Chapter 7
Understanding Provincial and Territorial Academic Integrity Policies for Elementary and Secondary Education in Canada

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Abstract Research on academic integrity and misconduct in higher education is not difficult to locate, as work in this area has increased dramatically over the past several decades. Overall, findings reveal that cheating is a serious problem plaguing higher education with many institutions documenting various approaches to address the relevant issues. A careful look at this literature, however, exposes significant gaps in our understanding of academic integrity and misconduct in Canadian elementary and secondary (or K-12) education, which is problematic as behaviours practiced in these settings during the formative years may influence behaviours in later life stages. Furthermore, school policies, which reinforce expectations for students and teachers in the workplace are of particular importance as K-12 teachers arguably impact students' approaches to academic integrity. This chapter focuses on key questions related to K-12 education in Canada: Do provincial and territorial ministries of education address academic integrity through policy for K-12 education? If these policies exist, what evidence demonstrates their influence on the implementation of academic integrity education at the school level? To begin to examine these questions, I conducted an environmental scan of Canadian ministries of education websites to identify academic integrity and misconduct policies. I found that only a few education ministries outline student expectations for academic integrity and consequences for misconduct or describe teacher responsibilities for providing academic integrity education and responding to academic misconduct (i.e., Newfoundland and Labrador, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan). To conclude this chapter, I discuss the implications of the presence or absence of effective academic integrity and misconduct policies for K-12 education in Canada and beyond, the impact on higher education and advanced training, as well as avenues for future research in the field.

Keywords Academic integrity · Canada · Elementary school · Government · K-12 education · Policy implications · Secondary school

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When I began my career in education as a certified K-12 general science and biology teacher in the province of Manitoba, Canada approximately 20 years ago, I had many hopes, questions, and concerns about the best ways to facilitate student engagement in the learning process. I wondered how students' interests, home lives and responsibilities, extra-curricular activities, nutrition and health, and social-emotional well-being influenced their learning. Although I was concerned about test and exam cheating, I did not consult relevant school policies (not sure these even existed), and I was generally unfamiliar with the broader concept of academic integrity. Other K-12 teachers may feel similarly when guidance is lacking, and when there are so many other pressing issues to consider when teaching children and adolescents. Consequently, I may have encouraged behaviours that I would now describe as violations of academic integrity.

As I began to write this chapter, I recalled past discussions with my students about the skills required in university, including the importance of having some exposure to writing and documenting sources while in high school. Some students commented that they were planning to enrol in science courses so there was no need to learn how to cite properly. I explained that, as a science major, I completed many science courses (e.g., plant sciences, genetics) requiring writing and citing, so these skills were relevant across disciplines. Because my students claimed to have little or no experience with documenting their sources (see also Crossman, 2014), I designed science assignments that required writing, searching for appropriate sources, and acknowledging other authors' ideas. I provided feedback on strengths and mistakes and opportunities to correct errors. My goal was not to create experts, but to expose my students to some expectations that they would encounter during their postsecondary studies and potentially help them to avoid plagiarism. This chapter was borne, in part, from these early experiences as an educator.

Background

Information about various aspects of academic integrity and academic misconduct in higher education are readily available as research in this field has increased dramatically over the past several decades (Ali & Aboelmaged, 2020). Cheating to gain an unfair advantage in academic work is a serious problem as it results in students who are less prepared for the next level in their education and are unable to apply knowledge and skills to workplace settings. Academic cheating is also linked to unethical workplace behaviour (Grimes, 2012; Lucas & Friedrich, 2005; Nonis & Swift, 2001). Because the consequences for engaging in academic misconduct can be detrimental to the individual and to society as a whole, many researchers, educators,

and administrators in higher education are working to address the issue using a range of proactive and reactive approaches. A careful look at the academic integrity literature, however, exposes significant gaps in our understanding of academic integrity and misconduct in elementary and secondary education. One of those gaps relates to academic integrity policies. The goals of this chapter are to examine academic integrity in Canadian elementary and secondary education through a review of the literature and an examination of academic integrity policy at the provincial and territorial government level in Canada.

