



## **IB Middle Years Programme Academic Integrity Policy**

Hidden River Middle School takes pride in empowering students to become caring, inquiring, knowledgeable global citizens who honor communities and create a better world. Our academic integrity policy is important to our mission as educators since academic honesty and integrity are closely tied to caring about others and our learning communities. We recognize that middle school, in particular, presents a time of great transition and academic, social, and emotional development of each learner.

We believe it is essential that all educators, regardless of subject, provide guidance for students who are still learning how to effectively collaborate to produce authentic and genuine group work and properly cite sources. We aim to create a supportive learning environment with appropriate scaffolding so that students complete their tasks with integrity from the start. All educators are responsible for explicitly teaching and supporting the development of student research skills (media literacy and information literacy skills).

In teaching, learning, and assessment, academic integrity serves to promote personal integrity and respect for others and the value of their work. Upholding academic integrity also helps to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to demonstrate the knowledge and skills they acquire during their studies.

Academic integrity in the IB is grounded in the IB Learner Profile. As an IB community of learners, we must strive to be *principled*, acting with “integrity, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere.” Accurate assessments of a student’s understanding allow educators to support students with instructional strategies and suggestions for growth, whereas inaccurate evidence of a student’s progress will not allow educators to best support their needs. As defined by the IBO, “Academic integrity is a guiding principle in education and a choice to act in a responsible way whereby others can have trust in us as individuals. It is the foundation for ethical decision-making and behaviour in the production of legitimate, authentic and honest scholarly work” (Academic Integrity 3).

University of Chicago professor Charles Lipson defines these core principles of academic honesty this way:

- When you say you did the work yourself, you actually did it.
- When you rely on others' work, you cite it. When you use their words, you quote them openly and accurately, and you cite them, too.
- When you present research materials, you present them fairly and truthfully. That's true whether the research involves data, documents, pictures, multimedia resources, or the writings of others (Lipson 3).

With the advent of AI, we have also established guidelines for the ethical, secure, and effective use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Generative AI (GenAI) technologies within our learning environment. This applies to all AI use in teaching, learning, administrative and school-related activities by all members of the school community.

### SPPS Values and AI Use

- **Achievement:** AI tools should be used to enhance academic success through challenging and collaborative learning, not to replace it.
- **Communication:** Use AI tools in a way that promotes clear, honest, and accessible communication.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Utilize AI to support learning while maintaining flexibility and a commitment to critical thinking and evaluation.
- **Collaboration:** Engage with AI tools and their outputs in a respectful manner that values input and avoids harm.
- **Accountability:** Students are accountable for using AI tools responsibly and ethically, with integrity and transparency.
- **Inclusive Culture:** AI tools should be used in ways that are inclusive and avoid generating discriminatory, offensive, or harmful content.

In addition, the Hidden River community acknowledges the significant environmental impact of AI use and strain on the electric grid and wants to ensure that, as principled learners, we are committed to using AI with intention and for a worthwhile purpose.

For more information about the Saint Paul Public Schools AI policy, see the district's website (<https://www.spps.org/about/departments/technology-services/staff-resources/artificial-intelligence>).

At present, SPPS district allows high school students access to Gemini AI—middle school students do not have access to it. As an IB World School, we emphasize the importance of the learning process (not simply the end product). It is important for middle school students to develop skills in reading, writing, mathematics, and creative and critical thinking without relying on AI. Middle school students do have some access to AI through apps, such as Canva.

## **The 3 Rules of AI: AI Best Practices for SPPS Students**

1. **Communicate Clearly About Your AI Use** - Always check with your teachers before using AI.
2. **Double-Check Everything** - AI can make mistakes!
3. **Do Your Own Thinking** - If allowed, use AI as a tool to *help* you learn, not to *avoid* learning

## **Definitions of Academic Misconduct**

In order to ensure academic integrity, students must understand how to avoid misconduct so that they do not inadvertently gain an unfair advantage.

