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## Descriptive Analysis of Georgia High School Teachers' Perceptions of Academic Dishonesty

Amy Manning Rowland

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A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF GEORGIA HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS'  
PERCEPTIONS OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

by

AMY MANNING ROWLAND

(Under the Direction of Walter Polka)

ABSTRACT

This research study was conducted with the assistance of Georgia high school teachers for the purpose of examining teachers' perceptions of academic dishonesty during the 2006-2007 school year. Data were gathered to establish teachers' perceptions of academic dishonesty by exploring what behaviors teachers felt to be academically dishonest, how teachers addressed such occurrences, whether teachers felt any internal conflict regarding academic dishonesty, whether any external pressures were involved in instances of academic dishonesty, and how these experiences affected teachers' attitudes toward their profession.

Results of the study indicated that high school teachers in Georgia consider academic dishonesty to be a prevalent problem. Teachers consider some types of academic dishonesty to be more serious than other types of academic dishonesty. Some teachers reported that academic dishonesty is a moral issue and that parents are responsible for the moral training of their children.

Some teachers also reported that administrators play an important role in the success or failure of policies that address academic dishonesty. Some

teachers feel comfortable approaching their administrators about issues concerning academic dishonesty, while other teachers do not.

The implications of this study are that staff development opportunities could allow teachers to explore honor codes, violations, sanctions, and policy implementation. Teachers could keep tests locked in secure locations, use software passwords, and plagiarism detecting software. Educational opportunities for parents could include being exposed to teacher syllabi, course requirements, sanctions, student handbooks, and information sheets. For administrators, graduate level course work could address academic dishonesty, and administrators could promote honor codes and an academic dishonesty policy.

**INDEX WORDS:** Academic dishonesty, Cheating, Teachers' perceptions, School board policy, Administrative policy

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DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

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DEDICATION

In loving memory of

J. B. Allen

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Across the country, elementary students were once taught the same story about one of America's founding fathers (Roche, 1997). According to legend, George Washington, a great military leader of the American Revolution and the first American president, once said, "I cannot tell a lie." Whether this statement is fact or folklore, the legend continues that Washington was a man of integrity and honesty, and educators perpetuate this theory by using Washington as an example of right living and honest dealing.

In recent years, however, news programs and other media have included attacks on the moral code of America's students. Such attacks often include a report on students' rampant use of cheating to make good grades. On some level, students, parents, teachers, and administrators all seem to be involved in this situation (McCabe, 1999; Taylor, Pogrebin, & Dodge, 2002).

In an era of increased accountability and education reform, student success benefits teachers and administrators as much as it does the student. However, as society and technology progress, the honesty, morality, and integrity of George Washington seem to have been forgotten. Yet, this shift in attitude cannot be examined individually because it is the result of a cultural evolution, and both teachers and administrators are affected by this change.

#### Honesty in America's Schools

In the 1600's when European settlers first came to America, the Puritans, particularly in the Massachusetts area, had the most profound impact on the new

settlement's budding educational system (Itzkoff, 1976). The Puritans did not endorse education for its own sake; they endorsed education so that parishioners could learn to read the Bible. Through this system of religious reading, the Puritans had the capacity to establish their system of morals and values and to integrate such a belief system into the culture of the time (Itzkoff, 1976).

American schools have always had a relationship with values (Polka, personal communication). In early America, the school was located in the church, and the local minister was often the teacher. For many students, the text book was the Bible. American schools have also always been concerned with academic dishonesty. These ideas will be further expanded in chapter two.

#### Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty is traditionally viewed as any act that involves a student's giving or receiving unauthorized help on an academic assignment. This includes receiving academic credit for plagiarized material (Storch & Storch, 2002). In their 2002 study, Taylor, Pogrebin, and Dodge proposed that although academic dishonesty is often seen as a measure students take to avoid failure, elite high school students are guilty of academic dishonesty as well. In this qualitative study, students cited competition, parental pressure, and peer and teacher pressures as the main reasons they were academically dishonest. Students also reported much concern over their future academic and financial goals, such as getting accepted into a prestigious college or university.

Most previous research studies have focused on the characteristics of cheaters, situational factors that contribute to academically dishonest behavior,

and reasons students give for such behavior (Bushway & Nash, 1977). Bushway and Nash reported that common types of academic dishonesty include using “cheat sheets” on exams, copying other students’ work, letting other students copy homework, plagiarism, and ghostwriting. However, there is little information available on teachers’ perceptions of academic dishonesty.

#### Prevalence of Academic Dishonesty

According to their study, Evans and Craig (1990) stated that teachers and students agree that the rate of cheating increases as students get older. In their study, Finn and Frone (2004) found that 33% of elementary students have been academically dishonest, and 60% of middle school students have been academically dishonest. According to the Josephson Institute of Ethics (2002), that number rises to 74% in high school. Teachers and students also agree that preventing cheating entirely is difficult to accomplish (Evans & Craig, 1990). This exponential increase of incidents of cheating as students age may be related to a student’s perception of individual success.

Finn and Frone (2004) also found an inverse relationship between school performance and cheating in high school students. However, they concluded from their research that high school students with strong identification ties to their schools are less likely to cheat, even if they are traditionally poor students. In another study on school cheating, McCabe and Bowers (1994) found that in schools with honor codes collaboration on tests increased, but other types of cheating decreased. Based on their 2001 study, Brown and Emmett asserted

that the amount of academic dishonesty has not increased over the years; findings depend on the types of cheating included in the survey.

### Modern Technology and Academic Dishonesty

One traditional method of cheating is the “rubber band trick” (Cheaters amok: A crisis in America’s schools: How it’s done and why it’s happening, 2004). One simply stretches the rubber band out, writes on it, and snaps it back into place. However, advanced technology provides a new frontier for cheaters, as well as limitless possibilities for creativity (Sweeney, 2004). Donald McCabe, professor of management at Rutgers University, reported that in his study of 4,500 high school students, 54% admitted to using the internet to commit plagiarism (Stricherz, 2001).

### *Distance Learning*

On the university level, the 1990’s saw the advent of the “distance learning” college course, which provides much opportunity for academic dishonesty, as the professor and students do not meet face to face, but by dialogue via internet chat rooms or video. Both college professors and students agree that students find it easier to cheat in such an environment. Further, in their study Kennedy, Nowak, Raghura, Thomas, and Davis (2000) stated that as the number of distance learning classes offered increases, so will the amount of academic dishonesty. Kennedy et al. also reported that college students believe that it is easy to cheat in traditional college classrooms; however, college faculty members do not share this view.

The distance learning phenomenon is also gaining popularity on the elementary, middle, and high school levels, referred to as a “virtual school.” Such schools range from students taking one on-line specialized course to all-day charter schools, which receive public school funds. The United States Department of Education reported that there are between 40,000 and 50,000 students attending virtual schools in 37 states (Paulson, 2004). In his article Collinson (2001) stated that incidents of academic dishonesty are on the rise in virtual school environments, just as they are in traditional school settings. Students in a “virtual” setting are often removed from both teachers and peers and are in an environment where moral decisions are not easily discerned (Heinrichs, 2004). The unethical use of computers in virtual schools, as well as other areas, has earned the name “cybercrime” (Collinson, 2001).

### *Advanced Technology*

There are many internet websites where students can purchase papers written to their academic specifications (IVY Research Papers, 2004). Some students are even more creative than simply using the internet to purchase academic papers. Graphing calculators can hold whole paragraphs of information, and most teachers allow students to have such calculators during exams (Cheating Becomes High Tech, 2004). Sweeney (2004) reported that a group of students at Waterford Union High School in Waterford, Wisconsin stole the answer key to a physics exam and programmed the answers into their graphing calculators, which they were allowed to use during the test.

Graphing calculators are not the only hand-held gadget that students use to cheat. A student at Racine Park High School in Racine, Wisconsin used a camera phone to send photos of a test to a friend (Sweeney, 2004). Other students employ the iPAQ, which is similar to the palm pilot, cell-phones for text messaging, and two-way pagers, which can act as mini-computers and access the entire internet (Cheaters amok: A crisis in America's schools, 2004). Another technological advancement called Bluetooth is a mini-computer capable of beaming answers to another student up to 50 feet away, even through walls (Hodges, 2004).

#### Administrative Pressures

Ultimately, building administrators are responsible for the technology used on their campuses. Academic dishonesty is pervasive in America's educational system (Callahan, 2004). Honor codes are one of the accepted methods of dealing with the issue (McCabe & Pavela, 2004). However, such honor codes are only useful if administrators are supportive and if teachers help enforce penalties (Dichtl, 2003). School administrators of the new millennium are responsible for supporting academic integrity from the top of the educational hierarchy to the bottom (Whitley & Keith-Spiegel, 2001). Furthermore, administrators should act as role models for both teachers and students in all endeavors. According to McCabe and Pavela (2004), administrators who implement honor codes may prevent students from developing the life-long habit of dishonesty.

Yet another pressure related to academic dishonesty is the one placed on administrators to keep their “clients” happy. Principals often handle educational matters in a businesslike fashion and make decisions based on survival, rather than on morals and ethics (Callahan, 2004). In addition to administrators, parents exert pressure on teachers, so teachers inevitably feel pressure from more than one source. Because of this reality, students often do not perceive faculty members as treating violations of academic integrity harshly because many teachers look the other way in order to avoid conflicts (Whitley & Keith-Spiegel, 2001). Additional pressures on administrators come in the form of increased accountability standards, which may be the cause of lax policies addressing academic dishonesty (Striterz, 2001).

The Professional Standards Commission of Georgia governs the ethical behavior of educators and has published on its website “The Code of Ethics for Educators,” which applies to all certified personnel in the state of Georgia, both teachers and administrators. According to the code, grounds for disciplinary action concerning academic dishonesty are covered under Standard Four: Misrepresentation or Falsification, which includes “falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting information regarding the evaluation of students” (Georgia Department of Education, 2003).

House Bill 1190 and House Bill 1187 mandated that local school boards establish a code of conduct for students. For instance, in the researcher’s school system, Board Policy states that the school system has the right to govern the behavior of students and to impose discipline that supports this governance.

This board policy specifies that school employees should report certain student behaviors to the administration, such as felonies, weapons, gang activity, riots, terroristic threats, and sexual battery. According to the board policy, however, there are other behaviors, such as truancy, smoking, verbal abuse, vandalism, insubordination, and cheating, that should be addressed by staff members. In the definition of terms set forth by the school board, there is no definition for cheating.

One of the main discrepancies of local school board policies is the strict sequence of actions taken against discipline problems and the lack of enforcement protocol for cheating, which may be rooted in increased accountability pressures (Stricherz, 2001). On the high school level in the researcher's school system, the code of conduct for students is listed in the student handbook. This code specifies the authority of the principal to take progressive disciplinary measures against student offenses and the behaviors which will result in disciplinary action. These behaviors are listed on a continuum that starts with possession and distribution of narcotics and ends with excessive tardiness. Cheating, which is not defined in the definition of school terms, is located near the bottom of the list.

Cheating is not mentioned at all in the researcher's teacher handbook. The closest the handbook comes to giving teachers guidelines on how to address the issue of cheating is listed in the teacher duties and responsibilities section. The handbook specifies that a teacher "enforces regulations concerning student conduct and discipline."

### Teacher Involvement and Reactions

Regardless of teachers' efforts, students seem to have a pervasive view of teachers and their reactions to academic dishonesty. In their study Evans and Craig (1990) reported that according to a study using focus groups of students, most teachers are viewed as unconcerned with the cheating that occurs in their classrooms. Stricherz (2001) discovered that 47% of 4,500 students surveyed believe that teachers overlook cheating, largely because they do not want to go to the trouble of reporting it. Williams (2001) stated that "cheating is seldom detected and....even when it is, action is rarely taken" (p. 227). In his study McCabe (1999) reported that many students think that teachers are not familiar enough with technology to catch students using technology to cheat.

To a certain extent, students may be right about their teachers and their lack of willingness to address academic dishonesty. In a survey of 4,000 teachers in the United States and Canada, McCabe found that 50% had ignored cheating at least once (*Cheaters amok: A crisis in America's schools – How it's done and why it's happening*, 2004). This lack of interest in addressing academic dishonesty can be attributed to several reasons. Some teachers are in denial that their students participate in cheating and that it occurs in their classrooms (Sweeney, 2004). Based on the widespread use of technology in cheating, some teachers may underestimate the rate of cheating because they do not understand the technology involved (Evans & Craig, 1990). Other teachers are afraid of retaliation by parents and not being supported by their administration (Stricherz, 2001).

Upon being faced with academic dishonesty, some teachers experience internal conflict (Roueche, 2002). While most teachers entered the profession for a love of their content area and to enlighten students, some teachers resent being forced into the roles of law enforcement and private detective. In spite of this phenomenon, there is no readily accessible information on the extent of this internal conflict and its affects on teachers' attitudes toward their profession.

However, there is evidence that teachers can reduce cheating in their classrooms by creating a culture of integrity, honesty, and high expectations (Sweeney, 2004; Williams, 2001). While some teachers who are not aware of technological advances may not know that their students are cheating (Hodges, 2004), other teachers have embraced technology and have used it to stop cheating, such as using software to detect plagiarism (Stricherz, 2001). Specifically, Turnitin.com is a school subscription website that detects plagiarism (Cheaters amok: A crisis in America's schools – How it's done and why it's happening, 2004).

### Statement of the Problem

American settlers of the 1600's used education as a vehicle for teaching morals and ethics that were acceptable to the Puritan society. This morality is evident in the folklore surrounding some of America's most famous founding fathers. However, as America's culture has evolved over time, economic demands, the struggle for success, accountability pressures, and advanced technology have created an environment in which academic dishonesty flourishes.

The state of Georgia has its own code of ethics for teachers and administrators, as provided by the Professional Standards Commission, yet state policy defers the establishment of codes of conduct for students to individual school districts. These school districts may be more specific and strict concerning students' violent offenses as opposed to students' ethical offenses, such as academic dishonesty. Consequently, teachers are often left to their own devices in dealing with academic dishonesty. For many teachers and students, academic dishonesty is not clearly defined by the school district's code of ethics for students or for teachers in the teacher handbook.

In Georgia there is no state-wide code of conduct for students, and there is no state-wide guideline to help teachers address academic dishonesty offenses. Additionally, there is little available research relevant to teachers' perceptions of what academic dishonesty is and their experiences with various types of academic dishonesty. Such perceptions and experiences are important because they may affect teachers' levels of internal conflict as well as their attitudes toward their profession. Therefore, this researcher attempted to explore teachers' perceptions of academic dishonesty by exploring what behaviors teachers felt to be academically dishonest, how teachers addressed such occurrences, whether teachers felt any internal conflict regarding academic dishonesty, whether any external pressures were involved in instances of academic dishonesty, and how these experiences affected teachers' attitudes toward their profession.

## Research Questions

The overarching research question of this study was: What are teachers' perceptions of academic dishonesty? In order to answer this question, the following sub-questions were examined. These sub-questions were a result of the review of the literature, the professional experience of the researcher, and the guidance of the researcher's doctoral committee.

### *Subquestions:*

1. What actions do teachers consider to be academically dishonest?
2. What are teachers' experiences with academic dishonesty?
3. How do teachers address such occurrences?
4. How do experiences with academic dishonesty affect teachers' levels of internal conflict and, thus, their attitudes toward their profession?
5. What pressures do external forces place on teachers during an occurrence of academic dishonesty?

## Significance of the Study

Educational literature addresses academic dishonesty, particularly plagiarism. However, there is little, if any, research that encompasses teachers' perceptions of academic dishonesty and their experiences with academic dishonesty. Also, there is a lack of research that encompasses teachers' levels of internal conflict and attitudes toward their careers in response to academic dishonesty.

While teachers in the past may have been able to voice their opinions related to plagiarism and subsequent punitive measures, the researcher allowed

teachers in Georgia an opportunity to express via the study their beliefs, opinions, and experiences with academic dishonesty, which, in turn, will provide information to future generations of teachers and administrators. From this research, future teachers may be able to glean strategies that will help them foster an environment of high standards and honesty in their classrooms.

Moreover, the benefit to administrators would be even more significant. This research will provide administrators with quantified data concerning teachers' perceptions of academic dishonesty and experiences with academic dishonesty. This information could be beneficial to administrators and school board members who face decisions about instituting an honor code, developing a code of conduct for students, evaluating a system of penalties for academic dishonesty, or constructing a handbook for teachers.

The issue of academic dishonesty is important to teachers and administrators, as well as to society as a whole. The researcher's purpose was to collect data from a sampling of high school teachers in Georgia concerning their perceptions of academic dishonesty. This data will be used to provide information to both teachers and administrators, which will be of use in making decisions for the future of education. The information gathered during the course of this study may be most relevant to school district personnel in the capacity of board members and administrators who are responsible for decisions that determine local policy as it relates to student honor codes, teacher codes of ethics, and each group's capacity to enforce these policies. Furthermore,

information from this study may be helpful in determining future RESA programs and professional development opportunities.

## Procedures

### *Research Design*

The researcher has provided a descriptive analysis of Georgia high school teachers' perceptions of academic dishonesty. The researcher modified an existing survey (Burke, 1997) and developed open-ended questions, based on information gleaned from the review of literature. Marshall and Rossman (1999) reported that the benefits of survey research include "accuracy, generalizability, and convenience" (p. 130). In addition, Marshall and Rossman noted that survey research helps researchers attain information in areas that may be considered "politically or ethically sensitive" (p. 130).

### *Population*

The population targeted in this study was high school teachers in the state of Georgia. The researcher used a stratified cluster sample to identify possible participants. Nardi (2003) suggested a sample of 100 in order to get 50 respondents. Therefore, the researcher expected to get 50% participation and doubled the sample size to compensate for possible non-responses. Krejcie and Morgan (1970) suggested a sample of 377 for a population of 20,000. Hence, the researcher contacted 754 high school teachers for participation in this study.

### *Data Collection*

The researcher sent a cover letter, explaining the purpose of this study and inviting teachers to participate, to the on-line e-mail address of 754 teachers.

The cover letter included a hyperlink to a researcher-modified survey and open-ended questions. The researcher-modified questions were based on the research questions and the literature on the subject of academic dishonesty. The validity of these questions was established by a panel of experts. The researcher also conducted a pilot study to improve the clarity of the survey items.

### *Data Analysis*

Upon the return of the participants' surveys, the researcher used the data analysis items on the survey website. The researcher examined qualitative responses to open-ended questions by hand to identify common themes and patterns of behavior.

### *Pilot Study*

The researcher chose six high school teachers in her school district, three teachers at two district high schools, to participate in a pilot study. These teachers agreed to provide feedback on the clarity of survey and open-ended questions. In order to preclude repetition, the researcher's school system was not included in the schools from which the sample was chosen.

### Limitations

The limitations of this study are as follows:

1. Participants' responses were voluntary; therefore, the responses may not be representative of all high school teachers.
2. Only high school teachers in Georgia were surveyed in this study; therefore, their responses may not be generalized to teachers on

other educational levels or in other states.

3. The survey website questionpro.com only provides summative data, so individual responses cannot be analyzed.

#### Delimitations

The following are the delimitations of this study:

1. The focus of this study was high school teachers in Georgia who were employed in public education at the time of the study.
2. The participants in this study were a sample from the high school teachers in Georgia.

#### Definition of Terms

1. *Academic dishonesty* is any instance in which students are deceitful when completing an academic assignment.
2. *Cheating* is any deliberate and dishonest act that allows a student an unfair advantage over his or her peers.
3. *High School Teacher* is any educator on the 9-12 grade level.
4. *Integrity* is “(1) *discerning* what is right and what is wrong (2) *acting* on what you have discerned, even at personal cost; and (3) *saying openly* that you are acting on your understanding of right from wrong” (Carter, 1996, p. 7).
5. *Internal Conflict* is defined as moral discomfort, anger, uncertainty, frustration, or emotional distress.
6. *External Stakeholder* is defined as any person other than the teacher who may be involved in a situation of academic dishonesty (e.g., students, parents, administrators).

## Summary

America's early educational foundation was based largely on the desire of the Puritans to teach parishioners to read the Bible and to incorporate appropriate morals and ethics into their daily lives. The remainder of the country eventually followed Massachusetts in providing children with an education funded by taxes. Throughout America's history, theorists have developed new ideas about the moral, social, and cognitive development of humans.

The increasing importance of academic success, financial security, educational accountability, and advanced technology has contributed to a competitive environment for both students and educators. Academic dishonesty has increased in recent years, and the findings of this study may help Georgia's policy makers remain current with this trend. Currently, teachers and administrators in Georgia are governed by The Code of Ethics for Educators set forth by the Professional Standards Commission. However, the state government relegated to local school boards the responsibility of developing a code of ethics for students and providing teachers with the capacity to enforce that code.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a basis for understanding academic dishonesty through a review of educational literature. In order to understand the current trends in education, one must be aware of the evolution of education in America. In his book *A Cheating Culture* (2004), researcher David Callahan connects current accountability pressures, student performance, and academic dishonesty. Callahan also views the roots of society's "succeed at all cost" mentality as being rooted in American history. As more accountability pressures are placed on teachers and more faith is placed in standardized-test data as an evaluation tool, teachers will have increased opportunity and incentive to alter the test pool or the accuracy of test data in any way that they can (Figlio & Getzler, 2002). The major studies discussed in this Review of Literature are presented in tables as APPENDIX

#### Beliefs of the Founding Fathers

America's founding beliefs were shaped by the first groups to settle in the country. The Pilgrims, who traveled on the *Mayflower*, had first been to Holland to search for religious freedom, which they eventually found in the New World (Gregg, 1915). The Puritans, Englishmen who sailed to America in 1628, sought a place to practice a "purified" style of worship, free from the constraints imposed by the British monarchy. Thus, the Pilgrims came to America to enjoy religious

freedom, while the Puritans longed for religious and political freedom (Callahan, 2004).

Even though both Pilgrims and Puritans had similar reasons for traversing the Atlantic, they had fundamental differences as well (Gregg, 1915). For example, Pilgrims believed that church and state were exclusive of each other and that non-church members should be allowed to vote. Conversely, Puritans believed that the church and state were one and that only church members should have a voice in government.

As the years passed, early Americans clung to the ideology that the success of democracy relies on the balance between power and morals (Koch, 1961). Furthermore, those men in governing positions felt that “the primary purpose of laws and institutions is to prevent evil,” not necessarily to govern the good (Eidelberg, 1968, p. 249). This precept echoes the philosophy of Thomas Jefferson: that man is rational, has rights, and is moral (Koch, 1961).

In keeping with Jefferson’s philosophy, the founding fathers tried to form a government that allowed for moderate leadership (Smith, 1965). Personally, Jefferson and other early Americans were suspicious of a centralized governmental power (Callahan, 2004). Combined with the culture of an adventure-filled frontier, that attitude added to the general population’s desire for personal liberty. For the greater political landscape, many representatives agreed with Jefferson’s idea that men who are allowed to enjoy their freedom and their labor are more easily governed (Koch, 1961). In fact, one of the goals of the early American politicians was to establish a society that did not require

governing at all, for they believed that “power without liberty is tyranny,” but “liberty without power is utopian” (Koch, 1961, p. 141).

As a single governmental system became necessary for the young country, Jefferson argued for man’s personal freedom and states’ rights (Koch, 1961). The main goal of the framers of the Constitution was to avoid a government controlled by a national chief or a popular democracy (Smith, 1965). One reason that men like Jefferson wanted to avoid an inherited title of leadership was that, according to Jefferson, “wisdom and virtue are not hereditary” (Koch, 1961, p. 144). Thus, men should govern themselves through elections, and the government established by the forefathers provided an opportunity for those to be heard who would normally have remained silent.

Three individuals who advocated personal liberty were Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, and John Dewey. As a proponent of the individual, Jefferson argued for equal rights, regardless of birth, and his intention was that this philosophy became woven into the fabric of American society (Koch, 1961). Benjamin Franklin, early moralist and scholar, was so dedicated to the ideal of intertwining morality and knowledge that he exhorted his compatriots to emulate Jesus and Socrates (Callahan, 2004). Another advocate for human rights, John Dewey viewed the individual as the conduit of human values from one generation to the next. He also sought to use science, or his education, to advance the human condition, giving early scholars an example of using one’s intellect to gird one’s moral and social beliefs. Similarly, the founders of the new nation intended

for men to use their intellect in their quest for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

### Eras of America's Public Schools

The first American settlers, the Puritans of the 1600's, had the most profound effect on America's educational system (Itzkoff, 1973). Because they wanted churchgoers to be able to read the Bible, literacy was of utmost importance. The Puritans also believed that controlling education was a sure way of establishing their moral system as that of the local society.

Massachusetts, a Northeastern state full of Puritan outposts, was the first state to establish a school board (Rippa, 1997). Horace Mann, the Father of American Education, was its first secretary.

Mann believed that education was the great equalizer of mankind and worked to ensure that all children received one of equal quality (Webb, Metha, & Jordan, 1992). As a product of these efforts, the Common School Movement, through which citizens supported education with taxes, began. Thus, Massachusetts was the first state to establish a public school system made up of 50 high schools, and in 1852, compulsory education became law. Hence, the Common School Movement of 19<sup>th</sup> century Massachusetts became the public school system of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Webb, Metha, & Jordan, 1992).

As early Americans moved westward, education evolved to fit the circumstances and needs of the people (Hughes, 1965). The geography of the west, rugged and stark, helped to control the types of people who flourished there. Only hearty, self-sufficient people thrived, and their pioneer spirit

influenced the style of education their children received. According to Hughes, in this era of westward expansion, neighbors helped one another, and children who attended school were welcomed into a one-room school house that mirrored the equality their parents embraced. American settlers were shaped by the land they inhabited, and their social structures were continually redefined by the landscape (Turner, 1920).

Equality, however, was not a product of the plantation-era South. In fact, the purpose of education in the Southern states was to perpetuate a stratified society and emphasize social boundaries (Rippa, 1997). This attitude, maintained by the wealthy landowners, did much to restrict the development of public education in the South. Another deterrent to Southern educational equality was the greatly dispersed population of the time (Webb, 1992). It was not economically feasible for students to gather in one school because of the cost of travel and time constraints.

In the Recovery Era South, during the aftermath of the Civil War, finances were again a problem for public education because the war-torn states could not fund an educational system for the masses (Good & Teller, 1973). Educational efforts were also hindered by those who clung to the pre-Civil War class system and by the state of the lower classes. During Congressional Reconstruction, education was provided for former slaves (Webb, 1992).

In 1872, during the Industrial Period, the Kalamazoo court decision upheld funds for public schools (Polka & Guy, 1998). During the Federalist Period, several educational advances were made. The first public high school opened in

Boston in 1821. Then in 1837, Horace Mann was named Secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education. By 1860, the first English language kindergarten in America was established (Guy & Polka, 1998).

During the International Period the first junior high school was started in Berkeley, California, in 1909 (Guy & Polka, 1998). After public schools became more prevalent, the lawsuit *Brown vs. Board of Education*, which took place in 1954, required racial integration. As a product of the Civil Rights Movement, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act provided federal funds for compensatory education in 1965. In 1972, Title IX declared that all aspects of educational funding would be gender equal. Then, in 2002, President George W. Bush signed into law *No Child Left Behind*, which was a reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, and was more specific in terms of educational outcomes and accountability.

#### A Historical Perspective of Cheating

Just as education has evolved over time, so has academic dishonesty. Nationally known researcher and author of the book *A Cheating Culture*, David Callahan (2004) postulated that America's love affair with cheating began generations ago in the era of young industrialism and big business. The industrialists of the 1800's fought economic battles over railroads, oil refineries, coal mines, and any other business venture. According to Callahan's research, these wealthy business barons cheated each other, and particularly smaller competitors. For example, Cornelius Vanderbilt supposedly once threatened a competitor with financial ruin because he felt that a legitimate law suit would take

too long. By the 1920's, cheating the law and customers took the forms of stock market deals, prohibition, and land development swindles, particularly in Florida.

By definition, cheating is breaking the rules to get ahead in any facet of life (Callahan, 2004). However, the term "academic misconduct" has become a euphemism for "cheating" (Kessler, 2003). One reason for cheating, which relates directly back to the ideal of the American dream and the early emphasis on big business, is the American concept that economic demand rewards the extreme (Callahan, 2004). Thus, students who were concerned with their economic futures were willing to go to daring lengths to ensure financial success. As result of this trend, people made decisions based on what was profitable, not what was right (Schiltz, 1999). According to Callahan (2004), over time, cheating subverted the work ethic so that the America of the past has become non-existent.

