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Revision Date:

Alder Grove Charter School Academic Integrity Policy

Alder Grove Charter School (AGCS) believes in the importance of academic integrity as a cornerstone of learning and personal development. Students are expected to submit original work for all assignments and to engage honestly in all academic endeavors. This policy establishes guidelines for ethical academic conduct, including the responsible use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools, and outlines consequences for violations.

This policy applies to all students in grades 5-12.

Acknowledgment

All students in grades 5-12 and their parents/guardians are required to review this Academic Integrity Policy and sign an acknowledgment form at the beginning of each school year. Course teachers may require additional acknowledgments for course-specific guidelines.

Policy Statement

AGCS maintains high standards of academic integrity to ensure that student work reflects genuine learning, critical thinking, and personal growth. Students are expected to:

- Submit original work for all assignments
- Properly cite and attribute sources when using the ideas or work of others
- Use AI and other technological tools responsibly and ethically
- Understand and follow course-specific guidelines regarding academic integrity
- Take responsibility for their own learning and academic choices

Definitions

Academic Integrity: The commitment to honest and ethical academic practices, including producing original work, properly citing sources, and following established academic guidelines.

Plagiarism: Directly copying the work or ideas of another student or from a printed or electronic source without proper attribution. This includes:

- Copying text, ideas, or creative work from any source without citation
- Paraphrasing or summarizing someone else's work without acknowledgment
- Using AI-generated content without proper citation or to a degree that is prohibited
- Submitting work created by someone else as your own

Artificial Intelligence (AI): Technology that uses machine learning to generate original content such as text, images, audio, or other materials. Examples include ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, Grammarly, and similar tools.

Original Work: Work created by the student that reflects their own thinking, research, analysis, and effort.

Avoiding Plagiarism

Students can avoid plagiarism by properly attributing sources using these methods:

Quote: Using quotation marks to include a piece of text exactly as written, followed by proper citation.

Example: Paragraph three of the text explains, "the cowbird, as well as other species of birds, lays its eggs in another bird's nest and thus avoids hatching and raising its own young" (Smith 5).

Paraphrase: Rephrasing the original text in your own words, followed by proper citation.

Example: Certain birds, including the cowbird, do not hatch and raise their own offspring but rather pass on these responsibilities by laying their eggs in other birds' nests (Smith 5).

Summary: Pulling out important information to put in your own words.

Example: Cowbirds do not hatch or raise their own young.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Guidelines

Guiding Principles

AI should be employed to support and enrich the learning experience while maintaining academic integrity. AGCS upholds the following principles for AI use:

1. **Academic Integrity:** AI should be used to support learning and not to undermine the integrity of student work.
2. **Transparency:** Students must be transparent about their use of AI tools and cite AI usage appropriately.
3. **Accountability:** Students are responsible for their actions when utilizing AI tools and must acknowledge the potential consequences.
4. **Teacher Authority:** Teachers reserve the right to set course-specific expectations and limitations regarding AI use. When in doubt, students should refer to the course syllabus and/or assignment instructions.

Support and Education

While this policy applies to all students in grades 5-12, AGCS commits to educating all students about academic integrity and the responsible use of AI. AGCS teachers will educate students about the responsible use of AI, including:

- Clarifying appropriate and inappropriate uses of AI tools within the context of student work
- Discussing the ethical use of AI, including potential biases and limitations
- Providing clear guidelines on what AI tools are approved by AGCS and when and how AI can be used for specific assignments
- Encouraging critical thinking and verification of accuracy for any AI-generated information
- Teaching about data privacy and the importance of not sharing personal information with AI systems
- Instructing students how to properly cite AI-generated content, as appropriate

Data Privacy and Safety

Students are reminded to:

- Never share anyone's personal information (full name, address, phone number, etc.) with AI tools
- Be cautious about uploading school materials or assignments to AI platforms
- Understand that content submitted to AI tools may be stored and used by the AI company
- Report any concerns about data privacy or AI safety to teachers or administration

Course-Specific Guidelines

Teachers must include clear AI usage guidelines in their course syllabi and assignment instructions. These guidelines should specify:

- Whether AI tools are permitted for the assignment
- What AI tools are permitted (AGCS will provide updated lists at least annually)
- If permitted, how AI may be used (e.g., brainstorming, editing, research assistance)
- Citation requirements for AI usage
- Any restrictions or limitations on AI use

Students are responsible for understanding and following these course-specific guidelines.