Academic Misconduct in Elementary and Secondary Education

Academic misconduct is not restricted to postsecondary education—students at every level are cheating (Davis et al., 2009) and the reported rates of academic cheating in K-12 levels may be increasing over time. The results from a survey conducted in the United States (US) revealed that 20%, 27%, and 30% of students in 1969, 1979, and 1989, respectively, believed that most of their high school peers had engaged in academic cheating (Schab, 1991). Furthermore, 34%, 60%, and 68% of high school students (during each of the three study periods) admitted to cheating on tests (Schab, 1991). In another US study, 93% of high school students admitted to cheating at least once, with students in larger schools cheating more often than students in smaller schools (Galloway, 2012). High cheating rates were also found in a national survey of >23,000 high school students from across the US showing that 38% admitted to copying an internet document to submit as part of an assignment, 58% admitted to cheating during tests, and 74% admitted to copying another student's homework (Josephson Institute Center for Youth Ethics, 2012). There is concern that "the problem of cheating is only increasing, that virtually nothing is being done currently about the problem (and students know that, too), and that students often lack explicit exposure to concepts related to academic integrity" (Cizek, 2003, p. 117).

American high school students are not the only ones making poor decisions regarding their schoolwork. When asked to reflect on their high school years, 58% and 73% of first year university students in Canada admitted to cheating on tests and written work, respectively (Christensen Hughes & McCabe, 2006). Similarly, 62% of students aged 12–18 years enrolled in private schools in Canada confessed to serious test cheating and 77% admitted to serious cheating in written work (Stoesz & Los, 2019). Further, 6–17% of junior high and high school students disclosed the turning in papers obtained from websites that did or did not charge fees (Stoesz & Los, 2019). In both studies, a significant proportion of students admitted to working on assignments with others when their teachers asked for individual work and helping their peers cheat on tests. Students who had engaged in academic misconduct were also more likely to report that these behaviours were not serious (Christensen Hughes & McCabe, 2006; Stoesz & Los, 2019).

When do cheating rates spike? High school students may be under the impression that cheating is a greater problem in high schools than it is in elementary schools or colleges (Schab, 1991). And there is some truth to this perception. Brandes (1986) explored the extent of cheating in 45 elementary schools ($n = 1,037$ sixth graders) and 105 secondary schools ($n = 2,265$ mostly eleventh graders) in California. The rates of all types of cheating were higher amongst high school students than amongst sixth graders. About 39% and 41% of sixth graders admitted to cheating on tests and plagiarizing, respectively, whereas 74% and 50% of high school students disclosed engagement in those cheating behaviours (Brandes, 1986). Similarly, self-reported cheating on math tests and assignments increased after transition to a midwestern US state high school; cheating rates were stable during the eighth grade but then increased significantly from the beginning to the end of the ninth grade (Anderman & Midgley, 2004). US high school students reported cheating on exams by looking at other students' exams or allowing others to view their exams more often than did college students (Jensen et al., 2002). In Canada, the trends appear similar in that the rates of academic misconduct in high schools are generally higher than the rates in post-secondary education (Christensen Hughes & McCabe, 2006).

Why do high school students cheat? Although 99% of US high school students agreed that it was important for them "to be a person with good character" and 93% indicated that their "parents/guardians always want [them] to do the ethically right thing, no matter what the cost", 36% of them feel that cheating may be necessary to succeed (Josephson Institute Center for Youth Ethics, 2012, pp. 4 & 6). If high school students believe that doing the right thing is important, then why are so many of them choosing to cheat in their academic work?

There are several possible predictors for cheating during high school. Peer culture, achievement pressures, fear of failure (Schab, 1991), lack of consequences (Christensen Hughes & McCabe, 2006), and failure to understand the actions that constitute plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct are associated with increased rates of academic cheating in middle-school students (Wan & Gut, 2008; Wan & Scott, 2016). Parents may also facilitate the cheating behaviours of their children as they "have traditionally been encouraged by elementary and secondary schools to participate in their children's education" (Davis et al., 2009, p. 6). The COVID-19 pandemic has only served to increase this pressure on parents to spend more time assisting their children with their schoolwork and supporting learning. Parent involvement in education is also viewed as caring for their children (Galloway & Conner, 2015), but this caring may be misplaced in some circumstances. Some parents may not clearly understand the boundaries between helping their children and doing schoolwork for them and may inadvertently encourage behaviours that will later be viewed as inappropriate collaboration and contract cheating.

