



## Thomas A. Edison High School

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## Plagiarism Policy

Parents and Students:

Thomas A. Edison High School has a zero tolerance for plagiarism and cheating. We take these offenses quite seriously and have committed to making sure that all students understand and acknowledge the importance of maintaining academic integrity at all times.

### What is Plagiarism?

Plagiarism means using ideas, opinions, factual information, or language from someone without giving that person appropriate credit. Plagiarism is fraud. Student writers are sometimes confused as to what should be cited. In addition to direct quotations, paraphrases and summaries of opinions of factual information not formerly known to the writer must also be cited. The exception to this rule is information termed general knowledge, information that is widely known and stated in a number of sources. Determining what is general knowledge can be complicated, so it is wise to remember the adage, "When in doubt, cite."

### How to Avoid Plagiarism

In academic work, credit should generally be given in an appropriate format. At Thomas A. Edison High School this means all works including reports, PowerPoint presentations, Web 2.0 creations, posters, brochures, etc., must have citations in Modern Language Association (**MLA**) format. These systems of documentation are explained in depth at all grade levels throughout the school year by the High School Librarian and classroom teachers, and there are many tools that students can access through the TAE Library website to assist them in citing including NoodleTools and various citation tutorials. Occasionally, in writing assignments such as log entries, teachers may permit informal citation; however, unless it is specifically and expressly noted, students should properly cite all work on all projects and reports.

It is very important to understand how to prevent committing plagiarism when using material from a source. If you wish to quote verbatim, you must use the exact words and punctuation of the original and you must include quotation marks and page numbers in your citation. In general, using large amounts of quoted text is not appropriate. When you quote large amounts of text you lose ownership of the paper. If you want to paraphrase ideas from a source, you must do a thorough job of putting the ideas into your own language and you must cite the source in the required format. (Statement from the [Online Writing Guide for Integrative Studies Students](#).)

### Acceptable Sources of Information

Students are NOT allowed to use sites such as Wikipedia, Buzzle, About.com, InfoPlease, ChaCha or other similar resources to research topics or create papers or projects as cited sources without specific teacher permission. All sources of information must be quality resources and meet the standard criteria for a quality site or source. The Thomas A. Edison library provides a number of high quality databases and written materials for research as well as instruction for students in evaluating web sites throughout their high school experience. The library provides access from both school and home to these resources. Unless an instructor specifically grants

permission in writing for students to use alternative sources, it is expected that students will use the databases and other library resources to research topics and information.

**Copyright Violations (Pictures, Images, and Music on the Web)**

Citation and copyright rules also apply to students who use photos, music, or links from Internet sources. Information and graphics accessed electronically must also be cited, giving credit to the sources. This material includes but is not limited to e-mail (don't cite or forward someone else's e-mail without permission), newsgroup material, pictures, graphics and music from searches and web sites. The librarian can and will provide students with instructions and resources that allow use of the materials without violation of copyright. However, the material must still be cited. Putting someone else's Internet material on your project, whether it is a paper, electronic, or web based project, is stealing intellectual property. Making links to a site is, at this time, okay, but getting permission is strongly advised, since many Web sites have their own requirements for linking to their material.

**Student Consequences for Failure to Adhere to Policy**

If a student uses a site that does not match the standards for quality as outlined above, the paper or project will not be accepted by the teacher and will receive a zero. If a student fails to properly cite their sources, plagiarizes, or uses excessive quotes in their paper or project, the assignment will not be accepted by the teacher and will receive a zero. Students do not have to be granted an opportunity to correct work and turn it in for partial credit. Students will be given ample time, instruction, and guidance regarding how to find resources, cite, and use quotes wisely. It is the responsibility of the student to let the instructor or librarian know if they are having trouble with accessing, using, or citing sources.

*Please read, sign, and return the below portion as directed.*

**Plagiarism and Cheating Code of Integrity Agreement**

I have read and understand the foregoing document and I understand that plagiarism and cheating are serious academic offenses that will result in severe consequences. I agree to only submit my original work for credit and to follow the procedures for finding, using, and citing information as directed by the Thomas A. Edison High School Plagiarism policy.

Violation of these rules may result in one or more the following consequences: a failing grade on the assignment/ test without the opportunity to make up the work; a parent conference; a formal letter placed in the student's discipline file; or other consequences determined by the Principal or District.

-----Cut off and Return-----

**Plagiarism Conduct Agreement**

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Parent's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Parent's Signature \_\_\_\_\_