In her *Wall Street Journal* article "Legalized 'Cheating'" (2006), Ellen Gamerman explores the influence rampant technology has had on educators' definitions of "cheating." Some educators adopt the "If you can't beat them, join them" philosophy and allow internet access and peer consultation, via text messaging, during exams. Educators' rationale for these measures is that the global workplace demands that employees be able to find and access information, not have arbitrary knowledge stored in their brains. Teachers and administrators at schools in Cincinnati, Ohio; Newport Beach, California; and San Diego, California; do not deem such collaboration "cheating" because the school rules have been changed to allow for such behaviors.

Educators who support this use of technology in the classroom view such decisions as being similar to the moral dilemma associated with the hand held calculator of the early 1970s (Gamerman, 2006). For years, teachers were unsure about whether technological assistance was appropriate in math classes, yet help from calculators has been permissible on the SAT since 1994. Other educators, however, do not agree with the use of technology, or peers, during tests because such resources are not available on standardized tests or college entrance exams (Gamerman, 2006). Over time, societal norms have evolved to encompass behaviors once thought abnormal or reprehensible, and such social norms greatly influence the moral development of the children produced in this society.

#### Moral Development

Kohlberg's theory of moral development includes six stages (Kohlberg, 1971). Zero stage is ruled by egocentric judgment; the individual has no concept of rules, and his or her behavior is governed by personal likes and dislikes. Stage one is punishment-obedient orientation in which physical consequences rule behavior, but there is no human meaning associated with the consequences. Instrumental-relativist orientation is stage two, and in this stage an individual acts based on personal satisfaction and occasionally the satisfaction of others. Stage three is interpersonal concordance-orientation, and at this stage behavior is based on social approval and helping others. Stage four is law and order-orientation, which is based on doing duty, respect for authority, and balance of social order. The social-contract legalistic-orientation is found in stage five where

behavior is based on generally accepted standards agreed upon by society. Morality of this stage is found in American government and the Constitution. Stage six is the universal-ethical-orientation in which behavior is based on conscience. Moral thought at this stage is abstract and is encompassed in the concepts of justice and the Golden Rule.

Another view of Kohlberg's six stages of moral development is that stages one and two are concerned with the concrete physical world (Gibbs, 2003). Then stages three and four require more mature judgment. These two stages should construct the moral norm for any given culture. At stage three, individuals begin to understand moral norms and values, and people in stages three and four should be able to transcend reciprocating by fact to reciprocating by ideal. Students in the fourth moral stage, "law and order," should at least know that academic dishonesty is wrong because it is against school rules (Eisenberg, 2004).

Part of this socio-moral development should be that moral cognition matures with exposure to the experiences of others (Gibbs, 2003). However, anti-social youth with immature moral judgment and egocentric bias showed slow moral development. Furthermore, when teens experienced a conflict between their morals and their peers, they usually sided with their peers (Eisenberg, 2004). For this reason, even high achieving students will cheat if the temptation is strong enough (Malinowski & Smith, 1985).

In 1985, Kohlberg and Williams found that students at high levels of moral development are not academically dishonest. Lambert, Hogan, and Barton

(2003) reported that both religious values and stage of moral development correlate with academic dishonesty. However, Eisenberg (2004) reported that 60% of college students are at level four of Kohlberg's stages or higher, so academic dishonesty is not just performed by low morally functioning students.

### Locus of Control

Locus of control may also be an issue in moral decision making because students who participate in maladaptive behaviors often have an external locus of control (Tony, 2003). Clinically speaking, locus of control is a scale or continuum that assesses belief as to the location of control for reinforcement or events (Dixon, Hayes, & Aban, 2000). More plainly defined, locus of control helps to determine how much people believe that they can control events in their lives (Carton & Nowicki, 1994). Furthermore, locus of control defines how much a person believes events are determined by his or her actions. People who believe that a certain outcome was contingent on his or her behavior exhibited internal locus of control (Stevick, Dixon, & Willingham, 1980). However, people who view events as controlled by others exhibited external locus of control.

According to their 1980 study, Stevick et al. found that people with an internal locus of control are more cooperative, have a greater social conscience, are more altruistic, have positive attitudes, and have more social interest than people with an external locus of control. Also, people with an internal locus of control are characterized by a higher level of academic/vocational functioning, are more apt to seek challenging goals, are more positive in interpersonal relationships, are more likely to delay gratification, and are persistent in the face

of difficulty (Carton & Nowicki, 1994). However, the internal locus of control is not always the best. Often, people with an internal locus of control are less helpful to others because of their view that people control their decisions and, therefore, their circumstances (Stevick, Dixon, & Willingham, 1980).

Conversely, people with an external locus of control believed that events were controlled by a force outside themselves, such as fate, luck, chance, or other people (Carton & Nowicki, 1994). The developing external locus of control was influenced by repeated situations in which one viewed events as controlled by an outside force. This can even cause a shift from internal locus of control to external locus of control. Students with external locus of control were more easily influenced by outside forces, such as their peers (Stevick, Dixon, & Willingham, 1980). Furthermore, external locus of control contributed to feelings of alienation and powerlessness, again contributing to delinquent behavior (Gore & Rotter, 1963).

Students who exhibit maladaptive behavior, breaking school rules for example, generally have an external locus of control (Tony, 2003). As psychosocial development is dependent upon a feeling of mastery over one's environment, internal locus of control is very important in influencing students to conform to societal mores. Kohlberg stated that individuals acquire their values, "evaluations of actions generally believed by the members of a given society to be either 'right' or 'wrong'," from their culture and environment (Berkowitz, 1964, p. 44). Child (1954) defined moral development as the whole process of developing behaviors that are socially acceptable for any given culture. Kohlberg

(1980) also believed that moral development is the “internalization of external cultural norms” (p. 24). In child development maladaptive behavior is not synonymous with “bad” behavior, but it is poor or inadequate response to adaptive behavior (Community Legal Services, Inc., 2007). Types of maladaptive behavior include impulsivity, lying, cheating, and stealing.

#### Academic Dishonesty in America

Academic dishonesty is clinically defined as any act of giving or receiving unauthorized assistance on an academic project or for claiming someone else’s academic work (Storch & Storch, 2002). Peer behavior, honor code, severity of penalties, certainty of being reported, and academic integrity policy are all associated with academic dishonesty (McCabe & Trevino, 1993). Traditionally, academic dishonesty has been viewed as a means to avoid failure by low-level students; however, Taylor, Pogrebin, and Dodge (2002) found that elite high school students participated in academic dishonesty as well. Eisenberg (2004) found that over the years, in both public and private schools, the biggest increase in academic dishonesty was on tests and exams.

Specific factors influence a student’s willingness to commit an act of academic dishonesty. The first is the student’s perception of the person making the rules; the rule-maker must convey a sense of fairness and deserved power in order for students to feel obligated to acquiesce to that person’s demands (Callahan, 2004). Second, a student’s perception of the physical classroom environment affects his or her willingness to justify academic dishonesty (Petress, 2003). Additionally, classrooms that appeared “less personalized, less

satisfying, and less task oriented” are environments in which students felt less compunction about cheating (Pulvers & Diekhaf, 1999, p. 495).

The culture of a school also plays an important role in how students view academic dishonesty (Conradson & Hernandez-Ramos, 2004). For most students, academic dishonesty starts in elementary school and is ingrained as part of the culture of the school and society of the students by high school. Puett (2004) reported that in first grade 24% of girls and 20% of boys cheated. According to the Duke University Center for Academic Integrity, by high school, at least half of all students had committed plagiarism with the internet (Dichtl, 2003). In a survey of 4,500 high school students, Donald McCabe found that percentage to be 54% (Strichertz, 2001).

Finn and Frone (2004) found that one-third of all elementary school students have committed acts of academic dishonesty. By middle school, the percentage rose to 60%, and the percentage reached its highest level in high school. Hence, research indicates that academic dishonesty in middle and high schools is on the rise (Conradson & Hernandez-Ramos, 2004). In a three year study, the Duke University Center for Academic Integrity found that 74% of high school students committed varying acts of academic dishonesty (Dichtl, 2003). This trend also includes those who are selected as America’s most promising students. In a survey of 700,000 students selected to Who’s Who Among America’s High School Students, 80% admitted to committing academic dishonesty at some point in the past (Kessler, 2003).

Many previous studies have focused on characteristics of cheaters, situational factors that contribute to academically dishonest behavior, and reasons students give for such behavior (Bushway & Nash, 1977). Additionally, there is considerably more documented research that addresses academic dishonesty in colleges and universities, as opposed to research conducted with younger students (Smith, 1998). Eisenberg (2004) corroborated Smith's conclusion that most quantifiable studies which evaluate academic dishonesty trends were conducted in higher education and that researchers did not conduct as many studies on this topic on the secondary level. In spite of the fact that there was not as much research conducted with secondary students as with collegiate students, research indicates that intervention on the high school level may be more beneficial for students than waiting until college to try to alter a well ingrained cultural norm (Eisenberg, 2004).

In higher education, where most academic dishonesty research is conducted, academic dishonesty is often the response of students who felt competition for and pressure to achieve top grades for internships, graduate schools, and top jobs (Gehring & Pavela, 1994). According to Pulvers and Diekhart (1999), 40% to 90% of college students committed academic dishonesty. College students reported believing that it is easy to cheat in the traditional college classroom (Kennedy, Nowak, Raghuraman, Thomas, & Davis, 2000). College professors, however, do not share this view. Yet, both college students and professors believe that academic dishonesty is easier to commit in internet courses. While college students may commit academic dishonesty,

research indicates that the levels of academic dishonesty are highest in high school, lower in college, and continued to decrease the higher the level of education (Williams, 2001). One reason for this may be that colleges and universities that are successful in establishing academic dishonesty policies also establish a strong sense of responsibility and ownership; however, most high school students do not have this option (McCabe, 1999).

In spite of all of the research that supports the precept that instances of academic dishonesty are increasing, one survey conducted by Cole and McCabe (1996) found that there have been no significant changes in the amount or types of academic dishonesty being committed. Brown and Emmett (2001) posited that instances of academic dishonesty have not increased but that results depend upon what types of academic dishonesty were included in the survey.

In addition to various research studies focused on the rates of academic dishonesty, there has been a myriad of studies to evaluate why students choose to commit academic dishonesty. Taylor (2003) found that popularity of academic dishonesty and the ease of plagiarizing from the internet topped the reasons students gave for their behavior. Conversely, Morrison (2003) postulated that the fault for academic dishonesty lay within the bureaucratic conundrum in which students find themselves. Because society understands grades, children are forced into an environment that encourages competition, thus undermining the main educational goal of encouraging life-long learners. Furthermore, in this type of environment, teachers inadvertently create a performance orientation, rather than a learning orientation. Some students realize that they cannot survive the

academic challenges of the performance-oriented classroom and opt to commit academic dishonesty to help maintain academic equilibrium (Mercuri, 1998).

Another reason that students give for academic dishonesty is competition for college admission (Callahan, 2004). According to research conducted by Godfrey and Waugh (1998), there are some students who are more susceptible to this feeling of competition than others. Students with a high need for approval have a higher rate of academic dishonesty. Students with a low need for approval have a low rate of academic dishonesty. Furthermore, Pulvers and Diekhart (1999) found that students who were academically dishonest were less mature than their counterparts and had a lower level of moral development. Yet another contributing factor in a student's willingness to be academically dishonest was his or her socio-economic status; students who were in lower socio-economic levels were more likely to view academic dishonesty as being morally acceptable (Baird, 1980).

Although most educators believe that students arrive in their classrooms as morally grounded human beings, teachers should not assume that their students share their moral conventions or awareness of immoral behavior (Eisenberg, 2004). Plagiarism is the most difficult form of academic dishonesty for students to understand (Kessler, 2003). The availability of the internet and computers allow for a variety of student violations (Mercuri, 1998), yet not enough students knew exactly what plagiarism is (Petress, 2003). Therefore, students do not acknowledge the moral culpability of being academically dishonest (Conradson & Hernandez-Ramos, 2004). For those students willing to

pay the price, there are “writers” who customize a plagiarized paper to fit specific academic requirements (Mercuri, 1998).

### Evolution of Academic Dishonesty

An innovative example of academic dishonesty is the student who stretched out a rubber band, wrote on it, and let it snap back into place for use during an exam (Cheaters Amok: A Crisis in America’s Schools -- How It’s Done and Why It’s Happening, 2004). While cheatsheets and the occasional rubber band are not extinct, technology provides students with a new frontier for academic dishonesty (Sweeney, 2004). Teachers already disagree on the role of technology in the classroom (Shaw, 2003), and many teachers are unaware of the technological advancements students have made, particularly concerning academic dishonesty (McMurty, 2001). More advanced technology allows for more advanced methods of committing academic dishonesty (Conradson & Hernandez-Ramos, 2004). Such advancement has earned the term “cybercheating,” which is defined as the use of technology tools in inappropriate ways for academic advancement.

There are two different kinds of academic dishonesty, passive and active (Finn & Frone, 2004). Passive cheating involves helping another student, while active cheating involves acting for one’s own benefit. Within these major domains of academic dishonesty, there are many different methods, including the fabrication of quotes, fictitious sources, getting copies of an exam in advance, breaking into teachers’ offices and files, and hacking into school databases (Petress, 2003). Other violations include morning students giving afternoon

students test questions, e-mailing homework, text messaging during tests, and using calculators programmed for tests (Callahan, 2004).

There are various definitions of “cheating,” particularly plagiarism (Kessler, 2003). Plagiarism may be defined as claiming “someone else’s words or ideas, a kind of literary theft” (Kessler, 2003, p. 60). More technically, plagiarism is “to present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source” (Kessler, 2003, p. 60). While intellectual theft may not be as tangible as other forms of cheating, it is still illegal (Petress, 2003). The newest method of plagiarism is from the internet, and as students become more technologically savvy, there are more opportunities for them to be creative in their cheating methodology (Cheaters Amok: A Crisis in America’s Schools – How It’s Done and Why It’s Happening, 2004).

As computers become more sophisticated, not only do students have more diverse ways to be academically dishonest, but also they feel less guilty about it as well (Conradson & Hernandez-Ramos, 2004). Part of students’ lack of compunction is directly related to the number of jokes and e-mails students send to one another. Because this material is not copyrighted, students may assume that all cyber-information is the same and, therefore, part of the public domain.

According to McCabe and Pavela (2004), internet sources are increasingly misused. Whether the intention is conscious or not, students do not acknowledge academic property (Conradson & Hernandez-Ramos, 2004). Of all the plagiarized internet papers, 60% were downloaded by high school students.

There are several websites that specialize in selling papers to students, from term papers to dissertations, such as Cyber Essays, Gradesaver, Killer Essays, PinkMonkey.com, A-1 Term paper, DueNow.com, Itchy Brains, School Sucks, and Dissertations and Thesis: Custom Research (PLAGIARISM IN CYBERSPACE: Sources, Prevention, Detection, and Other Information, 2004). Prices for these internet services range from \$12.95 per page to \$38 per page.

At IVY Research Papers, writers charge \$14.95 per page and guarantee teacher approval (IVY Research Papers, 2004). Custom Research Reports advertises an average price of \$600 per paper and writers with 32 years of academic experience (Custom Research Reports, 2004). At the website for MegaEssays, students click on the topic of their choice and view a sample paragraph; however, students must pay a membership fee in order to purchase the whole paper (MegaEssays, 2004). Some websites even promote intentional grammatical mistakes in purchased papers to help students avoid detection (Conradson & Hernandez-Ramos, 2004). Lisa Hubbard, an English teacher on maternity leave, had 12 students purchase papers on the internet, only to have the substitute catch them because of the white out covering the web address at the bottom of every page (Hodges, 2004).

For students who cannot afford “customized” papers, there are various banks of papers online where students can cut-and-paste whole plagiarized sections (Mercuri, 1998). Another act of plagiarism that does not require financial solvency is falsifying, or making up, fictional bibliography sources (Finn & Frone, 2004). A disclaimer on the website EssayWorld.com says that any

information gathered there should be cited as if it were from a book and that the owner of the site is not responsible for any misuse (McMurtry, 2001). Kenny Sahr, creator of SchoolSucks.com, blames teachers for student cheating, citing that teachers who give original and creative assignments and who know their students' work do not have to worry about plagiarism (Cromwell, 2004).

Another factor associated with academic dishonesty is the technological advancement of the classroom itself (Christe, 2005). At Indiana University, two students who were taking an on-line exam admitted to using cell-phones. Their defense for this action was that it was not "expressly forbidden" (Christe, 2005. p. 1). Many students who find themselves in on-line courses or in virtual classrooms do not know the rules of this new technological environment.

Distance learning, or the virtual school, which has been popular for some time on the college level, is gaining popularity in the K-12 sector (Paulson, 2004). Virtual schools range from students taking one on-line specialized course a day to virtually all-day charter schools. Currently, there are between 40,000 and 50,000 virtual school students being served in 37 states. The instances of academic dishonesty are on the rise in virtual schools, just as they are in the traditional schools (Collinson, 2001).

Kennedy, Nowak, Raghuraman, Thomas, and Davis (2000) proposed that as the number of virtual classrooms rises, so will the amount of academic dishonesty. Heinrichs (2004) proposed that when students are in a "virtual" environment, moral decisions are not as easily discerned. Therefore, in the absence of teachers or peers, students in the virtual school are left to fend for

themselves morally. New on-line environments require more of an honor code mentality because of the lack of teacher/student interaction (Kennedy, Nowak, Raghuraman, Thomas, & Davis, 2000).

At Racine Park High School in Racine, Wisconsin, a student was caught using a camera phone to send a copy of a test to her best friend (Sweeney, 2004). At Waterford Union High School in Waterford, Wisconsin, a student stole the answer key before an exam, and then a group of students programmed the answers into their graphing calculators. But most seriously, in China in July of 2004, students used cell phones to text-message during the college entrance exam (Hodges, 2004). Monitors for that exam could face the death penalty.

#### Preventing Academic Dishonesty

There are four ways that academic dishonesty poses a threat to the academic community (Gehring & Pavela, 2004). They are campus climate, faculty indifference, sense of community, and deception of those who may one day depend on the knowledge. Bolin (2004) found that a student's attitude toward academic dishonesty plays the most important role in whether that student cheats. While some educators may assume that students at schools with religious affiliations are less likely to be academically dishonest, Godfrey and Waugh (1998) found that parochial school students reveal the same rate of cheating as those at secular schools. Eighty percent of students surveyed by Evans, Craig, and Mietzel (1993) reported that ambiguous rules are a greater influence on academically dishonest behavior than religious orientation.

Finn and Frone (2004) found that there is an inverse relationship between school performance and academic dishonesty; therefore, the higher a student's school performance, the less likely that student will cheat. Types of tests teachers gave are also worthy of consideration because on multiple choice tests, students find it easier to cheat and less likely to get caught (Frary, 1993). One method teachers may use to prevent academic dishonesty is to address expectations and consequences (Dichtl, 2003). Teachers who clarified expectations and consequences and were then firm enough to enforce them reported fewer violations of classroom protocol. Teachers can further influence students by instructing them not to cheat (Bushway & Nash, 1977). According to Puett (2004), to make academic dishonesty awareness truly productive, education must start when students are young and be reinforced periodically.

In order to be sure that students understand various offenses, teachers should discuss different forms of cheating with students (Kessler, 2003). Many students do not understand the concept of intellectual property; therefore, students find it helpful when teachers provide a simple definition of academic dishonesty (Conradson & Hernandez-Ramos, 2004). Such clear definitions and consequences yield accountability on the part of the student, and most teachers find consistent reinforcement more productive than sporadic punishment (Kessler, 2003).

Plagiarism may be the most misunderstood form of academic dishonesty; hence, it is important for teachers to explain the correct form of citations (Kessler, 2003). In order to avoid this type of academic theft, teachers should teach

students to document everything, even informal sources. Furthermore, many students do not understand that cutting and pasting is morally wrong (Conradson & Hernandez-Ramos, 2004), and teachers need to emphasize the rules regarding the internet and stress that breaking these rules is not justifiable by any circumstances (Eisenberg, 2004).

Whitley and Keith-Spiegel (2001) reported that the best method of inhibiting academic dishonesty is to publish offenses and their consequences. Furthermore, severity of consequences is another important factor in altering behavior (Gehring & Pavela, 1994). Godfrey and Waugh (1998) proposed that the three best ways to ensure that students remain academically honest are informing students of penalties, enforcing seating arrangements for testing, and establishing smaller class size. When students were allowed to sit where they wished, there was a higher rate of academic dishonesty than when teachers assigned seats.

A more hands-on approach to combating academic dishonesty is to compare statistically identical wrong answers on multiple choice tests (Frary, 1993). However, this is only effective with large groups. For smaller groups, some in-class writing assignments may be more appropriate (Mercuri, 1998). Another solution to the problem of academic dishonesty could be for teachers to assign more group work or group community projects. However, the best way for teachers to combat academic dishonesty is to know their students and the quality of their work (Mercuri, 1998).

There are also ways to engender academic honesty in students so that the student body is responsible for preventing academic dishonesty. Students who lack self-control were not able to resist temptation when they perceived an opportunity to commit a deviant act; therefore, encouraging students to have self-control and self-discipline may help to curb their impulses to cheat (Bolin, 2004). Honor codes are often considered great inhibitors of academic dishonesty, and while they do help to prevent violations because of the consequences associated with them, they do not serve to educate the student population (Kessler, 2003). Yet, there is a great movement in high schools and colleges to institute honor codes to combat academic dishonesty (McCabe & Pavela, 2004).

Additionally, Eisenberg (2004) found that teachers can build a culture in which it is socially unacceptable to cheat, thereby enabling students to influence one another's behavior. School identity also plays an important role in whether students are academically dishonest; high school students with strong school identification are less likely to cheat, even if they are poor students (Finn & Frone, 2004). Again, school culture seems to be significant in the choices of students.

Academic dishonesty often is not mentioned in new student or freshman orientations. If there is a policy on academic dishonesty, it is not enforced, thus creating an atmosphere conducive to delinquent/deviant behavior (McCabe, 1999). Gehring and Pavela (1994) posited that the best way to overcome a culture of academic dishonesty is to allow students to set penalties and punishments. For example, at Catholic High School in Baton Rouge, Louisiana,

student council members proposed an honor code (Broussard & Golson, 2000). During the year devoted to its development, students wrote their proposal and presented it to the school and administration. No one at the school thought that the honor code would work because it was too strict. However, after implementing the board of peers to hear cases, the oath of confidentiality, parental signatures on the handwritten handbook, and students' signing the book of honor, there was a 90% decrease in academic dishonesty cases and a new school culture of honesty and trust.

Some colleges and universities have also taken measures to eradicate academic dishonesty by adding an XF or X grade to students' permanent records (Kansas College Gives First 'XF' Grade to Plagiarist, 2003). The XF denotes plagiarism, while an X signifies cheating in some other manner. Students who take an integrity course have the X deleted from their record, but the F stays. The impetus behind decisions to implement honor codes and XF grades is the awareness that if the public loses faith in the value of education, then colleges and universities will be out of business.

#### Future Ramifications of Academic Dishonesty

American society seems to be immersed in the cultural idea that anyone can succeed (Callahan, 2004). Because of this social view and the American emphasis on success, personal value is often viewed as financial value, which promotes unethical behavior. For students, this cultural more coupled with the perception that faculty members did not treat violations seriously is tacit permission to be academically dishonest (Whitley & Keith-Spiegel, 2001).

Students also perceived that teachers tend to look the other way when faced with academic dishonesty in order to avoid conflicts. Also, students found it easier to ask forgiveness than permission (Kessler, 2003).

McCabe and Pavela (2004) reported that American big business could be an influence on the state of academic dishonesty in America's schools.

Corporate scandals in recent years brought attention to America's drive for success regardless of cost, and this attitude seems to be trickling down to younger generations. Cheating in school generally leads to greater offenses as students get older (Petress, 2003). Young cheaters are more likely to grow up and cheat in business and on taxes (Callahan, 2004). Furthermore, student apathy will affect the workforce in the future (Nagy, 2004).

#### American Ethics, Morals, and Education

For many early Americans, identity is defined by personal character (Trees, 2004). However, through the years, traditional American ambition has led to some instances of deviant behavior (Merton, 1957). The general theory of crime stipulates that deviant behavior is normally the result of lack of self-control plus perceived opportunity (Bolin, 2004). Eisenberg (2004) reported that in a study of 3,000 students, 80% cheated, and of those 40% cheated on a quiz or test. Of this 80%, academic dishonesty was not limited to a small population; A and B students cheated because of perceived competition.

Not only are more American students being academically dishonest, but also they feel less guilty about it (Callahan, 2004). Students find irony in the fact that school policies for drugs and alcohol are stricter than policies for cheating

(Mathews, 2001). For most school discipline problems, such as drugs, alcohol, fighting, and academic dishonesty, there is a positive correlation between age and external locus of control (Tony, 2003).

For most American adults, concepts of right and wrong are shaped by their work environment as well as by social relationships (Callahan, 2004). Often American adults display two different moral compasses, one for personal decisions and one for career and success. Sankaran and Bui (2003) reported that students must learn moral accountability in order to transfer to the workplace of the future. In addition to environment and culture, personal characteristics influence ethical behavior.

There are six personal qualities that predict social responsibility: trustworthiness, honesty, fairness, caring, integrity, and citizenship (Pratt, Hunsenberger, Pancer, & Alisat, 2003). In spite of these six characteristics, environment again plays an important role in social morality because academic integrity is more easily encouraged in an environment where overall moral development is promoted (Whitley & Keith-Spiegel, 2001). Another powerful influence on students' perceptions of what is acceptable and what is not is the "ethos," or "nature and feel of the campus community environment" (Whitley & Keith-Spiegel, 2001, p. 336).

Teachers contribute to the ethos of a school campus because teachers are moral educators, whether they mean to be or not (Kohlberg, 1980). Teachers make evaluations, instruct students, and monitor social interactions. Additionally, teachers are responsible for the "hidden curriculum," or the

unconscious moral instruction of students, that takes place in the social structure of the classroom. Some school systems encourage the intentional moral training of students, and when begun at an early age, such education can be effective (Sankaran & Bui, 2003).

#### Federal, State, and Local Policy

House Bill 1187 mandated that local school boards establish a code of conduct for students (Georgia Department of Education, 2003). The Code of Ethics for Educators applies to all certified personnel in the state of Georgia, both teachers and administrators. Standard Four of the State Code of Ethics, Misrepresentation and Falsification, delineates grounds for disciplinary action as “falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneous reporting information regarding the evaluation of students” (Georgia Department of Education, 2003). Hence, teachers and administrators are prohibited from falsifying student records.

In the researcher’s teacher handbook, the only section that possibly relates to academic dishonesty for students is listed under teacher duties and responsibilities, “enforces regulations concerning student conduct and discipline”. A code of conduct is also presented in the student handbook, which contains the authority of the principal, progressive discipline procedures, and behavior which will result in these disciplinary procedures. These behaviors are listed on a continuum that starts with possession and distribution of narcotics and ends with chronic tardiness. Cheating is listed next to last; however, cheating is not listed in the definition of terms.

There are some behaviors, such as felonies, weapons, gang activity, riots, terroristic threats, and sexual battery, that school employees should report to administrative authorities (Laurens County Board of Education Board Policy – Student Code of Conduct/Behavior). According to the school board, there are other offenses, however, that should be addressed by staff members. These include truancy, smoking, verbal abuse, vandalism, insubordination, and cheating. Board policy also states that the school system has the right to govern the behavior of students and to impose discipline that supports this governance.

In other parts of the state, treatment of academic dishonesty in policy manuals differs. In the Cobb County Board of Education policy manual, there are levels of student infractions and levels of discipline delineated for administrators and teachers, but there is no mention of academic dishonesty (Cobb County Board of Education, 2005). The Spalding County Board of Education policy manual contains the instruction that each school should develop a code of conduct that is age appropriate for students (Spalding County Board of Education, 2004). In the policy manual on the Crisp County Board of Education website, there are three levels of student misbehaviors and three corresponding levels of discipline (Crisp County Board of Education, 2005). Academic dishonesty is considered a Level I infraction (along with tardiness, eating/drinking in class, and failure to wear an ID badge). Some consequences that correlate to Level I infractions are teacher/student conferences, time-out, verbal reprimands, and parent contacts. Regardless of location, in order to enforce district policy, both teachers and administrators bear the responsibility of student supervision.

### External Pressures Influencing Academic Dishonesty

One of the most outstanding influences on adolescent behavior is adult supervision or the lack thereof (Laird, Pettit, Bates, & Dodge, 2003). As children age, they have less and less adult supervision and are ultimately left to their own devices. The second great influence on adolescent behavior is peer influence (Burton, Ray, & Mehta, 2003). As adolescents mature and try to gain independence from their parents, they spend more time with their peers. Just as children can learn positive behaviors from the models they see as they grow up, they can also learn negative behaviors, often from their peers.

As children spend more time with their peers and less time with their parents, various acts of misconduct seem to become normative, possibly as a different view of anti-social behavior emerges (Burton, Ray, & Mehta, 2003). From these peer relationships, social information is being stored, whether a child participates or observes. Children watch others and use the information they gather to help make their own choices. Usually, any modeling that naturally occurs in the absence of adult supervision is negative. Possible outcomes of this negative influence are premarital sex, drug abuse, alcohol abuse, and academic dishonesty (Burton, Ray, & Mehta, 2003).

While peer relationships are important to social, cognitive, and physical development, friendships, previously considered to be positive, are now largely viewed as negative (Burton, Ray, & Mehta, 2003). Much of the blame for this negative influence is placed on the lack of parental supervision most teenagers experience, which is a major risk factor in adolescent behavior (Pratt,

Hunsberger, Pancer, & Alisat, 2003). Poor parental monitoring is associated with anti-social peers and peer pressure, and these two factors contribute greatly to delinquent behavior in teens (Laird, Pettit, Bates, & Dodge, 2003). The rate of poor parental monitoring seems higher for boys than it is for girls, and as the rate of parental monitoring decreases, the rate of delinquent behavior increases.

Another influence that contributes to the rate of academic dishonesty is the influence of parents (Callahan, 2004). Students are more likely to be academically dishonest when they have an overly onerous parent. Quite often, students who are academically dishonest have a parent of extremes, one who punishes them severely or not at all (Vitro, 1971). Conversely, moderate disciplinarians rear students who are more apt to internalize moral values (Vitro, 1971; Pratt, Hunsberger, Pancer, & Alisat, 2003). Authoritative parenting seems to be more significant in the maturation of boys than girls because of their need for grounding in the morals and values of their parents (Pratt, Hunsberger, Pancer & Alisat). Furthermore, parental influence, whether positive or negative, is more evident in boys than girls.

Much of the research presented is focused on the positive nature of parental supervision and influence; however, there are also some negative factors associated with parental supervision (Taylor, Pogrebin, & Dodge, 2002). Adults often prize competition in young people and encourage competition with a high demand for success. Such competition, coupled with parental pressure, peer pressure, pressure from teachers, and high goals for the future, is a major reason for academic dishonesty. According to the article "What Can We Do to

Curb Student Cheating,” two out of three parents support the teacher who catches their child cheating (2004). However, competition for spots in colleges caused parents to pressure teachers to give their students every opportunity to succeed (Nagy, 2004).

In his book *A Cheating Culture* (2004), David Callahan reported that parents often helped their children cheat, so it does not benefit teachers to go to parents with the problem. Some parents went so far as to ask a doctor for a false Learning Disability (LD) diagnosis for their child because of the extra time LD students get on standardized tests. Other parents did not actively help their children cheat, but they made excuses for them when they were caught (Cromwell, 2004). Some parents threatened to sue over disciplinary measures, so teachers were not as willing to report academic dishonesty (Conradson & Hernandez-Ramos, 2004). Such competition over grades, scholarships, and college admission led to ethical compromise and a demand for immediate results (Sankaran & Bui, 2003).

Another facet of parental pressure is the pressure parents place on administrators for their children to succeed (Callahan, 2004). Some administrators have even changed grades because of parents' threats and demands. Hence, teachers received pressure from both parents and administrators to ensure the appearance of success of their students.

#### Students and Academic Dishonesty

Of the 12,000 students surveyed by the Josephson Institute of Ethics in 2002, 74% admitted to cheating in the past year (Josephson Institute of Ethics,

2002). McCabe (cited in Stricherz, 2001) found the same percentage in the 4,500 students (in 14 public schools and 11 private schools) that he surveyed. Evans and Craig (1990) found that there is no difference between middle and high school students in their understanding of academic dishonesty. For many students, not only is being academically dishonest a matter of temptation, but also being academically dishonest is the product of a whole new outlook on cheating (Cheaters Amok: A Crisis in America's Schools – How It's Done and Why It's Happening, 2004).

Many students cited dishonesty in the adult world, such as President Clinton, Enron, and legal system inconsistencies, as an influence on their attitude toward academic dishonesty (Cheaters Amok: A Crisis in America's Schools – How It's Done and Why It's Happening, 2004). Students also feel a sense of moral relativity; academic dishonesty is acceptable or unacceptable depending on the situation. Furthermore, students' willingness to be academically dishonest is influenced by cultural and school norms (McCabe, 1999).

Nagy (2004) proposed that students do not view academic dishonesty as seriously as teachers do. Students reported being surprised when no one in their class cheated or when students were confronted with it (Cheating: Reflections on a Moral Dilemma, 2004). Most students reported that plagiarism was never addressed in class until someone was caught doing it (Petress, 2003). Also, students often blamed teachers for the academic dishonesty that did occur (Evans & Craig, 1990) because they believed that academic dishonesty was prevalent because teachers did not punish it (Baird, 1980). Of 4,500 students

surveyed, 47% of students believed that teachers overlooked cheating, and 26% of students thought that teachers overlooked it because they did not want to go to the trouble of reporting it. Williams (2001) concluded that “cheating is seldom detected....even when it is, action is rarely taken” (p.227).

McCabe (1999) used student focus groups and learned that students perceive teachers as unconcerned with academic dishonesty. Other students believed that teachers were conscious of academic dishonesty but chose to ignore it (Carroll, 2004). Possibly as a result of this perception, students view different types of academic dishonesty as good or bad on a cheating continuum, but not as good or bad in an abstract moral sense (Cheating: Reflections on a Moral Dilemma, 2004). Students viewed exam-related cheating as more serious than coursework-related cheating, which was much more common (Williams, 2001).

Students' reasons for academic dishonesty include good grades for college admission, as opposed to “going to work at McDonald's and liv[ing] out of a car” (“Cheaters Amok: A Crisis in America's Schools – How It's Done and Why It's Happening,” 2004, para. 14). Researchers indicated that the fear of getting caught may keep students from being academically dishonest; however, McCabe's study of focus groups revealed that not to be the case because students did not believe anyone cared enough to punish them (McCabe, 1999). Students also did not perceive teachers as technologically savvy enough to catch them.

## Teachers and Academic Dishonesty

Research indicates that teachers may not know how much academic dishonesty occurs in their classrooms (Evans & Craig, 1990). If students are as surreptitious as they claim to be, teachers may seriously underestimate the amount of cheating their students commit. According to Sweeney (2004), the average teacher is in denial. Many teachers have this attitude because they do not want to acknowledge academic dishonesty and how it affects the reliability and validity of their courses and tests (Godfrey & Waugh, 1998). Often teachers make the excuse that their students do not cheat intentionally and that they do not know any better (Christe, 2005).

According to the Duke University Center for Academic Integrity, many teachers are reluctant to confront students who are academically dishonest (Dichtl, 2003). Often, this attitude is a result of previous experiences or the experiences of colleagues. For example, Christin Pelton, a biology teacher in Kansas, had students conduct a leaf project that counted 50% of their final grade (Taylor, 2003). Using a plagiarism detection website, she found that one-fourth of her students had been academically dishonest. After receiving permission from the principal and superintendent, she gave the guilty students zeroes on the assignment. However, when students and parents, who had signed an academic integrity form, complained, the school board made Pelton give partial credit to the academically dishonest students and lower the assignment percentage from 50% to 30%, which lowered the course grades of the honest students. Ultimately, Pelton resigned.

Teachers who are not supported by their administrators become reluctant to address the issue of academic dishonesty in the future (Dichtl,2003).

According to Whitley and Keith-Spiegel (2001), many teachers who did not report instances of academic dishonesty to their administrators tried to handle it alone. Finally, there was a group of teachers who did not address the issue of academic dishonesty at all because of the problems associated with it (Callahan, 2004).

Teachers who did not report academic dishonesty feared legal retribution by parents, the extra work involved, having the same students the next year, and not being supported by administrators and parents (Callahan, 2004; Petress, 2003; Stricherz, 2001). In his news article, Cromwell (2004) reported that another reason for ignoring academic dishonesty is that teachers feel that it reflects poorly upon both them and their schools. In a survey of more than 4,000 teachers in the United States and Canada, half of the participants claimed to have ignored cheating at least once (Cheaters Amok: A Crisis in America's Schools – How It's Done and Why It's Happening, 2004).

In their 2003 study of 493 school faculty members, Simon, Carr, McCullough, Morgan, Olsen, and Russel found that teachers divided naturally into two groups, those who were trusting and those who were skeptical. Teachers who were more trusting felt more confident in their administrators and were more likely to report academic dishonesty. Teachers who were more skeptical did not trust their administrators and avoided reporting academic dishonesty. While Callahan (2004) claimed that attention to academic

dishonesty has increased over the past few years, the only viable solution is for teachers to hold students accountable for their actions (Dichtl, 2003).

Previously mentioned research indicated that academic dishonesty is pervasive on all educational levels; thus, teachers are left with the responsibility of finding the cause and enacting solutions (Eisenberg, 2004). Polka and Guy (2000) reported that teachers can reduce occurrences of academic dishonesty by creating a culture of integrity, honesty, and high expectations. Furthermore, a classroom culture in which honesty is prized helps students to feel confident in telling the truth and avoiding breaking the rules (Williams, 2001). Being aware of technological advancements and moral decline, the faculty of the new millennium is responsible for structuring classes so that they encourage academic integrity and discourage violations of it (Whitley & Keith-Spiegel, 2001). Additionally, the modern faculty should post academic expectations both on syllabi and around classrooms and should discuss their expectations with students (Whitley & Keith-Spiegel, 2001).

Another way to help students avoid the temptation to be dishonest is for teachers to use banks of questions so that tests throughout the classroom and on-line are different (Christe, 2005). Teachers are also using new plagiarism-detecting software (Stricherz, 2001). Turnitin.com is one such program to which schools must subscribe, but the cost may be worth it (Cheaters Amok: A Crisis in America's Schools: How It's Done and Why It's Happening, 2004). According to website owner John Barrie, 30% of the papers submitted to the site have been plagiarized.

In a study of 800 faculty members, McCabe, Trevino, and Butterfield (2001) found that in schools with an honor code, teachers perceive students as having a better understanding of honor expectations and academic integrity policies. Also, teachers believe that students should be involved in the judicial process of cases. Conversely, Evans and Craig (1990) found that both teachers and students were skeptical about preventing academic dishonesty.

While there seems to be a great number of teachers who try to deter academic dishonesty, there are teachers who feel pressure to help students cheat (Taylor, 2003). For example, teachers in Chicago were caught helping students on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) (Taylor, 2003). Other examples of teachers committing academic dishonesty included erasing incorrect answers for students, pointing to correct answers, and filling in blank answer bubbles. Teachers have also given students standardized test questions in advance.

#### Pressures Teachers Face

Modern America is an outcomes-based society in which the ends justify the means and focus stays on the end result (Matthews, 2001). This obsession with the end product rather than process has affected the accountability system of the work force, particularly in education (Magnuson, 2000). Specifically, in business, bonuses are often tied to production, and in education accreditation is tied to test scores. This social phenomenon encourages a “succeed at all cost” mentality, which is evident in the pressure that teachers feel to help their students perform well on standardized tests (Magnuson, 2000). In any arena, such a philosophy quickly leads to cheating.

Increased standards and accountability have influenced teachers to try almost anything to improve their students' test scores (Taylor, 2003). School administrators, as well as teachers, feel increased pressure from both the state and federal government to achieve (Magnuson, 2000). For example, in Houston, a principal and three teachers were forced to resign because of evidence that they helped students on standardized tests. This has also occurred in Kentucky, Rhode Island, and Connecticut.

In Maryland, a principal resigned after being caught cheating on standardized tests (Million, 2000). A new superintendent had reassessed schools, and the principal's school had fallen from number one to number four out of 124. In New York City, 61 educators in 30 schools were cited for cheating. The system administrators were so concerned that they had teachers cover all teaching materials on walls with brown paper and school board members to walk the halls during testing.

#### Teacher Internal Conflict

Every day, nearly 1,000 teachers leave education as a profession (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2005). Replacing these public school teachers will accrue an estimated cost of \$2.2 billion annually, with large states like Texas responsible for most of the cost. The high rate of teacher turnover and the rising cost of replacing teachers are a growing concern to educational administrators and state and federal legislators.

In its study conducted in 2002, Tennessee Tomorrow, Inc., a statewide partnership of public and private educators financed by the state of Tennessee,

sought to discover why teachers leave the profession at such high rates. Lack of administrative support, low salary, and benefits were reported by former teachers as reasons for dissatisfaction and frustration. Other reasons teachers cited for job dissatisfaction and personal frustration are increasing work intensity, deteriorating student behavior, and a decline in public respect of education (Webb, Vulliamy, Hamalainen, Sarja, Kimonen, & Nevalainen, 2004).

Student discipline problems are more frequent in schools where administrators and teachers are inconsistent in addressing such problems (Liu & Meyer, 2005). This could be a reason that teachers who were initially excited about joining the profession become disappointed and frustrated. Perceived distance of administrators is another reason cited by teachers for feelings of despair and frustration (Schlichte, Yssel, & Merbler, 2005).

#### The Role of Administrators

Pressure to succeed is pervasive in education, and this pressure comes from various sources, students, parents, doctors, and administrators (Callahan, 2004). Often the perception of students is that cheating is no more important than swearing in the hall or speeding on campus (Matthews, 2001). Teachers and administrators who acquiesce to parents' demands for higher grades or succumb to accountability pressures and give illegal assistance on standardized tests may influence students to be academically dishonest (Puett, 2004). At many schools, administrators have become lax about addressing academic dishonesty (Stricherz, 2001). Most schools do not have the same policies established for academic dishonesty as they do for discipline problems. This

trend is possibly rooted in additional accountability pressure placed on educators (Stricherz, 2001).

