

NORTH PENN SCHOOL DISTRICT

Administrative Regulations

6160(a)

INSTRUCTION

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of using another person's ideas or expressions in your writing without acknowledging the source. (MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. Third Edition.)

Guidelines

In the North Penn School District (NPSD), students and their parents/guardians, teachers, staff, and administrators honor the intellectual property of others and educate students to engage in fair use of original ideas by citing sources of works completed by others.

To implement this philosophy throughout the district, a consistent set of procedures and consequences has been established for the elementary, middle, and high school levels. In addition, a plan to provide consistent instruction about plagiarism, staff development, and communication about plagiarism to parents/guardians has been developed and is included in this regulation.

Rules and Procedures

When plagiarism takes place in an academic setting, it is most often handled by the individual teacher and administrator involved. The following procedures and consequences have been established for handling issues related to plagiarism at the elementary, middle, and high school levels:

Elementary

At the North Penn Elementary Schools the following process will be followed when a teacher suspects a student of plagiarism:

- 1) The teacher meets with the librarian and discusses the specifics of the concern.
- 2) The teacher meets with the student and explains why he/she believes the work is plagiarized. This meeting may include discussion of content, reteaching, rewriting, and/or modeling.
- 3) Following the meeting with the student, if the issue of plagiarism is not yet resolved, the teacher will:
 - a) Call home and contact the parents/guardians regarding the suspected plagiarism.
 - b) Notify the principal.
- 4) The principal meets separately with the teacher and the student to hear their respective accounts. Parents/guardians are invited to attend the student meeting.
- 5) The principal makes a decision and informs the parents/guardians, student, and teacher of the decision.

CONTINUED

If the parents/guardians or teacher chooses to appeal the principal's decision, he/she should contact the assistant superintendent.

The consequences for plagiarism are as follows:

- 1st incident – student rewrites the assignment for a reduced score/grade.
- 2nd incident within a school year – zero for assignment.

Middle School

At the North Penn Middle Schools, the following process will be followed when a teacher suspects a student of plagiarism:

- 1) The teacher meets with the department chair and/or librarian and discusses the specifics of the concern. If they concur that the concern warrants further investigation as an incident of plagiarism, the department chair and the teacher meet with an assistant principal to discuss the specifics of the incident.
- 2) If all three parties concur the teacher will:
 - a) Inform the student that the student is suspected of having plagiarized and that a behavior referral report will be completed.
 - b) Inform the student's parents/guardians about the incident.
- 3) If the student acknowledges that he/she has plagiarized, the assistant principal will assign a consequence as outlined below.
- 4) If the situation remains unresolved, the assistant principal will meet with the student, at which time the student will present his/her account of the incident. Parents/guardians are invited to attend this meeting.
- 5) After considering both accounts of the incident, the assistant principal will make a decision and inform the student, the parents/guardians, and the teacher of this decision.
- 6) If the assistant principal's decision is challenged by the parents/guardians or the teacher, the incident is referred to the principal for a final decision.

If the parents/guardians or teacher chooses to appeal the principal's decision, he/she should contact the assistant superintendent.

The consequences for plagiarism are as follows:

- 1st incident: student rewrites the assignment with a deduction of 25% of the assignment's total value or receives a zero for the assignment.
- 2nd incident: zero for the assignment.
- All subsequent incidents: zero for the assignment and possible suspension.

It is important for students and parents/guardians to recognize that due to the weight of some assignments, receiving a zero on an assignment could result in a grade of "F" for the marking period.

High School

At North Penn High School, the following process is followed when a teacher suspects a student of plagiarism:

CONTINUED

- 1) The teacher meets with the department chair and/or librarian and discusses the specifics of the concern. If they concur that the concern warrants further investigation as an incident of plagiarism, the department chair and the teacher meet with an assistant principal to discuss the specifics of the incident.
- 2) If all three parties concur the teacher will:
 - a) Inform the student that the student is suspected of having plagiarized and that a behavior referral report will be completed.
 - b) Inform the student's parents/guardians about the incident.
- 3) If the student acknowledges that he/she has plagiarized, the assistant principal will assign a consequence as outlined below.
- 4) If the situation remains unresolved, the assistant principal will meet with the student, at which time the student will present his/her account of the incident. Parents/guardians are invited to attend this meeting.
- 5) After considering both accounts of the incident, the assistant principal will make a decision and inform the student, the parents/guardians, and the teacher of this decision.
- 6) If the assistant principal's decision is challenged by the parents/guardians or the teacher, the incident is referred to the principal for a final decision.

If the parents/guardians or teacher chooses to appeal the principal's decision, he/she should contact the assistant superintendent.

The consequences for plagiarism are as follows:

- 1st incident – zero for the assignment.
- 2nd incident – zero for the assignment and possible suspension.
- All subsequent incidents - zero for the assignment and suspension.

It is important for students and parents/guardians to recognize that due to the weight of some assignments, receiving a zero on an assignment could result in a grade of "F" for the marking period.

Instruction about Plagiarism

Instruction about plagiarism will begin at the elementary level and continue through middle and high school. Concepts and examples will be based upon the developmental needs and capabilities of students. Instruction will occur primarily in those subjects requiring research and is included as a component of the library curriculum. As curriculum revision occurs, topics related to plagiarism will be considered in all departments or grade levels.

Training of Staff

Staff development opportunities will be provided to train teachers and administrators about plagiarism and will include instruction about key terms, detection, procedures, and consequences.

Communication to Parents/Guardians

Selected district publications, such as handbooks, newsletters, and the NPSD website, will be used to inform parents/guardians about plagiarism. Annually, parents/guardians will be required to sign a Plagiarism Awareness form.

CONTINUED

Responsibilities for Administrators

The building principal and/or assistant principals may become involved in cases of plagiarism if the issue cannot be resolved between the teacher, student, and parents/guardians. Building administrators will coordinate the appeal in such cases and will need to investigate claims in the dispute and make a final judgment regarding consequences.

It is important that the procedures set forth in this regulation be understood by administrators and communicated to staff and students.

Annually, building administrators should communicate the provisions of this regulation to parents/guardians.

ATTACHMENT

Initiated: April 2005
Reviewed: December 2007

NORTH PENN SCHOOL DISTRICT

**Plagiarism Awareness
Parent/Guardian and Student Acknowledgement**

Student Name _____

Grade _____ Homeroom _____

By signing this document, we acknowledge that we have read and understood the plagiarism guidelines, rules, and procedures.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Please return this form to: