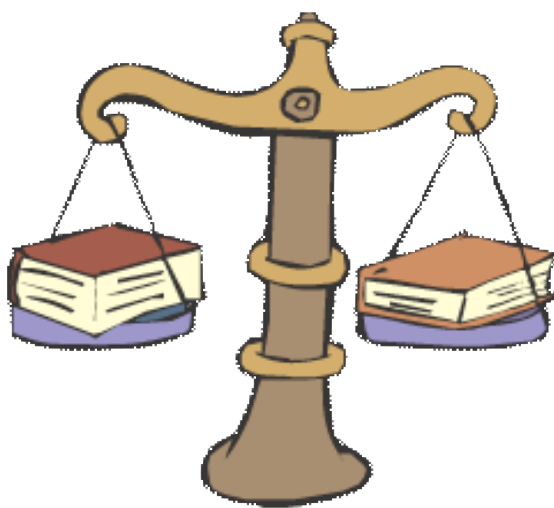


Honor Code

Mountain Lakes High School

Mountain Lakes, New Jersey



~Honest Excellence~

Academic Integrity



Academic Integrity is our commitment to four fundamental values:

- Honesty
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Trust

It is a commitment to being 100% honest and responsible in the completion of all academic materials and interactions with the school community. It means supporting the tradition of honest excellence, involvement, challenge, and inspiration to empower all students to be productive members of society.

Through this commitment, students and faculty will maximize and achieve their fullest potential in the areas of academic excellence and personal character. All members of the learning community will follow and uphold the provisions in the MLHS Honor Code.

Laker Pride: The Power of Learning

A PHILOSOPHY OF INTEGRITY

Mountain Lakes High School is an academic institution dedicated to growth through knowledge. The pursuit of knowledge is a pursuit of honest excellence; it must be a personal journey spirited by sincere, committed effort. Therefore, the Mountain Lakes High School community recognizes the crucial role of personal integrity in all academic endeavors. The Mountain Lakes tradition of academic excellence can continue only if all accomplishments take place within a climate of honesty, respect, responsibility, and trust.

THE PILLARS OF HONOR

The commitment to academic integrity rests upon four pillars: honesty, respect, responsibility, and trust. What do these four pillars of honesty, respect, responsibility, and trust mean to us at Mountain Lakes High School?

Honesty:

- Exercising daily commitment to truthful thoughts and actions.
- Bringing honor to oneself by acting and speaking truthfully and sincerely.

Respect:

- A commitment to be tolerant of others, their views and values. It means having high regard for one's own well-being, as well as that of others.
- A commitment to behaving respectfully.
- Attending all classes on time, contributing to discussions, meeting academic deadlines, and performing to the best of one's ability.
- Extending thoughtfulness and understanding to others.

Responsibility:

- Commitment to duty, including assigned duties and those for which one volunteers.
- An obligation to the ownership of one's work, deeds, words, and actions.
- Personal accountability to do the right thing.
- Taking action against wrongdoing, despite peer pressure, fear, loyalty, or compassion.

Trust:

- Faith that others will act in a forthright manner.
- Reliance on the integrity, ability, and character of others.
- A mutual relationship between students and faculty that enhances the learning environment.

"I hope I shall always possess firmness and virtue enough to maintain what I consider the most enviable of all titles, the character of an honest man."
--George Washington

At Mountain Lakes High School all submitted work must be guided by the Honor Code.

The highest standards of honesty must apply to students' actions at Mountain Lakes High School. Any act of dishonesty reflects upon a student and affects the entire school community. A student's integrity is at stake whether he/she is the person who gives or receives the information; both are acts of dishonesty. Of utmost concern is the fact that the student has been untrue to himself/herself and has damaged one of his/her most precious possessions—his/her character.

PROACTIVE / PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

Honest excellence in education requires a partnership in learning with administrators, teachers, students, support staff, and parents committed to daily interactions that reflect mutual respect and trust. Specifically in regard to the classroom, both teachers and students have responsibilities in the following areas:

PREPARATION FOR CLASS:

In order for the teacher and student to be actively involved in a worthwhile classroom experience,

Teachers will

- Foster a classroom environment that allows for open communication, dialogue, and discussion among all present.
- Be precise about expectations regarding student requirements for classroom work.