Regardless of accountability pressures, the modern administrator should be a role model in all endeavors, particularly those that are academic (Whitley & Keith-Spiegel, 2001). The school system administrator is responsible for fostering academic integrity from the top down. While honor codes may help reduce academic dishonesty, they are only effective if administrators are supportive of teachers and help enforce penalties (Dichtl, 2003). One measure some administrators take is paying a monthly or annual fee for electronic methods of finding plagiarism (Conradson & Hernandez-Ramos, 2004).

While academic dishonesty is typically a classroom issue, policy development and implementation are often considered administrative responsibilities. In the modern era of accountability and legal pressures, the most challenging aspect of the administrative domain is “balancing policy enforcement with practical procedural implementation” (Martin, 2000, para. 32). Administrators need an increasingly sophisticated understanding of school law and school board policy, but this understanding must be tempered with the common sense to address situations on an individual basis. A popular method for helping administrators, teachers, and students understand school policy is the student handbook (Chapman, 2005). While the student handbook is an effective communicative tool, administrators should ensure that the information contained in the handbook mirrors school board policy.

### Accountability, Academic Dishonesty, and Standardized Tests

On January 8, 2002, President George W. Bush signed into law *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB), which is a reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act ( Figlio & Getzler, 2002). A main focus of NCLB is the implementation of a strategy for holding schools accountable for student learning. The strategy of evaluation established by most states is a series of standardized tests (Figlio, 2005). Currently, every state except Iowa administers a battery of state-wide standardized tests in public schools (Jacob & Levitt, 2002). Student scores on these tests are directly linked to teacher performance and are used to hold teachers, administrators, and schools accountable for student learning (Figlio, 2005). This increased accountability is viewed as necessary in order to improve the quality of public education (Cullen & Reback, 2006).

Teachers and schools who perform well, according to their student data, may receive rewards for their efforts (Figlio, 2005). In California, merit pay may be as high as \$25,000 per teacher for those teachers whose students have large test-score gains (Jacob & Levitt, 2002). Teachers whose students do not perform well, however, may be subject to a variety of sanctions (Figlio, 2005). Sanctions may include redirection of funding, school choice, replacement of school leaders and staff, and a state takeover of school operations. This evaluation of public schools based on student test-score data provides many incentives and opportunities for schools to “game the system” (Figlio & Getzler, 2002, p. 1).

Most educators are aware of the test-score phenomenon that occurred in Texas in the mid-1990's. Upon investigation of test-score data, special education referrals and disciplinary records at 6,207 Texas public schools, Cullen and Reback (2006) found that during the testing period, those schools had an increased number of suspensions of low-performing students. Furthermore, most of the suspensions seemed to target low-performing black and Hispanic students. These schools also showed an increase in special education referrals and had a large number of students who were reclassified into special education programs. Cullen and Reback found that these schools encouraged absences of low-performing students during the testing periods.

Jacob (2002) found the same increase in special education referrals of low-performing students upon the mandate of standardized tests for accountability purposes. His study of third, sixth, and eighth graders in Chicago's public schools yielded information that High Stakes Testing (HST) increased student test scores in math and reading and was also cheaper per student than other means of increasing student performance. However, Jacob found that teachers often responded to HST by placing marginally performing students in special education environments so that their test scores would not be reported.

Figlio and Getzler (2002) followed a similar path by evaluating K-5 through eighth grade students in six large counties in Florida. They found that upon the institution of HST in the public schools in these counties, the number of students in special education placement increased. Furthermore, low-achieving students were more likely to be placed in special education environments, and high-

poverty schools saw a greater increase in special education placements than did wealthy schools.

Another method of altering the standardized test score reality is changing the disciplinary policy for low and high-achieving students (Figlio, 2005). Upon evaluation of 41,803 disciplinary incidents in Florida, Figlio found that schools responded to HST by increasing the punishment of low-performing students so that they did not attend school during the testing period. Also, Figlio discovered that punishment was reduced for high-achieving students so that they could be present during the testing period.

In their study of third through seventh grade classes in Chicago's public school system, Jacob and Levitt (2002) found that teachers and administrators respond to incentives and punishments by helping their students to cheat on standardized tests. They estimate that cheating on HST occurs in 4-5% of classrooms annually. In addition, in response to the pressures of accountability and HST, Jacob and Levitt suggest that teachers may "help" their students by changing their selections on answer documents, filling in questions left blank on answer documents, giving students extra time to finish the test, and providing correct answer to students either before or during the test.

### Summary

In response to their dedication to morality and education, the early settlers had a great impact on the educational tradition of American public schools. Throughout the forming of the educational culture of America, various cultural ideals have gained footholds as well. One of these ideals is the emphasis

Americans place on success, particularly economic success. As a result of this tradition, most often associated with business, adults place great emphasis on the spirit of competition and the concept of “getting ahead in life.” This attitude has become a cultural norm and has affected the young people of America.

Students at all educational levels feel pressure to succeed and act according to the demands placed on them by parents, teachers, and administrators. Young people often cite grades, scholarship opportunities, and financial welfare as reasons for their academic dishonesty. However, other factors, such as locus of control, play important roles in the decision-making process of young people. Friendships and social interaction have long been thought significant in the development of children, yet parental supervision seems to be necessary in helping students avoid deviant and anti-social behavior.

Students are not the only ones affected by society’s demand for success. Because of increased accountability, teachers and administrators feel more pressure than ever to ensure that their students are academically successful. Thus, teachers and administrators are influenced by governmental policies, as well as parents, and often take drastic measures to maintain superficial equilibrium among these groups. America is currently in an age of vast technological advancements and accountability pressures. As students become more adept at using this technology to gain an advantage over other students and as teachers and administrators face pressures to produce successful

students, the role of educational administrators is even more important in the influence that they have on the cultures of their schools.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction

The researcher's purpose was to examine teachers' perceptions of academic dishonesty. The researcher gathered information through quantitative means to determine the extent to which teachers are aware of academic dishonesty in their classrooms. The researcher also explored teachers' responses to academic dishonesty and administrators' reactions to academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty was explored in terms of types of occurrences, punitive procedures, and administrative support.

#### Research Questions

The overarching research question of this study was: What are teachers' perceptions of academic dishonesty? In order to answer this question, the following sub-questions were examined. These sub-questions were a result of the review of the literature, the professional experience of the researcher, and the guidance of the researcher's doctoral committee.

#### *Subquestions:*

1. What actions do teachers consider to be academically dishonest?
2. What are teachers' experiences with academic dishonesty?
3. How do teachers address such occurrences?
4. How do experiences with academic dishonesty affect teachers' levels of internal conflict and, thus, their attitudes toward their profession?

5. What pressures do external forces place on teachers during an occurrence of academic dishonesty?

## Methodology

### *Participants*

According to the *Interim Status Report: THE GEORGIA EDUCATOR WORKFORCE 2006-01*, there are roughly 20,000 high school teachers in the state of Georgia (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2006). Of these 20,000 high school teachers, about 9,000 have e-mail addresses posted on the internet, which qualified these teachers as the accessible population. The sample size calculator (raosoft.com) indicated that for a population of 9,000, the sample size should be 369. Based on the likelihood of obtaining a 50% response rate, the participants in this study consisted of 738 of Georgia's high school teachers. The average number of teachers at each Georgia high school was 51. The researcher needed to include 15 Georgia high schools in the study, and upon the suggestion of the dissertation committee, the researcher included one school from each RESA district, totaling 16, making the total number of teachers to be surveyed to 809.

The researcher selected teachers to participate in the study by using a stratified, cluster sample. The primary strata was all Georgia public high schools that provide teachers' e-mail addresses on the school's website. A list of Georgia public high schools is located at the Georgia High School Association website (GHSA.com). Links to all member high schools are provided on the

website, and of the 394 Georgia high schools listed on the website, 178 of them provide e-mail addresses for teachers.

Once this list of high schools with on-line teacher e-mail addresses was complete, the secondary strata was Georgia RESA districts. The purpose of dividing high schools into RESA districts was to ensure that the sample of selected high schools represents a diverse teacher population. Table 1 contains RESA districts and the number of high schools included in that district that list e-mail information on their websites. The researcher randomly selected one school from each RESA district, excluding her own school system.

At this point, the researcher coded each school in the each RESA district by number. When these schools were coded by number, the researcher used a random number generator on a TI-84 to randomly select one high school from each RESA district selected. All teachers at each selected high school received the e-mail survey, thus providing a cluster sample for participation.

### *Research Design*

The research design of this study was descriptive. “Descriptive research provides information about a given population or sample that is being studied” (Williams, 2002, p. 59). Descriptive research may involve studying attitudes, personal preferences, concerns, topics of interest, or practices (Gay & Airasian, 1999). The goal of descriptive research is to interpret events and circumstances, but not the causes behind the events and circumstances.

Table 1

*RESA Districts and E-mail Addresses*

RESA District	Number of Schools with On-Line E-mail Addresses
Chattahoochee-Flint	10
Coastal Plains	3
Central Savannah River Area	14
First District	7
Griffin	11
Heart of Georgia	5
Metro	53
Middle Georgia	4
North Georgia	5
Northeast Georgia	10
Northwest Georgia	16
Oconee	3
Okefenokee	2
Pioneer	17
Southwest Georgia	6
West Georgia	11

According to Charles (1995), the descriptive researcher can use quantitative and qualitative research methods. This researcher used a quantitative research method to collect data on teachers' perceptions of academic dishonesty through the use of a survey. The current study mirrored information sought by Dr. Jonathan L. Burke (1997) for his dissertation on perceptions of academic dishonesty by junior college professors. The researcher also used open-ended questions to add depth and breadth to the study. Teachers may answer these open-ended questions that allow them to elaborate upon personal experiences and opinions.

### *Instrumentation*

For use in this study, the researcher used as a model a survey by Dr. Jonathan Burke (1997) in his dissertation *Faculty Perceptions of and Attitudes Toward Academic Dishonesty at a Two-Year College* (1997). Before making any adjustments to the survey, the researcher conducted a review of the literature and used information gathered in this process to guide the survey modification. APPENDIX E indicates the correlation between the survey items, findings of the review of literature, and the research questions. Prior to beginning the survey process, the researcher submitted the survey to a panel of experts to determine the effectiveness of the survey questions in gathering data pertinent to the research questions. The panel consisted of four high school teachers with extensive teacher experience and awareness of current trends in education. Responses from the panel of experts were positive in that the panel felt that the survey questions adequately addressed the research questions. One facet of the survey amended on the basis on a participant's recommendation was the inclusion of a definition of internal conflict, not only in the introduction of the survey, but also in every question that addressed internal conflict.

The researcher also conducted a pilot study of six high school teachers in her school district. The purpose of the pilot study was to gather information on the clarity of the survey items and the length of time involved in responding to the survey. Pilot study participants reported that the time involved in taking the survey was eight to ten minutes and that this length of time was reasonable.

The survey consisted of 35 closed-ended questionnaire items and 5 open-ended questions. In the first survey item, the researcher addressed teachers' perceptions of academic dishonesty, which correlated with research question one. This research question is also explored through survey items 14 through 25. Items two and three were used to evaluate teachers' experiences with suspected student behaviors and certain student behaviors that were academically dishonest. These questions were used to answer research question two. Research question two was also explored through survey items 10 through 13.

Research question three, which deals with teachers' responses to academic dishonesty, was addressed through survey items 4, 5, 6, 29, and 30. This research question was also addressed in an open-ended survey question, survey item 33. Survey item seven was used to evaluate research question four, which focuses on teachers' responses to internal conflict they experience as a result of academic dishonesty. This research question was also examined through survey items 26, 27, and 28, and open ended survey items 31 and 32.

Research question five was explored through answers to survey items eight and nine, which address external stakeholders in situations of academic dishonesty. This issue was also addressed in open-ended questions 35. Survey items 36 through 40 were demographic in nature and allowed the researcher to adequately portray the sample.

A panel of experts (APPENDIX A) was used to determine the content validity of the survey instrument. Each survey item must be thoroughly examined before the instrument is used by the researcher (de Vaus, 1995). The panel of experts consisted of four high school teachers in the researcher's school district who agreed to assess the researcher's survey and its correlation to the topic of the study and the research questions. This panel of experts was selected based upon teaching experience, expertise in the field, and familiarity with current issues in education. Because of the panel's familiarity with the study, the researcher removed her school district from the list of possible schools selected for participation in this study.

The panel of experts was provided with the survey instrument and a list of the research questions. The researcher asked the panel to evaluate survey items for clarity and content. Panel members were very positive in their responses to the survey instrument and to the topic of academic dishonesty. The panel suggested a clear definition of internal conflict be placed on the survey before the open-ended question addressing the issue. The researcher made revisions based on the recommendations of the panel. Once revisions were made, the researcher resubmitted the survey to the panel for approval. This process improved the validity of the survey instrument.

Upon gaining approval from the panel of experts, the researcher conducted a pilot study. Gall, Borg, and Gall (1996) stated that research instruments should be stringently pre-tested before the researcher employs them in an actual research setting and that the pre-test participants should include

members of the target population. Hence, the pilot test included six area teachers, three from each public high school in the researcher's school district. Pilot test participants were provided with copies of the survey and directions. The researcher asked pilot test participants to follow the directions and answer the survey questions and then to evaluate their perceptions of the research instrument as well as the time involved in completing the survey. Pilot test participants responded positively to the survey, but they suggested that the research change the time involved in taking the survey as completing the survey did not take them as long as the research listed in the introduction. The research used this information to make adjustments (de Vaus, 1995).

The researcher included a cover letter with each survey (APPENDIX B). According to Gall et al. (1996), cover letters should be developed carefully as they greatly influence study participation. Gall et al. suggested that cover letters be brief with a clear intent of purpose, written to persuade readers to participate in the study by assuring them that the research is significant and that their responses are important in contributing to the effectiveness of the study. The cover letter also addressed confidentiality and informed consent.

### *Procedures*

Upon gaining IRB approval, the researcher placed her survey online at the [www.quia.com](http://www.quia.com) website. The researcher then e-mailed a cover letter to 754 high school teachers asking them to participate in the study. The cover letter explained the purpose of the study, the web format of the survey, instructions for completing the survey, and an e-mail address for the researcher so that

participants could request a copy of the results of the survey. The cover letter also contained a web address hyperlink so that teachers who decided to participate may click on it and go directly to the survey.

