



Vista Charter Public Schools Academic Honesty Policy

The School Board of Vista Charter Public Schools (“Charter School”) believes that academic honesty and personal integrity are fundamental components of a student’s education and character development. The Charter School will equip students with the skills to not cheat, lie, plagiarize, claim products generated by Artificial Intelligence as their own, or commit other acts of academic dishonesty. Students are expected to be the sole authors of their work and to exhibit honest behavior and academic integrity. Use of another person’s work must be accompanied by specific citations and references. The purpose of this policy is to create and maintain ethics and integrity in all academic endeavors and to provide our students with an understanding of what is and is not acceptable.

Definitions

- **“Plagiarism”:**
 - The unauthorized use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one’s own original work.
 - To claim products generated by Artificial Intelligence as your own
- **“Artificial Intelligence”:** Artificial Intelligence (“AI”) is a computer, robot, or other programmed mechanical device having the humanlike capacity to perform operations and tasks analogous to learning and decision making in humans, or question answering. Examples of AI include the following:
 - **“Chatbot”:** a computer program in the form of a virtual e-mail correspondent that can reply to messages from computer users.
 - **“ChatGPT”:** ChatGPT is a generative AI chatbot. It is a natural language processing tool driven by AI technology that allows human-like conversations and much more with a chatbot. The language model can answer questions and assist with tasks, such as composing emails, essays, music, images, and code.

Students, parents/guardians, staff and administrators shall be responsible for creating and maintaining a positive school climate that encourages honesty. Students found to have committed an act of academic dishonesty shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Examples of Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty

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- Cheating on Tests - Any intentional giving of or use of external assistance relating to an examination, test, or quiz without express permission of the teacher. This includes looking at another student's paper, sharing answers, or copying another student's paper and turning it in as their own work, or generating answers with a chatbot.
- Copying another student's computer file and submitting the work as your own.
- Fabrication - Any intentional falsification or invention of data citation, or other authority in an academic exercise.
- Disclosing information to another student, including an examination's contents.
- Using teacher manuals or answer keys.
- Buying an essay, paper, or written work online.
- Unauthorized Collaboration - While collaboration is often encouraged, unauthorized collaboration is not permitted.
- Any intentional representation of another's ideas, words, or works as one's own. Using more of a source than is acknowledged in the citation. Plagiarism includes the misuse of published materials, electronic material, and/or the work of other students. The original writer who intentionally shares their paper to copy, without permission from the teacher, is also engaged in plagiarism.
- Alteration of Materials - Any intentional and unauthorized alteration of student, teacher, or library materials.
- Forgery - Any unauthorized signing of another person's name to a school-related document.
- Transfer of Unauthorized Materials- Any giving or selling of unauthorized materials.
- Using tools to generate text, art, code, or music, that students then represent as having been generated independently.

Regardless of the student's intent, the above acts constitute plagiarism and/or academic dishonesty. In essence, plagiarism is the theft of someone or something else's ideas and/or work. Whether a student copies verbatim or simply rephrases the ideas of another person, or does so through AI, without properly acknowledging the source, it is still plagiarism. In the preparation of work submitted to meet assignment requirements, whether a draft or a final version of a paper or project (art, music, code, etc.), students must take great care to distinguish their own ideas, language, and work products from information derived or created from other sources. Sources include published primary and secondary materials, electronic media, information, and opinions gathered directly from other people, and products generated by AI.

Students are expected to adhere to specific guidelines and/or instructions provided by their teachers. All citations must be in either APA or MLA format as instructed by the teacher. Students are solely responsible for their own work. Accordingly, students are expected to ask for assistance or clarification on any issue where there may be questions or uncertainty. Students are prohibited from using AI to

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generate work products submitted for credit unless the teacher approves the use of AI tools for the assignment or project. In such cases, teachers shall clarify parameters for the appropriate use of AI.

Examples of Using AI, Chatbots, ChatGPT, etc. that are Permissible

1. Students may use AI to gain clarification on a topic they do not understand.
2. Use AI to inspire new ideas or new ways of thinking
3. Look up facts and verify the information with primary sources
4. Use it as a debate tool
5. Use it as an after-hours tutor
6. Generate a product from an AI generative tool and critically analyze the product for its effectiveness, aesthetic, or functionality.
7. [INSERT ADDITIONAL IDEAS THAT EMBRACES THE TECHNOLOGY AND BENEFITS THE STUDENTS]

Consequences for Academic Dishonesty (Consequences per incident, not class specific):

First offense – Staff will address this dishonesty and make contact with the family. No credit for the affected test or assignment. The assignment will be re-assigned. If the student fails to resubmit the assignment, the student will receive no credit. Staff will document the first offense.

Second offense - Student, parent/guardian, and school administrator or designee meeting, in accordance with the school's Positive Behavior Intervention & Support (PBIS) system. No credit given for the affected test or assignment. Staff will document the offense and file it in the student's cumulative file.

Third offense - The student will receive no credit on the assignment. A meeting with the student, the student's parent/guardian, the teacher of record, and the administration will be held. Staff will document the incident and file it in the student's cumulative file. The student may also be placed on an academic integrity agreement. The student may also be subject to discipline in accordance with Charter School policies, such as being excluded from: any extracurricular activities, including fieldtrips, sports, camps, etc.

Students with Individualized Education Program or Section 504 Plans

If the student has an Individualized Education Program ("IEP") or Section 504 plan, the teacher of record will contact the Charter School's Director of Special Education or the 504 Coordinator and comply with all provisions of applicable law in addressing any student conduct concerns, including plagiarism and academic dishonesty.

Appeal Procedure

The following procedure is established to ensure that a student may appeal: 1) a reduction in grade; 2) a

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reduction in a course's grade; and 3) failing a course due to plagiarism or academic dishonesty.

The student and parent/guardian will submit their appeal in writing to the Superintendent and include why they believe the finding and consequence are not accurate/appropriate. The Superintendent will investigate and respond with a written determination within ten (10) school days, or as soon as practicable. The decision of the Superintendent is final.