

**ROCKY HILL HIGH SCHOOL**  
**Academic Honesty Statement**  
(Media Center Handout)

Cheating and plagiarism constitutes academic dishonesty. Therefore, the Rocky Hill High School community will not tolerate cheating and plagiarism.

**Plagiarism:** “To steal and use as one’s own or to take and use as one’s own the writings or ideas of another.”  
– from the Latin *plaga* meaning kidnapping.

**Cheating:** “A fraudulent acquisition of another’s property.”  
*American Heritage Dictionary of English Language*

- I. There are three (3) types of plagiarism: ideas, information (data), and words (spoken or written).
1. **Ideas:** If you use another person’s unique ideas – their original thoughts/theories, opinions, or philosophy – you must give them credit.
  2. **Information:** If you use their research information/statistics, graphs, diagrams, tables, or drawings (that are not common knowledge) – you must give them credit.
  3. **Words:** If you use a person’s actual spoken or written words, you must either “quote” verbatim or paraphrase – and you must give them credit.

In each case, you must give credit to the originator of the ideas, information, or words. Failure to cite the source of information used is stealing. In addition, a list of sources cited (*Bibliography, Sources Consulted*) is always part of all research assignments.

- II. Research terminology
- **Common knowledge:** Information found in three (3) or more sources and is usually known by many people.
  - **Paraphrase:** “A rewording of the meaning expressed in something spoken or written.”  
*Webster’s New World Dictionary*
  - **Quote:** To take (incorporate into your essay), verbatim, a creator’s passage/statement. Quotation marks are placed around the used text.

- III. Why is plagiarism illegal and unethical?
- Stealing another person’s ideas can (and has) led to loss of jobs, million-dollar lawsuits, loss of reputations, and expulsion from college/universities.
  - Teachers assign papers so that students may synthesize information, understand its significance, and apply the information gathered. Plagiarism does not achieve these goals.

- IV. Repercussions for cheating and plagiarizing
- Students caught by the teacher cheating or plagiarizing will receive a zero grade for the assignment and may receive disciplinary action.
  - At the teacher’s discretion, students may have to re-write the assignment, in order to understand the learning experience of honest research methodologies.