The preferred number of participants (377) had not submitted information within 10 days, so the researcher sent a follow-up e-mail to teachers who had not responded, requesting their participation in the study. After 14 days, the researcher evaluated whether an adequate number of teachers had responded. The researcher did not have a response rate of 50% and did not reach the target sample size of 377. The researcher sent another reminder, but still did not attain the target number for sample size. The researcher gained permission from her methodologist to continue the study with the current number of responses.

### *Data Analysis*

Surveys were used to collect the data related to the research questions addressed in this study. The researcher analyzed the data using quantitative methods to determine patterns and trends in teachers' responses. Data on teachers' perceptions of academic dishonesty, experiences with academic dishonesty, and responses to academic dishonesty were reported as frequencies and percentages. The researcher presented this information in tables. Open-ended questions provided additional information related to the research questions, and the researcher used the answers to these questions to evaluate the prevalence of emerging themes. Information provided in the open-ended questions was used to elucidate and to enrich issues related to the research questions.

## Summary

This chapter contains a summary of the methodology that the researcher used to conduct this study. The researcher used quantitative methods to examine teachers' perceptions of academic dishonesty with a qualitative element to enrich the study. In order to find information based on the research questions, Georgia high school teachers were asked to answer survey questions. The researcher based the survey on that of Dr. Jonathan Burke (1997), with modifications specific to this study.

A cover letter was e-mailed to 754 Georgia high school teachers, excluding those who participated in the pilot study. The cover letter contained a hyperlink to the researcher's survey. Once the surveys were completed and returned, the researcher analyzed and reported the data.

## CHAPTER 4

### REPORT OF DATA AND DATA ANALYSIS

#### Introduction

This research study was conducted with the assistance of high school educators across the state of Georgia during the 2006-07 school year. This study was modeled after a study conducted by Dr. Jonathan Burke (1997), which evaluated teachers' perceptions of academic dishonesty at the junior college level. Data were gathered to evaluate actions teachers consider to be academically dishonest, teachers' responses to academic dishonesty, how teachers' experiences with academic dishonesty affect their levels of internal conflict and attitudes toward their profession, and what pressures external stakeholders place on teachers during an occurrence of academic dishonesty.

#### Research Questions

The overarching research question of this study was: What are teachers' perceptions of academic dishonesty? In order to answer this question, the following sub-questions were examined. These sub-questions were a result of the review of the literature, the professional experience of the researcher, and the guidance of the researcher's doctoral committee.

#### *Subquestions:*

1. What actions do teachers consider to be academically dishonest?
2. What are teachers' experiences with academic dishonesty?
6. How do teachers address such occurrences?

7. How do experiences with academic dishonesty affect teachers' levels of internal conflict and, thus, their attitudes toward their profession?
8. What pressures do external forces place on teachers during an occurrence of academic dishonesty?

#### Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The original list for the sample of teachers included 809 names and e-mail addresses (selected by choosing one school from each RESA district). Of these 809 teachers, 101 teachers responded to the on-line survey for a response rate of 12.5%. On-line survey specialist Michael B. Hamilton (2003) reported that out of 199 different surveys studied, the total response rate was 13.35%. Therefore, the response rate for the current research is comparable to that of other on-line surveys. Not all teachers responded to all questions, so the N may vary from 99 to 101. Responses to open-ended questions varied in number from 46 to 65.

In order to gather information about the survey respondents, the researcher included several survey questions to gather demographic data. Demographic data is presented in Table 2.

Of the survey respondents, 13% were African American, 1% was Asian, 78% were Caucasian, 1% was Hispanic/Latino, and 4% were other. Sixty-three % were female and 35% were male. Five % of the respondents reported having between one and three years teaching experience. Eighteen % reported four to eight years experience, Eighteen % reported nine to 12 years experience, and 58 % reported 13 or more years experience.

Table 2

*Demographic Information*

Item	f	%
<b>Race</b>		
African American	13	13
Asian	1	1
Caucasian	79	78
Hispanic/Latino	1	1
Other	4	4
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	64	63
Male	35	35
<b>Number of Years Experience</b>		
1-3 years experience	5	5
4-8 years experience	18	18
9-12 years experience	18	18
13 or more years experience	59	58
<b>Educational Level</b>		
Bachelor's degree	20	20

Table 2 (continued)

*Demographic Information*

Item	f	%
Master's degree	54	53
Specialist degree	24	24
Doctorate degree	2	2
Primary Content Area		
Art teachers	2	2
Career and Technical Education teachers	15	15
English teachers	18	18
Foreign Language teachers	2	2
Health/PE teachers	2	2
Math teachers	22	22
Science teachers	22	22
Social Studies teachers	14	14
N=101		

Twenty % of the respondents had attained a bachelor's degree, 53% attained master's degrees, 24% attained specialist degrees, and 2% attained doctorate degrees. Two % of the respondents reported their content area as art, 15% reported Career and Technical Education, 18% reported English, 2% reported foreign language, 2% reported health/PE, 22% reported math, 22%

reported science, and 14% reported social studies. Therefore, the education level attained by most respondents was a master's degree. Also, the four main academic courses (English, Social Studies, Math, and Science) were the most widely represented. Tangential courses were not as heavily represented as major academic courses.

#### Actions Teachers Consider to Be Academically Dishonest

Research question one addressed those actions teachers consider to be academically dishonest. This research question was explored in survey items number 1 and 14 through 25. Responses to survey item number one are reported in Table 3.

In general, teachers considered all actions listed on the survey to be academically dishonest. Of the 101 teachers who responded to this question, the largest percentage (97) reported the perception that a student's stealing a copy of the test in advance is academically dishonest. The lowest percentage of teachers (89) reported perceiving using technologically stored information on a quiz or test as academically dishonest. The same percentage of teachers (96) reported viewing stealing an answer key and text messaging during standardized tests as academically dishonest.

Teachers' perceptions of the seriousness of different types of academic dishonesty were explored in survey items 14 through 25. These responses are recorded in Table 4. The data in Table 4 shows that most teachers weight academically dishonest behaviors toward highly serious and extremely serious.

Table 3

*Actions Teachers Consider to be Academically Dishonest*

Actions	f	%
Stealing a copy of the test in advance	98	97
Stealing an answer key	97	96
Text messaging during standardized tests	97	96
Falsifying research references	96	95
Looking on another student's paper during a quiz/test	96	95
Using camera phones during standardized tests	96	95
Copying another students homework	95	94
Turning in another student's work	94	93
Using cell phones during standardized tests	94	93
Using a "cheat sheet" during a quiz/test	94	93
Copying from another work without proper references	92	91
Using technologically stored information during a quiz/test	90	89

N=101

The infraction of academic dishonesty that received the most ratings of extremely serious (92 percent) was stealing an answer key. The infraction of academic dishonesty reported extremely serious by the next highest number of teachers (91 percent) was stealing a copy of the test in advance. However, two percent of

Table 4

*Percentages of Teachers' Rating of Seriousness of  
Academically Dishonest Behaviors*

Behavior	Not Serious	Somewhat Serious	Moderately Serious	Highly Serious	Extremely Serious
Copying homework	2	22	31	25	19
Looking on another student's paper during a test	0	3	11	40	45
Using a cheat sheet during a quiz/test	0	1	8	27	63
Turning in another student's work	1	1	6	28	63
Falsifying research references	0	1	9	35	55
Copying from another work without proper references	0	4	14	32	49
Stealing an answer key	0	0	3	5	92

Table 4 (continued)

*Percentages of Teachers' Rating of Seriousness of  
Academically Dishonest Behaviors*

Behavior	Not Serious	Somewhat Serious	Moderately Serious	Highly Serious	Extremely Serious
Stealing a copy of the test in advance	0	0	5	4	91
Using technologically stored information during a quiz/test	2	1	6	32	59
Text messaging during a quiz/test	0	0	5	14	79
Using a cell phone during a quiz/test	0	0	6	14	76
Using camera phones during a quiz/test	0	0	4	13	82
N=100					

teachers reported that students' copying someone else's homework is not a serious infraction of academic dishonesty. One other infraction, turning in another student's homework, received a rating of not serious by one teacher.

### Teachers Experiences with Academic Dishonesty

Research question two addressed teachers' experiences with academic dishonesty. This research question was explored through survey items 2, 3, 10, 11, 12, and 13. Responses to survey item 2 are reported on Table 5.

Table 5

#### *Teacher Suspected Student Behaviors*

Behavior	f	%
Copying another student's homework	95	94
Looking on another student's paper during a quiz/test	95	94
Using a "cheat sheet" during a quiz/test	71	70
Turning in another student's work	66	65
Copying from another work without proper references	62	61
Falsifying research references	43	43
Using technologically stored information during a quiz/test	25	25
Stealing a copy of the test in advance	13	13
Stealing an answer key	9	9
N=101		

Teachers responded that they had suspected all student behaviors listed on the survey. Of the 101 responses to this question, 94 percent of teachers

reported suspecting students of copying another student's homework. Ninety-four percent of teachers also reported suspecting a student of looking on someone else's paper during a quiz/test. The lowest percentage of teachers (9) reported suspecting a student of stealing an answer key. Responses to survey item three, which addressed academic dishonesty infractions teachers are certain have occurred in their classrooms, are reported in Table 6.

Table 6

*Teacher Certain Student Behaviors*

Behaviors	f	%
Copying another student's homework	92	91
Looking on another student's paper during a quiz/test	89	88
Using a "cheat sheet" during a quiz/test	64	63
Turning in another student's work	55	54
Copying from another work without proper references	49	49
Falsifying research references	31	30
Using technologically stored information during a quiz/test	14	14
Stealing a copy of the test in advance	12	12
Stealing an answer key	7	7

N=101

According to the data presented in Table 6, ninety-one percent of teachers reported being certain that students copied someone else's homework. The second largest percentage of teachers (88) reported being certain a student had looked on another student's paper during a quiz or test. Seven percent of teachers reported being certain that a student had stolen an answer key, which was the lowest number of responses for any of the infractions.

Responses to survey items 10 and 11, which addressed ratings of the seriousness of academic dishonesty, are reported in Table 7. The largest

Table 7

*Rating of Seriousness of Academic Dishonesty*

Topic	Not Serious	Somewhat Serious	Moderately Serious	Quite Serious	Very Serious
At your School	7	22	43	13	15
In your Courses	26	32	24	8	10

N=100

percentage of teachers (43) viewed academic dishonesty as a moderately serious problem in their schools. Fifteen percent of teachers reported the issue as very serious in their schools. Seven percent of teachers reported that academic dishonesty is not a serious issue in their schools. Twenty-six percent of teachers reported that academic dishonesty is not a serious issue in the

courses they teach. Ten percent teachers reported academic dishonesty to be a very serious problem in the courses they teach. The largest percentage (32) viewed academic dishonesty as somewhat serious in the courses they teach.

Survey items 12 and 13, which addressed the frequency of academic dishonesty, are reported in Table 8. Overall, most teachers' responses

Table 8

*Frequency of Academic Dishonesty*

Topic	Never	Seldom	Occasionally	Often	Frequently
Suspected academic dishonesty	1	19	60	12	7
Certain of academic dishonesty	0	39	43	10	6

N=100

centered around seldom and occasionally when suspecting and being certain of academic dishonesty. One percent of teachers reported never suspecting academic dishonesty, while 60 percent of teachers reported suspecting Academic dishonesty occasionally. Seven percent of teachers reported suspecting academic dishonesty frequently.

Zero percent of teachers reported never being certain of academic dishonesty. Forty-three teachers reported that they were occasionally certain of

academically dishonest behavior. Six teachers reported that they were frequently certain of academic dishonesty.

#### Teachers' Responses to Academic Dishonesty

Research question three addressed how teachers respond to academic dishonesty. Research question three was explored through survey items 4, 5, 6, 29, 30, and 33. Responses to survey item 4 are presented in Table 9.

Table 9

#### *Teacher Responses to Suspected Academic Dishonesty*

Response	f	%
Dealt with student one-on-one	71	70
Gave a warning	43	43
Gave an "F"	28	28
Confronted student but did not pursue the matter	19	19
Reported incident to administrator	13	13
Lowered grade on assignment	9	9
Did nothing	4	4
Did not encounter academic dishonesty	0	0

N=101

Of the 101 responses to this survey item, four percent of teachers reported doing nothing when they suspected academic dishonesty. Nineteen

percent of teachers reported confronting the student but not pursuing the matter further. The largest number of teachers (70 percent) reported confronting the student one-on-one. The lowest percentage of teachers (9) reported lowering the student's grade on the assignment.

Responses to survey item 5, which addressed teachers' responses when they were certain of academic dishonesty, are reported in Table 10.

Table 10

*Teacher Responses to Certain Academic Dishonesty*

Responses	f	%
Gave an "F"	73	72
Dealt with student one-on-one	60	59
Reported incident to administrator	18	18
Lowered grade on assignment	15	15
Gave a warning	12	12
Confronted student but did not pursue the matter	4	4
Did not encounter academic dishonesty	1	1
Did nothing	0	0
N=101		

One percent of teachers reported not having been certain of academic dishonesty. Of the teachers who were certain of academic dishonesty, the

lowest percentage (4) confronted the student but did not pursue the matter further. Fifty-nine percent of teachers dealt with the student one-on-one upon being certain of academic dishonesty. The largest percentage (72) gave the student an F on the assignment.

Survey item 6, which addressed measures teachers have taken to prevent academic dishonesty, are reported in Table 11. Circulating the classroom during a test was reported by 97 percent of teachers, the largest number, as a measure

Table 11

*Actions Taken to Prevent Academic Dishonesty*

Action	f	%
Circulate room during test	98	97
Distribute different forms of the same test	73	72
Lock tests in secure locations	68	67
Protect test software with passwords	43	43
Check references on research papers	44	44
Use plagiarism detecting software	23	23

N=101

they take to prevent academic dishonesty. Seventy-two percent of teachers reported distributing different forms of the same test as a measure they take to

prevent academic dishonesty. The lowest percentage of teachers (23) reported using plagiarism detecting software to deter students from committing academic dishonesty. Of the 101 teachers who responded to this question, 18% reported that they approached their administrator with an issue of academic dishonesty.