Students will

- Bring all necessary materials to class.
- Come to class with homework assignments prepared.
- Make sure they understand teacher's expectations for upcoming classes. Ask questions about anything they do not fully understand.
- Be actively involved as they prepare assignments for class. Formulate questions they might have about the material.

IN CLASS:

Teachers will

- Begin class promptly.
- Answer questions to the best of their abilities and honestly acknowledge when they do not have the answers. When these cases arise, they will investigate answers and provide responses for students in a timely fashion.
- Encourage honest, open, and fair classroom discussion, being respectful of differing views.
- Periodically check with collaborative groups, where applicable, to ensure that each is functioning effectively. The teacher will make recommendations, offer advice, and/or redirect the group, if necessary.

Students will

- Be in class on time.
- Make good use of class time by being focused on the lesson, avoiding side conversations.
- Be respectful of the teacher and fellow students.
- Take responsibility for carrying out his/her particular assignment in a collaborative situation, where applicable.

"My grandfather once told me that there are two kinds of people: those who work and those who take the credit. He told me to try to be in the first group; there was less competition there." -Indira Gandhi

EXAMS:

Teachers will

- Be available to help students prepare effectively.
- Develop exam questions that will be a meaningful test of the course content.
- Create an atmosphere conducive to fair and honest testing.
- Carefully monitor the exam to prevent cheating.
- Give due and careful consideration to student answers when evaluating them and assigning grades.
- Address issues of dishonesty, should they arise.

Students will

- Come prepared and put forth their best efforts.
- Read and follow directions carefully.
- Rely on their own preparation as they take the test; make an honest effort.
- Accept responsibility for what they know and what they don't know.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Teachers will

- Develop fair assignments with expectations delineated.
- Clearly specify when collaboration with other students is permitted on an assignment. If collaboration has not been specified as permissible, the assignment must be the student's individual honest efforts.
- Devise meaningful assignments that enhance and further the work done in the classroom.
- Give due and careful consideration to the student's work when evaluating it and assigning a grade.
- Address issues of dishonesty, should they arise.

Students will

- Be good time managers; be realistic about the workload and plan ahead.
- Read and follow directions carefully.
- Seek only appropriate help from others.
- Give full and proper credit to sources.

TIPS TO HELP STUDENTS ABIDE BY THE PRINCIPLES SET FORTH IN THE HONOR CODE

- Seek the advice and wisdom of your parents, guidance counselor, and teachers when establishing academic goals.
- Set reasonable academic goals. Write them down and review them periodically. Make adjustments when appropriate.
- Plan and develop an academic schedule that will challenge you without imposing unreasonable demands on your time, interests, and academic ability.
- Balance academic and extracurricular goals.
- Take readable notes. Review and correct them after class. Rewriting your notes reinforces what you learned from the lesson.
- Ask the teacher for clarification of expectations for all work, if you are unsure.

"The time is always right to do what is right." -Martin Luther King, Jr.

- When collaborative activities are permitted, work together to ensure that responsibilities are clearly and equitably distributed among all members of the group. Consult with the teacher if the group is experiencing difficulty in meeting the requirements of the assignment.
- Start long-term assignments ahead of time. Create a plan for what you expect to complete each day.
- If you know ahead of time that you will have difficulty meeting a deadline, discuss the matter with your teacher well in advance of the deadline.
- Establish a consistent time and place to do your homework and studying. Select a quiet, well-lighted location that is free from distractions posed by television, telephone, and the Internet. Organize the materials in your study area so that all are close at hand and easily located.
- Know your learning style. When possible, complete course requirements and prepare for class in a manner compatible with that style. For example, if you are a visual learner, illustrate your understanding through pictures, charts, and graphs, if offered that option.
- Take advantage of helpful opportunities available to you: peer tutoring with National Honor Society members, extra help sessions with teachers, writing conferences with English teachers, research assistance from the media specialist.
- On occasion tutors may assist in the learning process of a student. In order to adhere to the principles of academic integrity, it is imperative that all interactions between students and tutors remain true to the classroom teacher's intent for assigning the particular activity, and that all pertinent instructions are honored. The primary responsibility for understanding and abiding by the teacher's expectations and guidelines for any activity lies with the student.
- Take care of your health. Get plenty of rest and make nutritious food choices.