### **Coursework:**

- **Plagiarism:** The representation of the ideas or work of another person as the student's own. Students must also understand that the copying of works of art, such as music, film, dance, theater arts, or visual arts can also be considered misconduct.
- **Paraphrasing (without giving credit):** Paraphrasing is when a student uses their own words to communicate another's ideas. Credit must still be given to the person whose ideas the student is using.
- **Collusion:** Supporting misconduct by another student (i.e., in allowing one's work to be copied or submitted for assessment by another). It is acceptable to peer edit and research together, but the end product must be the student's own words.
- **Duplication of work:** Submitting the same work for different classes (e.g., submitting the same essay in 7th and 8th grade ELA).
- **Unfair advantage:** Includes any other behavior that gains an unfair advantage for a student or that affects the results of another student.
- **Malpractice on assessments:** The following list of actions, described in the IBO's "Academic Integrity" publication, also fall under the definition of academic misconduct:
  - Taking unauthorized material into a classroom (e.g., notes, cell phone, etc.).
  - Misconduct during an assessment, including any attempt to disrupt the test or distract another student.
  - Exchanging, supporting, or attempting to support the passing on of information that is related to the assessment, including via social media or the internet.
  - Copying the work of another student.
  - Failing to comply with the instructions of the proctor/test monitor.
  - Impersonating another student.
  - Stealing exam/test papers.
  - Making up data for an assignment.

## Ways to Avoid Misconduct

- **Citations:** Students should always cite information that is beyond what is considered common knowledge. The best rule to follow is, ‘When in doubt, cite your source.’
- **Authentic work:** Students must remember that all work must be authentic—even ideas. If an idea is taken from a website or any other source, it must be properly cited even if the student paraphrases the idea in their own words. Using Google Translate in world language classes does not reflect authentic work.
- **Collaboration:** When a teacher gives students work to be done collaboratively, the names of the collaborators should be recorded and an account of how the work was divided should accompany the assignment, if requested.
- **Student support vs. collusion:** Students are encouraged to create support systems with other students to help each other when learning. However, help can easily become collusion. Collusion is defined as supporting dishonesty by another student, as in allowing one’s own work to be copied or submitted by another for assessment.

## Staff Responsibilities

Staff should take a proactive approach to teaching academic integrity rather than a reactive or punitive approach.

The responsibility of the **administrators** will be to:

- Ensure that academic integrity and age-appropriate citation protocols are taught in 6th, 7th, and 8th grade classes and supported in all classes.
- Participate in the investigation and correction of academic integrity where appropriate.
- Ensure that investigations into academic misconduct are conducted consistently and fairly.

The responsibility of the **IB coordinator** will be to:

- Ensure that all staff have access to the IBO’s publication “Academic integrity” and understand the guidelines and procedures presented there.
- Explain and clarify the expectations of the school’s academic integrity policy to staff.

The responsibility of the **librarian/media specialist** will be to:

- Support instruction in using age-appropriate citation protocols in 6th, 7th and 8th grade classes.
- Assist teachers by co-teaching lessons involving research skills.
- Assist students who request help with research skills.

The responsibility of the **teachers** will be to:

- Emphasize that the purpose of education is learning (i.e., acquiring knowledge and developing skills for the future), not just the attainment of high grades.
- Read and follow the guidelines and procedures established in the IBO’s publication “Academic integrity” and this policy.

- Educate students on what is considered misconduct (e.g., explain reasonable collaboration compared to collusion when giving a group assignment).
- Model the types of behavior that are expected of students with respect to research methods and proper referencing of sources.
- Educate students on how to use citations when working with outside source material.
- Make students aware of the procedures taken by the school when misconduct is suspected and the consequences when misconduct is detected.
- Supply continual support and guidance on academic integrity with the goal of preventing both intentional and unintentional academic misconduct.
- Use methods and tools to discourage misconduct.
- Ensure the use of AI supports and enhances curriculum goals
- Cultivate an AI-ethical culture by engaging in discussions and modeling the transparent use of AI effective practices concerning bias, privacy, transparency, and the impact of AI on learning
- Maintain open lines of communication and engage in dialogue with families, students, and staff about the role of AI in education

### **Family Responsibilities**

As students practice academic honesty, families should be aware of this policy and provide support, as able, for the academic growth of their student. Families may consider reinforcing the policy by encouraging students to:

- plan assignments
- schedule time for completion of assignments
- use good research and planning techniques
- ask teachers for advice
- understand the school's AI guidelines and policies

Families might also engage in discussions with their children about responsible AI use and its implications. Family resources suggested by SPPS include:

- [Parents Ultimate Guide to Generative AI](#)
- [Videos and Tips for Families | Common Sense Media](#)
- [AI Literacy Guide for Teens](#)

### **Student Responsibilities**

The responsibility of **students** will be to:

- understand the school's academic integrity policy.
- avoid all forms of misconduct and make sure that all work is authentic.
- learn and use citation procedures as taught by their teachers.
- seek advice from teachers or librarians if they have questions about citing sources accurately.
- inform staff when they are aware that other students have engaged in misconduct.
- support peers and collaborate as directed by teachers but do not engage in collusion

- complete all assignments/assessments in an honest manner and to the best of their abilities.
- abstain from receiving non-permitted assistance in the completion or editing of work, such as from friends, relatives, other students, private tutors, essay writing or copy-editing services, pre-written essay banks, or file sharing websites.
- demonstrate responsible use of the internet and associated social media platforms.
- comply with AI tool terms and conditions, including respecting privacy and using tools for educational purposes.
- recognize biases and inaccuracies in AI algorithms and critically analyze AI-generated information.
- use AI on assignments only as authorized by teachers, who will designate acceptable levels of AI usage.

### **Student Rights**

The rights of **students** include:

- being educated about academic integrity in classes and provided with examples of citations.
- receiving the right to fair and equal treatment in all areas of academic concern.
- having a fair and unbiased evaluation of academic assessments based on clearly stated criteria.
- appealing any accusation of misconduct.

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

These questions address some common concerns regarding academic integrity.

Q: What is cheating?

A: Cheating includes, but is not limited to, copying answers, inappropriately consulting with another person regarding test content, or taking any other action which unfairly helps oneself or another person.

Q: What is plagiarism?

A: Plagiarism is an idea or work that is not common knowledge and is submitted as the student's own work, without giving due credit to the original source. This act can be intentional or unintentional. Work is defined as, but not limited to: a quote, phrase, complex idea, research, table, chart, graphic, text, internet resource, paper, or thesis. Paraphrasing of any of the above without proper citation is also plagiarism.

Q: I did not realize that I was not acknowledging my sources in my work. Does this count as academic dishonesty even though I did not do it on purpose?

A: Yes. As per the International Baccalaureate, students must understand that passing off the work of another person as their own is not acceptable, whether the act was intentional or unintentional.

Q: Am I allowed to submit the same assignment for two different assessments?

A: No. Even though the work is yours, the IBO views this as a duplication of work. Your goal as a student is to continue to grow rather than missing the opportunity to engage in new learning.

Q: If I have questions about citations, who can I ask?

A: All of your teachers or the school librarian have the knowledge that you need to cite successfully. Remember, books and webpages are not the only material that must be cited.

Q: What about paraphrasing?

A: Paraphrasing is not just rearranging the words or changing a few words of someone else's text. Paraphrasing is expressing the ideas contained in the text in your own words. If you are confused about how to paraphrase, talk to a teacher or librarian for help.

Q: What's the difference between collaboration and collusion?

A: The International Baccalaureate defines collaboration as working together on a common aim with shared information; it is cooperative behavior that does not result in allowing one's work to be copied by another.

### **Consequences for Academic Misconduct**

When an educator suspects that misconduct has occurred, the following procedure will be used.

If this is the first time that a student has engaged in misconduct in the class:

- The teacher will have a restorative conversation with the student.
- The teacher will use the situation as a teachable moment to help the student understand the type of academic misconduct that occurred and how to prevent it from happening again.
- The teacher will explain the expectations for redoing the work with evidence of learning.
- Families may also be contacted to inform and discuss the situation.

If the student has already engaged in academic misconduct previously:

- The teacher will investigate the incident and report the incident to the appropriate counselor, intervention specialist, and/or administrator for documentation.
- If the teacher and administration agree that misconduct has occurred, then staff will communicate with the family to discuss.
- Consequences range from the student earning a zero on the work to being required to redo the work with evidence of learning.

As students progress from 6th to 8th grade at Hidden River, we expect that they will have a better understanding of academic integrity; more leniency in assigning consequences will be

extended to 6th graders who may be new to the middle school expectations of academic integrity. By the time students are in 8th grade, we are preparing them for the more stringent expectations of high school, so it is important that they understand the severity of academic misconduct.

Students will also have the opportunity to present a written statement where they can document their version of events.

**Policy Revision:**

Please see our [policy revision plan](#) for details on the process we will use to revise our policies.

This policy is published on our school website, [hiddenriver.spps.org/academics/ib-myp](https://hiddenriver.spps.org/academics/ib-myp)

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