

Sequoia Middle School Academic Integrity Policy

Introduction

In alignment with the mission of the school and the requirements of the International Baccalaureate Organization (IB), this policy has been developed to promote academic honesty as a core principle. As highlighted in the IB Learner Profile, students are principled, act with integrity and honesty, upholding fairness and justice while respecting the dignity and rights of others. They take responsibility for their actions and consequences. Students are reflective, consider their learning and experiences to assess their strengths and limitations, supporting their personal development.

Academic Integrity Philosophy and Practice

The Conejo Valley Unified School District believes that academic honesty requires adherence to ethical principles. Administrators, faculty, students, and parents are engaged in a partnership to uphold the values of integrity, personal accountability, and respect for the rights of others.

Purpose

The aim of this policy is to:

- Educate the school community on the importance and benefits of academic integrity.
- Promote and ensure good academic practice and a school culture that actively encourages academic integrity.
- Ensure all work produced by students is their own authentic work and that ideas and words of others are fully acknowledged and properly cited.
- Outline the roles of everyone in the school community in ensuring academic integrity.
- Encourage students to seek support from teachers, supervisors, and IB Coordinators to prevent malpractice.
- Outline the consequences of academic dishonesty.

CVUSD Board Policy (BP 5131.9)

The Governing Board believes that academic honesty and personal integrity are fundamental components of a student's education and character development. The Board expects that students will not cheat, lie, plagiarize or commit other acts of academic dishonesty. All students and parents must read and sign the CVUSD Acceptable Student Use Policy (AUP) for use of computer networks, including the internet. The policy states that if a student violates the AUP that potential consequences include loss of computer privileges and/or school disciplinary action as stated in the CVUSD Rights and Responsibilities/Discipline Handbook, school and classroom rules, and/or prosecution under the state and federal law.

Definition of Academic Integrity

The International Baccalaureate (IB) defines academic integrity as a set of values and skills that promote personal integrity and good practice in teaching, learning, and assessment. It is influenced and shaped by many factors, including peer pressure, culture, parental expectations, role modeling, and taught skills ("From principles into practice." IBO.org).

Students should understand the importance of:

- Proper conduct in completing assignments and examinations.
- Giving full acknowledgment of the original authorship and ownership of creative material.
- Producing authentic work, including text, data, art, and music.
- Protecting intellectual property, including creative expressions, patents, registered designs, trademarks, moral rights, and copyright.

Academic dishonesty is a deliberate attempt to disrupt the learning process by misrepresenting another's work as one's own. Dishonesty can occur within traditional paper/pencil activities and through the use of technology such as copying materials, or allowing another student to copy, or submitting a paper or project which is not one's own work.

Examples of academic misconduct include:

- Cheating during tests or using unauthorized materials.
- Copying assignments, plagiarizing, or submitting falsified information.
- Plagiarism: Copying text without acknowledgment, passing an author's work off as your own.
- Collusion: Allowing another student to copy your work.
- Duplication: Submitting the same essay for multiple assignments.
- Infringement: Using copyrighted material without permission.
- Obtaining prior knowledge of test content or removing exam materials.

Definitions in Alphabetical Order

Academic Integrity in Practice: All community members have a role in implementing our Academic Integrity policy's objectives.

Artificial Intelligence: A tool that uses previously gathered information to curate and/or create content.

Collusion vs. Collaboration:

- Collusion occurs when a student uses another's work without proper acknowledgment.
- Collaboration involves working together on shared goals with transparency.

Duplication of Work: Submitting the same work for different assignments or assessments without permission.

Misconduct During Exams: Includes using unauthorized materials, impersonating another student, and disrupting the exam or distracting other students. Other forms of malpractice include fabricating data, stealing assessment materials, and sharing exam content prematurely with other students.

Plagiarism: Failing to acknowledge sources or presenting another's work as one's own.

Students should:

- Use quotation marks or other conventions for direct quotes and provide accurate citations. See examples at the end of this document.
- Acknowledge all sources, including AI tools, visuals, and multimedia.

Students will:

- completely and correctly acknowledge the work and ideas of others;
- follow the guidelines of artificial intelligence use in accordance with schoolwide policy;
- only use AI as a research assistant not as a substitute for critical thinking and/or original work.
- review their own work before submission and identify any passages, computer programs, data, photographs, etc., and acknowledge accordingly;
- ensure that all work submitted for assessment is authentically their own;
- prove that all pieces of work are original and have not been plagiarized if academic dishonesty is suspected;
- be aware of the consequences of academic dishonesty.
- realize that the final value of an education is what is learned, that there is real value in integrity, and that the grades received should be the result of honest effort.

Teachers will:

- teach and discuss what academic integrity is within their classroom;
- provide instruction on appropriate use of artificial intelligence in the classroom;
- provide examples and discuss the expectations and assessment guidelines with all students for each piece of work;
- teach proper citation and research practices;
- be vigilant for obvious changes in a student's style of writing and language;
- provide extra assistance to students to prevent infractions of academic honesty;
- ensure use of the drafting process to check authenticity and individuality of submitted work;
- use academic honesty software such as Turnitin or CopyLeaks to check major assignments.

School leaders will:

- ensure that all teachers and staff members are provided with and understand the academic integrity policy and the corresponding information;
- ensure that the academic integrity policy and disciplinary actions due to infractions are in line with the pedagogy and beliefs of the International Baccalaureate Organization;
- assist teachers and staff members with how to properly educate students about academic integrity;
- assist teachers to investigate infractions and decide on an action;
- educate parents and guardians about Sequoia Middle School's academic integrity policy;
- provide professional development opportunities for technologies related to academic integrity;
- update the academic honesty policy to reflect the most current educational research and philosophies;
- be cognizant that academic dishonesty can be controlled, that guidelines can be implemented, and that grades mean little when dishonesty is accepted and learning is thereby devalued.

Parents or guardians will:

- read, understand, and support Sequoia's Academic Integrity Policy;
- read, understand, and support CVUSD's Acceptable Use Policy (AUP);

- have a general understanding of the expectations and assessment guidelines for their child's assignments;
- support the child's understanding of academic integrity and work to ensure it is maintained in all pieces of work;
- support the school's decision and action plan if an infraction has been made;
- emphasize that the most important measure of an education is what is learned and that the grades a student receives should reflect actual learning.

Parents, teachers, and students need to understand that allowing others to be dishonest without doing something about it is the same as endorsing it and that doing work for or giving answers to others is a form of dishonesty.

School's Response to Malpractice

In accordance with the CVUSD Board Policy and Administrative Regulation 5131.9 for Academic Honesty, the following steps will be followed by all Sequoia Staff:

A. First Infraction

1. The student will receive a grade of Fail for the work in question.
2. The teacher will conference with the student and notify the parent.
3. A referral will be sent to the assistant principal and counselor.

B. Second Infraction in the Same or Any Other Class

1. The student will receive a grade of Fail for the work in question.
2. There will be a conference involving the parent, teacher, student, and an administrator.
3. The student's citizenship grade in that class will be lowered to Unsatisfactory for the grading period.
4. The student will be referred to the Student Study Team (SST) for review and recommendation, including examination of current level placement.

Works Cited

International Baccalaureate Organization. "From principles into practice." October 2023. www.ibo.org.

Accessed 14 February 2025.

Appendix

CVUSD Acceptable Use Policy

CVUSD Board Policies

MLA Formatting Guideline

Embedding Quotations into Your Writing

MLA Referencing Conventions

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