

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 an IB learning community, it is our desire that each student values and upholds 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 considers academic misconduct to be any act that can give unfair academic advantage to a student, his grades, or his records. 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 Riverwood'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 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/sign Code of Conduct form (Riverwood).
- 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.

THE RIVERWOOD HIGH SCHOOL HONOR CODE

As members of Riverwood High School, we value honesty, integrity, and respect for self, others, and property. We accept responsibility to uphold these values and to preserve our personal honor and the honor of the Riverwood community.

PERSONAL HONOR VERIFICATION

Committing to honorable behavior, every student will affix to all academic work, at the teacher's discretion, the following handwritten verification of honor: "I have neither given nor received any unauthorized aid on this assignment," followed by the student's signature.

TESTING ENVIRONMENT OF RIVERWOOD HIGH SCHOOL

When students take a test or quiz in any classroom at Riverwood High School, they may be instructed to do to one or more of the following:

- Clear everything from the desk and place all materials, notebooks, and books (closed) underneath the desk. No paper on the desk at all. No open books, notebooks, or loose notes under the desks or on the floor around desks, or
- Place all book bags, back packs, and books in the front of the room so that the student sits at the desk with only a pen/pencil/school issued surface. Cell phones must be off and out-of-sight. Use scratch paper that the teacher will provide if needed. Students may not use their own paper. Remain seated, quiet and in the classroom during a test or quiz.

CHRONOLOGY OF A REPORTED VIOLATION OF THE HONOR CODE

- The teacher notifies the student and parent/guardian within two school days of discovery of the Honor Code Violation and the classroom consequence.
- The teacher reports the violation to the Assistant Principal of Instruction via the Honor Code Violation form.
- The assistant principal meets with the student to review the Academic Integrity policy, possible sanctions, and the appeal process. (see section entitled "Sanctions") The student will receive a copy of the Honor Code Violation, the teacher's statement and any other evidence (if applicable).
- The Honor Code Violation is filed in the student's permanent record in the counseling office.

APPEAL

Every student has the right to appeal an Honor code violation. When the student meets with the assistant principal, the student will receive an Appeal Request form, a copy of the policy, a copy of the Honor Code Violation, the teacher's statement and any other evidence (if applicable).

The Appeal Request form must be returned within 5 school days from the date that the student meets with the assistant principal; otherwise, the request for an appeal will be denied. The Honor Council will carefully evaluate the appeal and make its uncontestable ruling. The decision of the Honor Council will be mailed home.

SANCTIONS

- On major assignments, which are defined by the teacher, the student will receive a zero (IB internal assessments receive a mark of "N").
- On minor assignments, which are defined by the teacher as well, a student may receive a zero on the assignment, may have a chance to resubmit the assignment without penalty, or a chance to resubmit the assignment with a penalty, which will also be determined by the teacher.
- The assistant principal will document the Honor Code Violation in Infinite Campus as an academic offense on the discipline record.
- If applicable, a student may be ineligible for school awards/scholarships/leadership positions and/or demoted from positions held in clubs, organizations, including athletics.
- Suspension and/or removal from clubs and activities as outlined in either national or local school constitutional by-laws or guidelines, including athletics
- Members of competitive organizations will receive consequences at the discretion of the Riverwood Athletic Department.

HONOR COUNCIL

The Honor Council is a group comprised of four faculty members and a counselor. The Council carefully evaluates the appeal to determine whether to uphold or overturn the Honor Code Violation. Members of the Council are nominated and elected by the faculty as needed. An alternate will be selected to eliminate any possible conflict of interest.

STUDENT REPORTING

Students may anonymously file an incident of academic dishonesty on the Riverwood Website, <https://www.fultonschools.org/RiverwoodHS> by linking to Academics and then Academic Integrity. The violation report will automatically be emailed to the assistant principal. The student will receive an automated response that reads:

"Thank you for submitting this information. Students play a vital role in upholding the school's high standards. A student's right to privacy regarding academic and discipline matters must be handled with extreme caution and sensitivity; therefore, we cannot discuss the outcome of your report with you directly. Nevertheless, your invaluable honesty will prompt an investigation by the administration and the classroom teacher. Again, thank you for being a leader in our school by reporting this incident."

<https://tinyurl.com/RICStudentReporting>