VIOLATIONS OF THE HONOR CODE

Teachers' expectations for all work are clearly stated. If a student is unsure of the requirements for any activity or assignment, to avoid a violation of the Honor Code, he/she is responsible for checking his/her understanding with the teacher.

Violations of the Honor Code include but are not limited to the following areas:

Cheating:

In copying, a student is taking the work of another, either on homework or on a test, and claiming it as his/her own. At Mountain Lakes High School cheating includes but is not limited to:

- Copying and or offering homework verbally, in written form, or by electronic means.
- Copying and/or offering answers on tests or quizzes verbally, in written form, or by electronic means.
- Pressuring other students to violate the Honor Code.
- Bringing in and using unauthorized information during class time, including information stored in a calculator.
- Offering or receiving information under circumstances when information is not to be shared.

*"Before I can live with other folks, I've got to live with myself. The one thing that doesn't abide by majority rule is a person's conscience."
—Harper Lee, To Kill a Mockingbird*

- Having anyone, including parents or tutors, complete assignments and submitting the work as one's own.
- Presenting collaborative work as independent work and independent work as collaborative. (In group work, one person should not and will not bear the burden for the entire group assignment.)
- Copying answers from answer guides in texts.
- Fabricating or "fudging" data, information, or sources. Attempting to pass off made up material as the result of genuine efforts.

Plagiarism:

The act of plagiarism may include direct copying, but it may also be more complex than verbatim repetition. A student, in preparing a project for a class, will have plagiarized if he/she has taken information from sources without citing what sources were used. Plagiarized material may appear in a student's paper as word-for-word copying, a summation, or a paraphrase of another's ideas. A student has plagiarized whether the material from another source has been taken in whole or in part. In effect, by not naming the source, the student is claiming the work of another as his/hers.

- Submitting images and/or documents in whole or in part from the Internet without citation of the source(s).
- Copying another's work.
- Using another's ideas without proper citations.
- Incorporating portions of another's writing within the context of your own work.
- Failing to acknowledge a source of information.
- Using "unique" phrases without citations.
- Using graphics, charts, diagrams, illustrations without citations.

THE HONOR COMMITTEE

- I. Composition
 - A. One student from each grade level
 - B. Three faculty members, one chairperson to be appointed by the Principal
 - C. One administrator
 - D. One substitute faculty member, to serve in place of one of the three appointed faculty members if he/she cannot be present
 - E. Four substitute student members (one from each class) to serve in place of one of the appointed student members if he/she cannot take part in any discussion or meeting.

- II. Student Application Process
 - A. Students may nominate themselves for a position on the Honor Committee by obtaining and completing an application for the desired position. Additionally, the student must submit a petition containing 25 signatures of members of his/her class.
 1. The applications will be reviewed by the faculty members of the Honor Committee and the administrator.
 2. A personal essay will be a large part of the application.
 3. Sophomore, junior and senior members will be chosen in the spring. The representative for the freshman class will be chosen in the fall.
 4. Finalists will be reviewed by the entire faculty.
 - B. Students may also be nominated by a member of the faculty at large.
 1. Students then obtain and complete an application.
 2. Students must submit a petition containing 25 signatures of members of his/her class.
 3. The application will be reviewed by the same members of the Honor Committee.

"Dignity consists not in possessing honors, but in the consciousness that we deserve them." --Aristotle

- C. Students must reapply every year.
 - 1. If a student does not fulfill his/her duties, the student may not be asked to return for an additional term.
 - 2. A student may also choose not to return to the position the following year.
 - 3. Any action of a student representative that is determined to be dishonorable in any way or contradictory to the Honor Code will result in the prompt removal of that student from the Honor Committee.
 - 4. Following the removal, a student replacement will be drawn from the previous pool of applicants.
- D. Student role on the Honor Committee
 - 1. Student will act as a representative of the Honor Committee at the first class meeting and as required by circumstance.
 - 2. At the meeting, the student will make it clear that he/she is available to the students who have concerns or issues that pertain to academic integrity.
 - 3. Student will also review the solutions proposed by the faculty component of the Honor Committee.
 - 4. The report given to students will be void of any names pertaining to the incident being reviewed.