Increases in cheating from middle school to high school may also be attributed to changes in the goal structures of the learning environment, such that academic misconduct is more likely in classes with a perceived performance goal structure (emphasizing ability and competition) than mastery goal structure (emphasizing learning and effort) (Anderman & Midgley, 2004; Murdock et al., 2004). Regardless of the goal structure of the learning environment, the likelihood of cheating

increases when a teacher's pedagogy is perceived as poor (Murdock et al., 2004). Overwhelming quantities of content, grading on curves, having to complete just one or two assessments (Evans & Craig, 1990; Galloway, 2012; Galloway & Conner, 2015), and uncaring teachers (Curtis & Clare, 2017; Murdock et al., 2004; Wangaard, 2016) increase the likelihood of cheating in middle school and high school. If teachers are perceived as uncaring, unfair, and discriminatory, "adolescents decide to cheat because" (Thorkildsen et al., 2007, p. 174) cheating is viewed "as a rational choice in a culture of warped values" (Kohn, 2007, p. xiv).

High school students also perceive that schools' academic integrity and misconduct policies lack clarity and are not enforced (Sisti, 2007; Stephens & Wangaard, 2013), and they are "forced to cheat in a school culture that promotes getting ahead over learning" (Galloway, 2012, p. 378). When policies are absent or unclear, it should come as no surprise that students, parents, and teachers may all be confused about expectations for writing and plagiarism and collaboration to complete schoolwork, and the long-term and short-term consequences of engaging in academic misconduct. Therefore, clear, thoughtful, and detailed academic integrity policy provides a solid foundation for which to create cultures of integrity within schools at all levels of the education system (Bretag et al., 2011, 2014; Stephens & Wangaard, 2013).

The Canadian Context

There is no federal ministry and no national oversight in Canadian education (see Bosetti et al., 2017; Capano, 2015; Eaton & Christensen Hughes, 2022); education is decentralised to Canada's ten provinces and three territories. In six provinces and territories, single ministries of education are responsible for K-12 and postsecondary education, and separate ministries of education are responsible for K-12 and postsecondary education in seven provinces (see Table 7.1). Despite decentralization, there are similarities in the education systems across the country (Volante & Ben Jaafar, 2008). For example, provincial and territorial governments have established partnerships to work toward common goals and align policies on curriculum design and assessment for primary and secondary education (see Capano, 2015). Historically, increased collaboration between provinces has been driven by reduced federal government funding especially during difficult economic times (Galway, 2012). Common education goals and financial constraints are argued to have fueled "a process of institutional isomorphism among provinces" (Capano, 2015, pp. 331–332), but the alignment of goals and policies across the country may also communicate areas of priority for education leaders to the public. Partnerships across Canadian education systems might be expected to lead to further collaboration in areas such as academic integrity because of the closely related link to fair assessment and curriculum design.

Based on the research literature and my professional experiences as an educator and researcher, I formulated two questions about elementary and secondary education in Canada. Do ministries of education address academic integrity and misconduct

Table 7.1 Academic integrity policy documents from provincial and territorial ministries of education

Province: Ministry of Education Responsible for K-12 Education	Dedicated academic integrity policy	Document Examined	Details
British Columbia (BC)**: Ministry of Education	No	Not found	Indication on website that academic integrity policies are created at lower district or school levels. Responsibility for academic integrity is placed on teachers and students, in particular, international students
Alberta (AB)**: Ministry of Education	No	The guiding framework for the design and development of kindergarten to grade 12 provincial curricula	Does not address academic integrity directly. Values (i.e., fairness, responsibility) deemed important in education, which overlap with the academic integrity values
Saskatchewan (SK)**: Ministry of Education	Yes	Academic integrity and student responsibility guidelines	Outlines school board, in-school administrator, teacher, and student, and parent responsibility. Template for model academic integrity policy at the division level provided
Manitoba (MB)**: Ministry of Education		Provincial assessment Policy Kindergarten to Grade 12: Academic responsibility, honesty, and promotion/retention	Each division and school must develop policies aligned with government policy
Ontario (ON)**: Ministry of Education	No	Ontario schools—kindergarten to grade 12: Policy and program requirements Growing success: Assessment, evaluation, and reporting in Ontario schools 2010	Integrity is mentioned in relation to the validity of student's performance on a test and modification/adaptations for students who experience challenges
Quebec (PQ): Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur*	No	Policy on educational success: A love of learning, a chance to succeed	Ethics and religious culture are curriculum requirements. No mention of academic integrity
New Brunswick (NB)**: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development	No	10-year education plan: Everyone at their best (anglophone sector)	No mention of integrity, honesty, or other content related to academic integrity or academic misconduct

Table 7.1 (continued)

Province: Ministry of Education Responsible for K-12 Education	Dedicated academic integrity policy	Document Examined	Details
Prince Edward Island (PEI)*: Department of Education and Lifelong Learning	No	Not found	
Nova Scotia (NS)**: Department of Education and early childhood development	No	Council to improve classroom conditions (two documents consisting of meeting minutes summarizing discussions) Provincial school code of conduct policy	Meeting goal was to build consensus on definition of academic integrity (e.g., plagiarism) Code of conduct policy neglects academic integrity and academic misconduct
Newfoundland and Labrador (NFLD)*: Department of Education	Yes	Assessment, evaluation and reporting policy (PROG-317)	States that students "work to the best of their abilities, in an academically honest manner and adhere to the classroom/school Code of Conduct" (p. 2). Short section on academic honesty for teachers, students, parents, and school administration. Document is non-academic misconduct centric
Yukon (YK)*: Department of Education	No		Focus of government level policies is on students' physical safety/risk management. Policies related to fair assessment, academic integrity, misconduct (or academic misconduct) were not found
Northwest Territories (NWT)*: Department of Education, Culture and Employment	No	Literacy with ICT Across the Curriculum	No policy on student academic integrity or academic misconduct, but sparse details on plagiarism, attribution, and ethical use of information within the IT literacy curriculum

Table 7.1 (continued)

Province: Ministry of Education Responsible for K-12 Education	Dedicated academic integrity policy	Document Examined	Details
Nunavut (NU)*: Department of Education	No	Education Framework Inuit Aaujimajatuqangit for Nunavut Curriculum	Not a stand-alone academic integrity policy document. This framework document states that integrity is important. No details beyond this are provided

Note *Denotes provinces and territories with single ministries of education responsible for both K-12 and postsecondary education. **Denotes provinces with separate ministries of education for K-12 and for postsecondary education

through policy for elementary and secondary education? If these policies exist, what evidence demonstrates their influence on the implementation of academic integrity education at the school level? Academic integrity policy for K-12 education at the provincial and territorial level communicates the values that the community holds, provides a set of standards of quality, and guides the actions to uphold values and adhere to standards (Bretag & Mahmud, 2016), and would provide an important foundation for further policy development at the school level.

An Environmental Scan of Canadian Educational Policy for Academic Integrity

To begin to examine these questions, I conducted an environmental scan of Canadian provincial and territorial ministry of education websites to identify academic integrity or academic misconduct policies. Environmental scans are used widely in private and government sectors (Rowel et al., 2005) to inform policy development, and planning and strategic decision-making processes (Charlton et al., 2019; Choo, 2002), and are associated with improved organizational performance (Choo, 2002). Environmental scans are also useful when there is uncertainty in the extent of the information available (Charlton et al., 2019) as it enables one to broaden the search for information beyond the organization or the peer-reviewed literature. For this chapter, government level academic integrity policy for K-12 education in Canada is absent from the research literature, thus environmental scanning was deemed appropriate for collecting information on this topic.

Environmental scanning often involves the collection of administrative data, internal reports, and guidelines using informants, observation, internet searches (Albright, 2004; Charlton et al., 2019), and information about external events, trends, and other influences (Choo, 2002) but "there are no prescribed standard methods. [for] information collection" (Rathi et al., 2017, p. 79). The environmental scan

for this chapter took the simple form of internet searches of Canadian ministry of education websites. The search strategy included terms such as "academic integrity," "academic honesty," "academic misconduct", "plagiarism," and "attribution" in addition to the name of a province or territory and "education department" or "education ministry". Where these terms were not located in a broad search of the ministries' websites using Google's search function, webpages listing policies were scanned for titles with these terms and documents with titles related to fair assessment, information literacy, and student misconduct. The initial search was conducted in February 2020 and repeated in June 2020 to confirm the results of the initial search.

Academic Integrity Policies at the Government Level

My search revealed that few provincial and territorial ministries of education appear to provide any statements regarding student expectations for academic integrity, consequences for misconduct, and teacher and principal responsibilities for providing academic integrity education and responding to academic misconduct. Manitoba and Saskatchewan have each published stand-alone, publicly accessible, online academic integrity policy documents. The Manitoba Education policy outlines two fundamental values of academic integrity (i.e., honesty and responsibility) and lists the expectations of school divisions and schools (e.g., specify a range of consequences for academic misconduct and invoke sanctions), principals (e.g., respond appropriately to academic misconduct, report behaviour on report card), and teachers (e.g., clear communication of assignment expectations, support students' time management, communicate with parents) (Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning, 2015). There are two unique aspects of Saskatchewan's policy document: (a) the inclusion of a template for a model academic integrity policy at the school division/district level, and (b) a statement that "actions such as cheating; plagiarism; having others complete the work (e.g., parents/guardians); buying papers from the internet; or re-submission of previously submitted work are all examples of actions that are not in keeping with academic integrity" (Ministry of Education Government of Saskatchewan, 2011, p. 2). Although not a dedicated document for academic integrity, Newfoundland and Labrador published an assessment policy, which include statements about academic honesty and the responsibility of students, parents, teachers, and school administration regarding academic misconduct (Newfoundland & Labrador English School District, 2013). This policy also emphasises the need for an educative approach and the importance of "second chance opportunities" when appropriate.

My environmental scan did not result in the identification of academic integrity or academic misconduct policies for any other region. This was somewhat surprising, particularly for the provinces of Ontario and Alberta as these provinces represent the most important cases of educational policy reforms, particularly in terms of the introduction of standardized assessments (Capano, 2015), which necessitates honesty, fairness, and trust in the processes and results of the evaluation in students' skills and abilities. Ontario's postsecondary sector is also extremely proactive in

communicating the values of academic integrity by way of the Academic Integrity Council of Ontario (Ridgley et al., 2019), and similar networks are evolving in western Canadian provinces (McKenzie, 2018; Stoesz et al., 2020). The involvement of K-12 educators and administrators within these networks may facilitate a greater understanding of the importance of promoting academic integrity and in reducing academic misconduct in students' early education.

Academic Integrity Policies at the Secondary School Level

Next, I explored the extent to which government level academic integrity policy in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Newfoundland and Labrador may have impacted high school policy and practice. I randomly selected five high schools in each of Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Newfoundland Labrador, and randomly selected five schools in each of three randomly-selected provinces that did not have a provincial level policy for academic integrity (i.e., British Columbia, Ontario, New Brunswick) using an online list randomizer (Random.Org, 2020). Next, I searched for academic integrity policies on the websites of the randomly selected high schools in each province from a publicly available list on each government's website. If the high school did not have a website, another school was randomly selected.

   In Saskatchewan, only three of five high schools published academic integrity policies (within student handbooks) on their websites, which were limited in detail (e.g., few sentences, only described plagiarism). In Manitoba, two of five high schools had academic integrity statements, but details were also limited. Two of five high schools in Newfoundland and Labrador published academic integrity statements, and both referred to the government level policy. This appeared to communicate the message that academic integrity was important for stakeholders at all levels in the region's education system. Overall, only 47% of school handbooks examined referred to academic integrity policies. The selection of high schools and provinces for this set of analyses did not allow for the examination of the influence of the structure of ministries (i.e., ministries dedicated to K-12 education or those ministries that combined K-12 and higher education) on academic integrity policy development at the high school level. See Table 7.2.

   Given the minimal information found on academic integrity policies in high schools, in those provinces that had government policies, I expected an even lower proportion of high schools to have academic integrity policies in those provinces without government-level policies. My hypothesis was not supported. Three, two, and three of the five high schools in British Columbia, Ontario, and New Brunswick (respectively) had academic integrity statements (overall 53%). My inspection also revealed significantly more detail on non-academic misconduct and its consequences in high school policies, suggesting a greater need to deal with disruptive and dangerous behaviour because it often has immediate negative impacts on others within the learning environment (e.g., increased peer disciplinary problems, reduced

Table 7.2 Academic integrity statements or policy documents from high schools in canada

Province School District/Division, School	Student Handbook Examined	Academic integrity statement or policy (Yes/No). Details of policy, if available
Saskatchewan**		
Creighton SD 111, Creighton Community School	Student Handbook (2019 –2020)	(Yes). Emphasis on plagiarism as an act of fraud. More consequences for late practices for assignments than for plagiarism
Good Spirit SD 204, Yorkton Regional High School	Policies and Procedures for Students and Parents: Academic integrity and plagiarism	(Yes). Teachers expected to use technology and collaboration to enhance teaching and learning. Students expected to be honest, complete coursework using their own efforts, and not to copy or plagiarize. Students may be required to redo the assessment honestly and/or attend an academic integrity seminar
Horizon SD 205, Lanigan Central High School	Not found	(No)
Saskatchewan Rivers SD 119, Carlton Comprehensive High School	Not found	(No)
South East Cornerstone SD 209, Estavan Comprehensive School	Student Handbook	(Yes). Values statements (respect, honesty) are provided. Plagiarism and copyright infringement are mentioned as well as inappropriate access to materials (but this is not about academic integrity). Final exam policy does not address academic misconduct, only exam scheduling
Manitoba**		
Beautiful Plains School Division, Neepawa Area Collegiate	N.A.C.I Policies	(No). Examination policy describes exemptions
Louis Riel School Division, Glenlawn Collegiate	Expectations for Students at Glenlawn Collegiate	(Yes). Emphasis on honesty and fairness in the school division and collegiate. Students expected to meet accepted academic honesty standards and consult teachers about expectations. Consequences for inappropriate collaboration, plagiarism, and cheating
Mountain View School Division, Gilbert Plains Collegiate Institute	Code of Conduct	(No)

Table 7.2 (continued)

Province School District/Division, School	Student Handbook Examined	Academic integrity statement or policy (Yes/No). Details of policy, if available
River East Transcona School Division, Collège Miles MacDonell Collegiate	Assessment Beliefs, Strategies and Practices	(Yes). Defines academic dishonesty as "any submission of work that is not wholly the student's such as plagiarism, copying, cheating, not citing sources" (para. 6). Teachers determine if learning outcomes have been legitimately met and assign a "0" grade for compromised assessments
Western School Division, Morden Collegiate Institute Collégial Morden	Code of Conduct	(No). Single page devoted to student conduct with nothing further than general values statements, but no specifics related to academic integrity
Newfoundland and Labrador*		
Avalon Region, Gonzaga High School	Student Guidelines 2019–2020	(No). Nothing specific to academic integrity
Avalon Region, Queen Elizabeth Regional High School	2019–2020 Student Handbook	(Yes). Statements refer to the provincial policies on academic integrity
Central Region, J.M. Olds Collegiate	Principles of Success	(No). One statement on cheating: "Cheating: Deliberately using materials, information, or answers on an exam/assignment that is not your own" (p. 10)
Western Region, Indian River High School	Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting Policy Guidelines	(No). No specific details about academic integrity. Policy statement relates to late assignment submission
Labrador Region, Mealy Mountain	Assessment and Evaluation Guidelines (2018–2019)	(Yes). One-page outline of the expectations for students and teachers, and administration along with consequences. Details are limited
British Columbia**		
District 19, Revelstoke Secondary	Code of Conduct, Student Handbook, Athletic Handbook	(Yes). Academic misconduct is deemed an example of a behaviour that is moderately inappropriate. One statement about plagiarism
District 37, South Delta Secondary	Handbook/ Conduct	(Yes). Statement of academic integrity with a focus on plagiarism and cheating. Several examples are provided and a statement of the importance of integrity for school and personal reputation

Table 7.2 (continued)

