handbook where appropriate.

FCS Board Policy: <http://www.boarddocs.com/ga/fcss/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=8RSRU76F9FB4>

RCMS Student Handbook: <https://www.fultonschools.org/Page/14462>

This policy is reviewed by the school administration biennially. The next scheduled review is January 2021.

Revised 3.25.20