III. Teacher Application Process

- A. Teachers who are interested may volunteer for one of the three faculty positions.
- B. The final decision will be made by the Principal.
- C. Teacher positions will be reviewed yearly by the Principal.

IV. Function of the Honor Committee

- A. When an incident of cheating occurs, the teacher involved must notify the Assistant Principal who will then notify the Honor Committee.
- B. The Committee will not be punitive in nature; rather it will seek proactive solutions to cheating.
- C. The offending student will appear before the Committee when the second offense occurs. Parents are invited to be a part of the process.
- D. Prior to the meeting, the Committee will complete several steps:
 - 1. Meet with the teacher involved in the incident.
 - 2. Collect any facts relating to the incident (schedule, records, etc.).
 - 3. Create a tentative, proactive plan that may help the student avoid cheating in the future.
 - 4. Review the solution with the student members of the Honor Committee.
- E. Within a reasonable amount of time as determined on a case-by-case basis by the Honor Committee and/or the Assistant Principal, the student will go before the Honor Committee.
 - 1. The student who committed the infraction and Committee members will work together to determine the cause of the infraction.
 - 2. The Committee and the student will create a list of short term and long term goals that will help the student realize success through honest effort.
 - 3. The student will provide suggestions for the proactive plan created by the Committee.
 - 4. These suggestions will be taken into consideration as the Committee finalizes the plan for the student.
 - 5. The chairperson or administrator will contact the parents and confirm the plan for their child.

"The most important human endeavor is the striving for morality in our actions. Our inner balance and even our very existence depend on it. Only morality in our actions can give beauty and dignity to our lives." --Albert Einstein

6. The Honor Committee will designate a faculty member to serve as a mentor for the student throughout the ensuing four-week period.
7. After a period of four weeks, the student will appear again before the Committee and update the Committee on his/her progress. Parents may choose to attend with the student.

The Honor Committee's purpose is not punitive in nature. However, if a student repeatedly fails to comply with the Honor Code, he/she is subject to punitive measures.

LEVELS OF CONSEQUENCE

1st Offense: The student will receive a zero for the assignment, and the teacher will contact the student's parents. The incident will be kept on file with the Assistant Principal for the remainder of the student's high school career. The assistant principal will counsel the student concerning proactive measures that he/she might take to prevent further violations. Parents may take part in the meeting with the Assistant Principal and the student, should they choose to do so. The student will be informed of further consequences should another violation of the Honor Code occur.

2nd Offense: The student will receive a zero on the assignment, and the incident will be reported to the Assistant Principal. The Assistant Principal will contact the parents to discuss the incident. Parents are informed that they may take part in meetings with their child and the faculty members of the Honor Committee. The student then will be given a date for a meeting with the faculty members of the Honor Committee. The student will be suspended for two weeks from all extra-curricular activities. The student will be responsible for informing all involved coaches and advisors of this suspension. The student will be informed of further consequences should another violation of the Honor Code occur.

3rd Offense: The student will receive an F as the marking period grade for the course in which the infraction occurs. The parents will be contacted by the Assistant Principal and informed that they may take part in discussions regarding the formulation of preventive plans for their child. The student will be suspended from all extra-curricular activities for four weeks and will be given a date to meet with the faculty members of the Honor Committee. The student will be advised that should another violation occur, he/she could lose credit for the course.

If a student's infraction of the Honor Code is exceptional and seems to have violated more than one aspect of the Honor Code, the student will be held accountable for a second or third offense regardless of whether or not the student has committed a first or second offense. This decision will be made by the Assistant Principal, taking into consideration the recommendations of the Honor Committee.

All incidents involving violations of academic integrity will be recorded on a standard form by the Assistant Principal and the teacher involved. At the close of each school year, a letter will be sent to the parents of all students who have violated the code verifying the violation(s) and the action(s) taken.

The National Honor Society advisor will be informed by the Assistant Principal of all infractions of the Honor Code. The National Honor Society Faculty Council will be informed by the National Honor Society advisor of all infractions committed by members of the National Honor Society and candidates under consideration for membership.

Following a review by all constituent groups, the Honor Code may be amended through the consensus of faculty, students, parents, and the Accreditation for Growth Planning Team.