Westlake Middle School:
Academic Honesty Policy

> **Disclaimer: This WMS Academic Honesty policy does not supercede any Mount Pleasant Board of Education Policy (see #8350) that may either directly or indirectly connect to these contents.**

Westlake Middle School's (WMS) Academic Honesty Policy is discussed and communicated to students and parents to ensure full understanding of academic honesty expectations during each school year. Effective during the school year 2017-18, an abbreviated version of the Academic Honesty Policy is published in the Student Handbook. The full version of the policy is available on the school's website: http://wms.mtplcsd.org. Academic honesty has also been integrated into the Mount Pleasant Central School District's Code of Conduct and these policies complement the WMS Academic Honesty Policy.

Heads of School (Principal & Assistant Principal)
The heads of school ensure that the WMS Academic Honesty Policy is clearly communicated to students through publication in the Student Handbook and is communicated to parents through information at Back to School Night and on the school's website: http://wms.mtplcsd.org.

Parents
WMS parents are informed of the Academic Honesty Policy through publication in the Student Handbook and at Back to School Night. The full policy is also available on the school website: http://wms.mtplcsd.org. Parents are encouraged to understand the role of the policy in their child's academic growth and development.

Teachers
Teachers at WMS communicate and promote, in age appropriate language, the school's Academic Honesty Policy. Students at all grade levels are supported in their growing understanding of recognized reporting and citing conventions, and the development of research skills. Becoming a principled, reflective thinker about all aspects of academic honesty is encouraged. Teachers clearly explain why academic honesty is important in developing original ideas and in respecting intellectual property rights of others in all published forms. The differences between academic honesty and academic misconduct are clarified for students.

The library media specialist partners with classroom teachers to provide lessons on digital citizenship that include proper use of all digital sources in academic work. These lessons, from *Common Sense Education's K-12 Digital Citizenship Curriculum*, were developed to educate and guide students to harness the power of the Internet and digital tools in order to become safe, responsible and respectful digital citizens.

Students
Students at WMS are expected to act with honesty and integrity at all times. It is recognized that learning the complexities of proper citation and research skills and being a good digital citizen is learned over time. WMS provides students with all the support necessary to engage in learning opportunities that promote their understanding of academic honesty conventions adopted by the school and generally accepted in the academic world.

All WMS students, with the guidance of their parents and teachers, will hold themselves to the highest standards of honesty and integrity in order to become principled, critical thinkers throughout their lives. Students will be confident and proud that all of the academic work that they create is an original product of their best efforts. If a student is suspected of academic dishonesty (all forms of cheating, including plagiarism, collusion and duplication of work), the Code of Conduct will be enforced consistently and fairly.

Code of Conduct
The Mount Pleasant Central School District's Code of Conduct has a section on academic honesty under *Prohibited Student Conduct*. This prohibited conduct is described as plagiarism, cheating, copying, altering records or assisting another student in any of these actions. Any student who violates the Code of Conduct in direct reference to academic honesty will be subject to one or more of the disciplinary procedures outlined under *Disciplinary Procedures*.

Important Definitions:
    Plagiarism
    Using someone else's words, media or ideas (intellectual property) and calling them your own is plagiarism. Examples of plagiarism include:
- Copying someone else's words or phrases without quotation marks and accurate references or footnotes.
- Using someone else's media and ideas without accurate references or footnotes.
- Minor rearrangement of words or phrases, manipulation of media and modification of ideas when they are essentially the same and submitting them as your own.
- Directly copying pictures through any means and/or pasting them from the Internet and calling them your own or not giving proper citation of source.

    Collusion
    Allowing others to copy or use your work and submit it as their own without approval from the teacher is collusion. If the teacher permits collaboration (the open-minded exchanging of ideas), all students must make meaningful contributions if the work is submitted as a group. Examples of collusion include:
- If a student works with another student and they write down the same answers.
- If a student allows other students to copy answers on an assignment or an assessment.

Duplication of Work
Creating work for one assessment and resubmitting it for another assessment is duplication of work. An example of duplication of work includes:
- Writing an essay for one class, and then later submitting the same essay for another class.

Approaches to Learning (ATL) Skills
The principled and caring learner should:
- Paraphrase accurately and concisely
- Use a variety of organizers for academic writing tasks
- Understand the definition of intellectual property
- Create references and citations, use footnotes and endnotes and construct a bibliography according to recognized conventions
- Take responsibility for one's own actions
- Make fair and equitable decisions
- Keep an organized and local system of information files or notes
- Use appropriate strategies for organizing complex information
- Select and use technology effectively and productively
- Consider ethical, cultural and environmental implications

Support
Students should ask their teachers and/or the school library media specialist for guidance and support in implementing the WMS Academic Honesty Policy.

Academic Honesty Policy Summary
All WMS students, with the guidance of their parents and teachers, will hold themselves to the highest standards of honesty and integrity in order to become principled, critical thinkers in all aspects of their lives. Students will be confident that all academic work they create is an original product that represents their current level of knowledge and skill, with appropriate citation. If a student is suspected of academic misconduct (all forms of cheating including plagiarism, collusion, and duplication of work), the WMS Code of Conduct will be upheld consistently and fairly. For additional information see the WMS IB Middle Years page.

History of Policy Development
In 2014-15, committees formed at WMS to develop the IB policies. The committees consisted of administration, teachers and parents, who met to establish the outline of the policies. During 2016-17, the policies were further refined by the IB Consultant, IB Coordinator, IB Steering Committee, by the teachers at a full faculty meeting and lastly, by administration. The policies are annually reviewed and updated by the IB Steering Committee.