Province School District/Division, School	Student Handbook Examined	Academic integrity statement or policy (Yes/No). Details of policy, if available
District 51, Grand Forks Secondary	GFSS Student Code of Conduct	(No)
District 58, Merritt Secondary	Merritt Secondary Code of Conduct	(No)
District 33, Sardis Secondary	2019–2020 Student Planner	(Yes). At least a page of information on plagiarism and cheating; consequences are limited
Ontario**		
F E Madill Secondary School	Handbook/Code of Conduct Assessment Policy	(Yes). Some definitions, education, consequences included in the Assessment Policy
Sudbury Secondary School	Student Handbook	(Yes). Plagiarism is listed as an infraction and is defined. Distinct documentation styles are mentioned because of the expected use at postsecondary institutions. The approach to consequences for plagiarism are different for grades 9–10 and 11–12 and is partly dependent on intentionality of the offence
District School Board of Niagara (DSBN), Stamford Collegiate	DSBN Code of Conduct	(No). Simply states that integrity is important
Westmount Secondary School	Ownership and Authorship Procedure	(No). Detailed procedure about ownership, authorship, for all members of the learning community
Lakehead Public Schools, Hammarskjold High School	Not found	(No). Details non-academic misconduct
New Brunswick**		
A-East, Caledonia Regional	Student Handbook 2019–2020	(Yes). Plagiarism and cheating with consequences of re-doing the assignment or exam
A-South, St. Malachy's Memorial High School	Not found	(No)
A-North, Miramichi Valley High School	Student Handbook 2019–2020	(Yes). "Plagiarism is illegal." Provide tips on avoiding plagiarism and what plagiarism is. Second on cheating, and consequences
A-West, Central New Brunswick Academy	Student Handbook 2018–2019	(No)
Fredericton High	Student Handbook 2019–2020	(Yes). Plagiarism policy with definitions, details, and consequences; personal electronic devices in terms of cheating

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peer test scores; Figlio, 2007). Unfortunately, even behaviour policies and the implementation of them are often described as ambiguous, superficial, and ineffective (Rowe, 2006).

The lack of policies and/or the inconsistent approaches to academic integrity education in K-12 education in Canada suggests several issues that require further investigation. First, structural changes that have occurred in education in an effort to increase efficiencies (Capano, 2015), including an overall shift in accountability such that schools have greater autonomy and locally elected school boards have reduced authority (Galway, 2012), may result in a communication gap between government level decisions and adoption of policy at the school level. Second, elected leaders may not have prioritized honesty, trustworthiness, and responsibility in student learning and assessment or in the education system as a whole, resulting in an inconsistency in the adoption of the values of academic integrity at the school level, potentially leading to a general apathy among students, parents, and teachers. The efforts of my colleagues and I to discuss academic integrity with high school educators have often been met with defensiveness, denial, and statements that academic integrity is not applicable to high school students because they are "just becoming scholars." My experiences are consistent with research demonstrating that teachers often underestimate or reject the idea that cheating is occurring in their classes, even when they admit that cheating is a significant problem in middle and high schools (Evans & Craig, 1990). Perhaps denial stems from teachers' lack of training and tools to promote academic integrity or deal with academic misconduct effectively.

Deprioritizing academic integrity education may have long-term implications for primary and secondary students, particularly as they transition to their postsecondary studies. Students are often expected to make a huge leap in understanding the rules and overall academic culture as they transition from high school to postsecondary and professors believe that students should have mastered skills, such as writing and citing, prior to their arrival at university (Peters & Cadieux, 2019). Students also perceive that postsecondary faculty take academic integrity and misconduct more seriously and implement strategies to discourage cheating more often than did their high school teachers (Christensen Hughes & McCabe, 2006). Thus, the enormous mismatch between the expectations for acting with integrity across educational levels is problematic and disadvantages students as they begin postsecondary studies. Although the majority of policies at the postsecondary level for academic integrity are imperfect and lack the level of detail (McKenzie et al., 2020; Stoesz et al., 2019; Stoesz & Eaton, 2020) recommended by leading academic integrity policy experts (Bretag et al., 2011), the contrast between K-12 and postsecondary policy for academic integrity in Canada is mindboggling.

Implications for K-12 Classrooms in Canada

As part of the development or revision of academic integrity policies, careful examination of how assessment policies and programs influence academic integrity or fuel

