Plagiarism Policy
Webutuck H.S. English Department

Mission Statement: Plagiarism is a serious, unethical, and sometimes illegal practice. The purpose of this policy is to ensure academic equity and integrity for all students.

Definition: The Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary entry for the verb "plagiarize" reads:

Inflected Form(s): -riz·ed; -riz·ing
Etymology: plagiarize
  transitive senses: to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own: use (another's production) without crediting the source
  intransitive senses: to commit literary theft: present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source
  - pla·gi·a·riz·er noun


Department Stance: It is our expectation that all students complete their own work and cite any used sources appropriately when necessary. It will be our assumption that students who repeatedly plagiarize are dishonest and are engaging in such activities with the intent to deceive.

Students who are unclear as to whether or not they have committed plagiarism or who do not fully understand the MLA (Modern Language Association) guidelines in order to properly cite sources should consult with their teacher or the librarian.

Procedure: The following procedure and consequences will be followed by when a student is suspected of plagiarism.

1. The teacher will research the alleged plagiarized piece, to include checking any known or previously cited works.
2. The teacher will conference with the student about the alleged offense.
   a. If it is decided that the student has made an honest mistake, then the teacher will point out the student’s citation error(s) and the student will be given the opportunity to fix the mistake. An honest mistake is when the student has made a simple, innocent error, such as unintentionally leaving out a proper citation for a source or inadvertently leaving out the citation of paraphrased text; however, the infraction is not reflected in a significant portion of the student’s work.
   b. An assumption of student guilt will only be made if a student is found to have plagiarized a significant portion of more of his/her work and the teacher can
provide substantial proof beyond mere speculation that the student has plagiarized. In such a case, the following will apply:

i. A First Offense will receive a zero on the assignment with no means of making up the assignment (to include extra credit). The teacher will notify the parent as to the concerns regarding the student’s work. The appropriate administrator will be notified and advised that the student should lose Internet access in the building for a period of two weeks.

ii. A Second Offense will receive an automatic zero. The teacher will notify the parent as to the concerns regarding the student’s work. The appropriate administrator will be notified. The student will receive in-school suspension and lose all computer privileges for 90 school days. A referral will be submitted to the student’s permanent record.

iii. A Third Offense will incur an automatic zero for the assignment and parental notification. Computer privileges will be suspended indefinitely. The appropriate administrator will be consulted and asked to institute the most suitable punishment for a repeat offender, to possibly include a Superintendent’s Hearing.