Permitted AI Use

AI tools may be used for educational purposes when explicitly permitted by the teacher, such as:

- Brainstorming ideas or generating topic suggestions
- Checking grammar and spelling
- Getting feedback on first drafts of original work
- Research assistance and finding sources
- Learning and understanding concepts
- Practice and skill development

Please refer to the AI Responsible Use Rubric provided by AGCS.

When AI is used, students must:

- Cite the use of AI in their work (see citation examples below)
- Verify the accuracy of AI-generated information with reliable sources
- Critically evaluate AI output for potential biases or limitations
- Ensure that the final work reflects their own understanding and effort

Prohibited AI Use

The following uses of AI are never permitted:

1. Using AI to complete assignments or assessments to a degree where it is not allowed
2. Submitting AI-generated work as one's own without proper citation
3. Using AI to plagiarize or misrepresent the source of ideas or content
4. Using AI to impersonate individuals or organizations
5. Using AI to generate content that is unlawful, harmful, offensive, or against AGCS policies
6. Submitting or publishing school materials (past papers, textbooks, worksheets, curriculum materials) to AI tools
7. Using AI as a substitute for genuine student effort or original thinking

Citing AI Usage

Students must cite AI usage appropriately. Examples of proper AI citation:

In-Text Reference: *When asked to describe the symbolism of the green light in The Great Gatsby, ChatGPT provided a summary about optimism, the unattainability of the American dream, greed, and covetousness. However, when further prompted to cite the source on which that summary was based, it noted that it lacked "the ability to conduct research or cite sources independently" but that it could "provide a list of scholarly sources related to the symbolism of the green light in The Great Gatsby" ("In 200 words").*

Works Cited Entry: *"In 200 words, describe the symbolism of the green light in The Great Gatsby" follow-up prompt to list sources. ChatGPT, 13 Feb. version, OpenAI, 9 Mar. 2023, chat.openai.com/chat.*

Academic Integrity Intervention Process

When a student violates the Academic Integrity Policy, AGCS will follow a progressive intervention process:

First Offense

1. Course teacher contacts student's Certificated Teacher (CT), if applicable
2. Student receives a score of 0 on the assignment
3. Student is notified of the violation and discusses the incident with CT and parent/guardian(s)
4. Student is given an opportunity to redo the assignment following proper academic integrity guidelines
5. CT notifies the Principal, who will document the incident

Second Offense

1. Course teacher contacts student's Certificated Teacher (CT), if applicable
2. Student receives a score of 0 on the assignment
3. Student is notified of the violation and discusses the incident with CT and parent/guardian(s)
4. Student is **not** given an opportunity to redo the assignment
5. An Attendance and Academic Intervention meeting (AAIM) is requested and scheduled with the Principal or designee to support the student in understanding and practicing academic integrity

Third Offense

1. Course teacher contacts student's Certificated Teacher (CT), if applicable
2. Student receives a score of 0 on the assignment
3. An Attendance and Academic Intervention meeting (AAIM) is requested and scheduled with the Principal or designee
4. Student and family are warned that further violations may result in loss of course credit, if applicable, and may be subject to additional disciplinary action

Fourth Offense

1. Course teacher contacts student's Certificated Teacher (CT), if applicable
2. Student receives a score of 0 on the assignment
3. An Attendance and Academic Intervention meeting (AAIM) is requested and scheduled with the Principal or designee
4. Student may be required to retake the course to receive credit
5. Student may be subject to additional disciplinary action, up to and including involuntary withdrawal from AGCS, in accordance with due process provisions outlined in the AGCS charter petition

Appeal Process

Students who believe they have been incorrectly accused of an academic integrity violation have the right to appeal. The appeal process is as follows:

1. **Submit Written Appeal:** Within five (5) school days of being notified of the violation, the student (or parent/guardian on behalf of the student) must submit a written appeal to the Superintendent.
2. **Supporting Documentation:** The appeal must include a clear explanation of why the student believes the accusation is incorrect and any supporting documentation or evidence.
3. **Review:** The Superintendent or designee will review the appeal, consult with relevant staff, and examine all evidence within ten (10) school days of receiving the appeal.
4. **Decision:** The Superintendent or designee will issue a written decision to the student and parent(s). If the appeal is granted, the violation will be removed from the student's record and the grade will be restored. If the appeal is denied, the original consequence will stand.
5. **Final Appeal:** If the student/family disagrees with the Superintendent's decision, they may appeal to the Governance Council within five (5) school days. The Governance Council's decision is final.

Policy Review and Updates

This policy will be reviewed and updated as needed to reflect changes in technology, educational best practices, and legal requirements. Students and families will be notified of any policy changes.