academic cheating is essential. In Canadian K-12 education systems, high stakes assessments of provincial and territorial assessment programs have important consequences for secondary students—in some jurisdictions results from these assessments make up 30–50% of final grades and/or serve as graduation requirements (Volante & Ben Jaafar, 2008). Research data in the US suggests that high stakes exams contribute to academic misconduct by students in both K-12 education and postsecondary studies (Nichols & Berliner, 2007). Although provincial standardized assessments have been implemented to legitimize Canadian education on the global stage, improve teaching and learning systems, and to hold educators accountable (see Volante & Ben Jaafar, 2008), there has been substantial debate over the value of these assessments to serve these purposes (Cizek, 2001). Moreover, the link between high stakes standardized assessment and the pressure to cheat needs to be examined closely within the Canadian K-12 education context. Success in K-12 has traditionally been measured by achievement of high test scores, acceptance to postsecondary studies, and numerous accomplishments—when these are valued above the quality of learning, students may feel enormous pressure, and cheating may be seen as one way to both achieve and to alleviate the pressure (Galloway, 2012). Thus, exploring the association between standardized assessment and cheating may require that the definitions of success for elementary and secondary school students need to be reimagined (Galloway, 2012).

Changing current practice would arguably be enhanced if teacher training programs in postsecondary institutions were to provide preservice teachers with holistic education on academic integrity, including an understanding of the various perspectives and cultural traditions (e.g., First Nations perspectives; Lindstrom, 2022; Poitras Pratt & Gladue, 2022), and ethical assessment in K-12 education (Malone, 2020; Sisti, 2007; Wan & Scott, 2016). Such education would help to ensure that they are equipped to make professional decisions and can model the values of honesty, respect, and responsibility upon entry into the profession. This is necessary as teachers serve as important role models and are held to high standards in terms of their character and values (Lumpkin, 2008). Administrators in elementary and secondary schools should also ensure that teachers feel comfortable discussing school procedures with them (Yoannou, 2014) and have access to ongoing professional development to stay current with the latest developments in the field of academic integrity (Wan & Scott, 2016). Teachers who value, model, and practice academic integrity are more likely to provide direct instruction to students so that they can develop the appropriate skills to complete their assignments with integrity (Peters & Cadieux, 2019).

Teachers also need guidance from good policy and be prepared with the skills required to deal with cheating promptly, consistently, and effectively when it is identified (Davis et al., 2009). Effective intervention is possible only when the circumstances surrounding the cheating situation are understood. For example, if students have not been instructed or have not had time to practice learning with integrity, behaviours could be viewed as "teachable moments'" for building skills rather than executing a standardized punishment (McGowan, 2005; Wan & Scott, 2016). Moreover, because of the increasing rates of academic misconduct at the high school

level, teaching relevant skills in the early elementary grades is necessary. Relevant education may be provided through the digital and information literacy curricula, however, the message that academic integrity is important in all schoolwork would be stronger if academic integrity education was woven throughout all core subject areas (Lampert, 2008). Finally, parents can support efforts to promote integrity "by talking to their children about the valuing of learning and honesty over grades, by tempering their own desire for their children to succeed at all costs, and by supporting the teacher in disciplining their children when they are caught cheating" (Davis et al., 2009, pp. 65–66).

Conclusion

My environmental scan revealed that few provincial and territorial ministries of education provided guidance to students on academic integrity and consequences for misconduct, or teacher and administrator responsibilities for providing academic integrity education and responding to academic misconduct. Interestingly, an association between the presence or absence of government and school level policies was not evident. Education leaders at the provincial, school division, and school levels in Canada should work together to develop holistic policies that are informed by research and the experiences of all stakeholders, including educators, parents, and students. Such policies must support teaching and learning environments where academic integrity is deemed valuable, is highly respected, and is consistently practiced, and that fosters the development of trusting relationships between students and teachers to support learning (Wan & Scott, 2016). Academic integrity policies must also provide guidance for appropriate consequences for academic misconduct, while at the same time avoiding the development of "... a climate of fear among students and a desire to challenge the system" (Bailey, 2010) by implementing zero tolerance policies, which may be flawed and ineffective (e.g., as shown for non-academic misconduct; Martinez, 2009). Policies must emphasize the values of academic integrity (International Center for Academic Integrity (ICAI), 2021), the importance of proper attribution, and strengthening information literacy skills (Wan & Scott, 2016), so that students in elementary and secondary education are not simply avoiding punishment but moving towards learning with integrity. Finally, postsecondary institutions must provide preservice K-12 teachers with holistic education on academic integrity, including various ways it is understood and expressed based on cultural traditions (e.g., Lindstrom, 2022; Poitras Pratt & Gladue, 2022) and ethical assessment (Malone, 2020; Sisti, 2007; Wan & Scott, 2016).

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