Responses to survey item 29, which addressed the level of confidence teachers have in measures taken to prevent academic dishonesty, are reported in Table 12. The largest percentage of teachers reported being moderately

Table 12

*Confidence in Measures Taken to Prevent Academic Dishonesty*

Topic	None	Low	Moderate	High	Extreme
Confidence In measures Taken	6%	26%	45%	16%	6%
N=99					

confident in measures taken to prevent academic dishonesty. An equal percentage of teachers, six, reported having no confidence in measures taken to prevent academic dishonesty and having extreme confidence in measures taken to prevent academic dishonesty.

Responses to survey item 30, which evaluated teachers' willingness to approach their administrators about issues concerning academic dishonesty, are presented in Table 13. In the data presented in Table 13, seven percent of teachers reported that they are not at all likely to approach their administrators

about issues concerning academic dishonesty. Twenty-three percent of teachers reported being moderately likely to approach their administrators about the topic,

Table 13

*Likelihood of Approaching Administrator Regarding Academic Dishonesty*

Topic	Not At All	Slightly Likely	Moderately Likely	Highly Likely	Extremely Likely
Likelihood Of Approaching Administrator	7	15	23	30	25
N=100					

and 25 percent of teachers reported being highly likely to approach their administrators about academic dishonesty.

Survey item 33 was an open-ended question, which addressed whether teachers are aware that any school board policy exists, which pertains to academic dishonesty, and, if so, if the policy was followed in the teacher's experience. Of the 61 teachers who answered this question, 23 reported that in incidents of academic dishonesty, school board policy was strictly followed.

In some instances, teachers were aware of a policy that addressed academic dishonesty, but did not feel that it was strict enough. For example, Respondent 321002 stated, "Our policy allows students who cheated to re-do the assignment which is the reasons that I seldom take action." Respondent 371028

reported, “Students are allowed to redo the assignment for a maximum grade of 70.”

Some teachers reported that policy was not followed or was used against them. Respondent 372997 wrote, “They [administrators] do not care. Cheating is endemic in the public school system. There is also a great amount of fear that punishing children who cheat is tantamount to a violation of their civil rights.”

Respondent 373014 stated, “On at least one occasion, school board policy was used as a ‘cover’ for pressuring me to change a student’s grade.”

Teachers also responded that, on occasion, the following of policy depended on the identity of the student involved. Respondent 429090 states, “In my experience whether board policy is followed has depended upon the severity of the situation and, alas, upon the social importance, or lack of importance, the student and the student’s family possessed.” Respondent 429652 wrote, “In my experience, the person involved was a major football player and unfortunately nothing was done to the student.”

Further, some teachers are not aware of what their board policy concerning the issue of academic dishonesty is. Respondent 453660 wrote, “I don’t know what their policy is. I don’t bother with administrators since they don’t address my concerns sufficiently.”

#### Teachers’ Internal Conflict and Attitudes Toward Their Profession

Research question four addressed how experiences with academic dishonesty affected teachers’ levels of internal conflict and, thus, their attitudes

toward their profession. This research question was explored through survey items 7, 26, 27, 28, 31, and 32.

Responses to survey item 7 are reported in Table 14. The largest percentage of teachers (79) reported that they respond to internal conflict brought on by instances of academic dishonesty by discussing the matter with other teachers. Fifty-two percent of teachers reported addressing an administrator with their internal conflict, and 23 teachers reported “other” as their means of responding to internal conflict induced by academic dishonesty.

Table 14

*Teachers’ Responses to Internal Conflict*

Response	f	%
Discussed the matter with other teachers	80	79
Discussed the matter with the administrator	52	52
Other	23	23
Addressed the superintendent	0	0
Addressed the school board	0	0
Changed Schools	0	0
N=101		

Responses to survey item 26, which asked teachers to rate their level of internal conflict in regards to situations of academic dishonesty are reported in Table 15.

Thirty-seven percent of teachers reported moderate intensity to their levels of

Table 15

*Level of Teacher Internal Conflict*

Topic	No Intensity	Low Intensity	Moderate Intensity	High Intensity	Extreme Intensity
Internal Conflict	5	18	37	30	9

N=99

internal conflict brought on by instances of academic dishonesty. Thirty percent of teachers reported a high level of intensity to their internal conflict. Nine percent of teachers reported an extreme intensity to their level of internal conflict.

Responses to survey items 27 and 26, which addressed the level to which teachers' internal conflict affected their attitudes toward their profession and toward education, are presented in Table 16. The largest percentage of teachers (40) reported that their level of internal conflict had little effect on their attitudes toward their profession. Thirty percent of teachers reported that their internal conflict had a moderate effect on their attitudes toward their profession, and 16 percent reported that their level of internal conflict had no effect on their attitude toward their profession. Four percent of teachers reported that their level of internal conflict had an extreme effect on their attitudes toward their profession.

Also, in Table 16, 42 percent of teachers reported that their level of internal conflict had little effect on their attitude toward education, and 29 percent

Table 16

*Effects of Academic Dishonesty*

Topic	No Effect	Little Effect	Moderate Effect	High Effect	Extreme Effect
Effect of academic dishonesty on teacher attitudes toward profession	16	40	30	9	4
Effect of academic dishonesty on teacher attitudes toward education	16	42	29	10	2

N=99

of teachers reported that their level of internal conflict had a moderate effect on their attitudes toward education. Sixteen percent of teachers reported that their level of internal conflict had no effect on their attitudes toward education, and two percent of teachers reported that their level of internal conflict had an extreme effect on their attitudes toward education.

Survey item 31 was an open-ended question, which asked teachers to elaborate on any methods they used to address internal conflict brought about by

circumstances of academic dishonesty. Some teachers expressed feelings of anger and betrayal. Respondent 371123 states, “I was angry because I felt betrayed by those I bust my butt for.” Respondent 381403 wrote, “It just made me mad that the student would turn in another student’s work and think I wouldn’t know.”

Other teachers reported specific actions they take in regard to internal conflict brought on by academic dishonesty. Respondent 373014 wrote, “Talk with peers, friends, a therapist.” Respondent 453660 stated, “Venting with friends. Drinking more. Not wanting to continue to put forth 100% of my effort and time if students continue to undervalue their own education.”

Still, other teachers reported feeling defeated by their experiences. Respondent 372956 wrote, “In the last few years, I backed down rather than end up at the board office with parents.” Respondent 384659 reported, “I am often tempted to ‘let it go’ because I am aware of the complete lack of support for any actions that are taken. I will be the villain.” Respondent 42996 wrote, “It’s a problem with society. Moral decay.”

Survey item 32 was an open-ended question which asked teachers to explore their feelings how their level of internal conflict brought on by academic dishonesty has affected their attitudes toward education.

Teachers expressed divergent views on how academic dishonesty ultimately affects their attitudes toward education. Respondent 381347 wrote, “I cheated in high school .... Sometimes when students cheat (work together) it is much like an open book test – they learn through the process. Making a cheat

sheet is a review strategy.” Respondent 381365 reported, “I turn the experience into a positive encounter in the end. I am a teacher. All experiences give me the opportunity to grow and become a stronger teacher.”

Other teachers do not believe that students understand the full implications of their actions. Respondent 424854 wrote, “High school students make poor choices just as adults do and they must learn there are consequences for these choices.” Respondent 384760 stated, “These are still kids. They don’t fully understand the impact of their actions.”

Teachers also reported that the dishonesty that takes place in schools is representative of larger moral issues. Respondent 324408 states, “Dishonesty exists in every aspect of our lives. School is just a small part of that.” Respondent 382113 reported, “Education is a microcosm of society. It saddens me that the moral integrity of the world is decaying ....” Respondent 383949 wrote, “It makes me more cynical about the education my students receive and the moral climate in general.” Respondent 426811 wrote, “What happens in a classroom is just a small picture of what happens in every workplace in America.”

Still other educators look to parents as the source of the problem. Respondent 323814 states, “Most parents want their children to succeed no matter what the means.” Respondent 372956 wrote, “I was more disappointed with the attitudes of the parents and students. The parents did not want their children to suffer or be punished.” Respondent 381289 states, “They [parents] just want to keep the child from feeling the consequences of his or her actions.”

Respondent 381587 wrote, “I am now very frustrated that many parents feel it is ok for students to copy answers or entire assignments.” Respondent 429652 said, “Education begins in the home. If more values and integrity are not taught and demonstrated in the home before a child goes to public or private school, then the children will not have any concept of values. Also, values of the parents are reflected in the behavior of the students.”

#### Pressures Stakeholders Place on Teachers

Research question five addressed the pressures that external stakeholders place on teachers. This research question was explored through survey items 8, 9, and 35.

Responses to survey item eight are presented in Table 17. The highest percentage of teachers (61) reported their administrator being a positive factor in their experience with academic dishonesty. Twenty-one percent of teachers, the lowest number, reported a student being a positive factor in the experience.

Table 17

#### *External Stakeholders Who Were Positive*

Stakeholder	f	%
Administrator	62	61
Parents	44	44
Students	21	21
N=101		

Responses to survey item nine are presented in Table 18. The highest percentage of teachers (60) reported the students as being a negative factor in their experiences with academic dishonesty. The lowest percentage of teachers (10) reported the administrator as being a negative factor.

Table 18

*External Stakeholders Who Were Negative*

Stakeholder	f	%
Students	61	60
Parents	39	39
Administrator	10	10

N=101

Survey item 35 was an open-ended question, which asked teachers to describe a situation in which an external stakeholder (administrator, parents, etc.) places pressure on them during an instance of academic dishonesty.

Some teachers reported being supported by administrators during instances of academic dishonesty. Respondent 318109 states, "Our administration supports us and we document any cheating in our classrooms." Respondent 324994 responded, "My administration has always been 100% supportive."

Other teachers reported feeling threatened by their administration in situations dealing with academic dishonesty. Respondent 373014 states, "I felt

there would not only be little support for me by my immediate supervisor, but that I would incur consequences if I didn't change a grade as the supervisor wanted. This prompted me to look for work in a different school system."

Respondent 368621 wrote, "I had a student cheat on a test and I gave the student a zero. The parents pressured the administrator to pressure me to allow the student to retake another test over the same material. I thought that this was wrong, but I believe that a teacher should do what they are told to do by their administrators."

Respondent 373014 stated, "1) I was pressured by an administrator to change a student's grade for a course that had already been completed and for which grades had already been submitted. 2) I had physical evidence that a student had cheated on a test, but because it was evidence that would not 'stand up in court,' my administrator would not support me." Respondent 374547 reported, "I gave a student a 0 for plagiarism on a research paper and an administrator told me they had to be given a chance to rewrite the paper."

Respondent 382212 wrote, "I gave no credit for a plagiarized assignment and was told to give the administrator's child anything but a zero by my administrator." Respondent 373014 stated, "I felt there would be not only be little support for me by my immediate supervisor, but that I would incur consequences if I didn't change a grade as the supervisor wanted. This prompted me to apply for work in a different school system."

Teachers also reported receiving pressure from parents in instances when their children have been academically dishonest. Respondent 323814 stated, "I

caught an honors kid using a graphing calculator with stored notes during a final exam. His parents absolutely refused to believe that he had looked at the notes. They thought that it was alright that he had the notes on the calculator but that he had just not USED them. They said that they would have their son take a lie detector test at the police department to prove his innocence. The kid stood by his story until they were on the way to take the lie-detector test. My principal and assistant principal repeatedly asked me if I was sure that the student had looked at the calculator notes. I assured them that I was absolutely sure since the student turned the calculator off immediately when I looked over his shoulder to see what was taking him so long to finish his test. I also reminded them that an electronic 'cheat sheet' is the same as a regular cheat sheet hidden under a test paper. I took his calculator from him and looked through his programs to find 'Hintz.' You would not believe the amount of notes that I found on that program. The student's parents withdrew their son from school and enrolled him in another school since he had been disgraced (apparently my fault for catching him). Needless to say, I don't eat at the restaurant where this student works today. Just not in the mood to eat poison."

Respondent 372997 reported, "The parent and student outright denied that any cheating took place." Respondent 372956 stated, "Three years ago, I taught an honors class in which four students plagiarized information. One student had copied the entire paper from the textbook. I gave them all zeros and was immediately bombarded with phone calls and meetings with parents about how their students did not understand, were under pressure, etc. After several

sleepless nights and much anguish, my daughter (whom I had taught and was in college) advised me to simply let it go. She told me it was upsetting me far more than anyone else. The parents were going to the board. I chose to simply drop the grade. Those four students did not receive a grade at all for the assignment. The administration supported me but I did not want to continue the anguish. Sometimes judgment must come from somewhere else. It poisoned my opinion of those students and I still have no respect for them or their parents.”

Respondent 388304 reported, “I caught a band student cheating for the second time and she was to receive ISS. Her father called me and asked if I could write her up next week because if she received ISS this week she would not be able to march on Friday. The band director also gave me a visit and asked for the same favor, because she was supposed to perform a solo part on Friday.”

Respondent 459465 wrote, “Parents wanted me to pass their daughter who was caught plagiarizing an assignment, forging her mother's signature and had been absent 1/3 of the class. She did not pass even when they threatened legal action.”

### Summary

Of the 809 teachers originally included in the sample, 101 responded by completing a survey that explored teachers’ perceptions of and experiences with academic dishonesty. Participants represented all geographical areas of Georgia as they were derived from the 16 RESA districts.

Results of the study suggest that teachers consider a wide variety of acts to be academically dishonest. The highest number of teachers considered

stealing a copy of the test in advance and stealing an answer key to be academically dishonest. Teachers also reported that stealing a copy of the test in advance and stealing an answer key were the two most serious acts of academic dishonesty. Other acts teachers considered “extremely serious” were using a camera phone during a quiz/test and text messaging during a quiz/test.

Teachers reported suspecting students of copying someone else’s homework and looking on another student’s paper during a quiz/test more than other academically dishonest actions. Of the behaviors teachers were certain had occurred, the copying of another student’s homework and looking on another student’s paper during a quiz/test were still rated highest. However, teachers’ certainty of occurrences was not as high as their suspected occurrences.

Teachers reported believing academic dishonesty to be a “moderately serious” trend in their schools; however, the majority of teachers only thought academic dishonesty to be “somewhat serious” in the courses they teach. Most teachers rated the frequency of academic dishonesty of which they suspected and of which they were certain as “occasionally.”

No teachers reported never suspecting academic dishonesty, and the majority of those who did suspect academic dishonesty addressed the issue with the student one-on-one. Teachers who were certain that academic dishonesty had occurred most often responded by giving the student an “F” on the assignment. In order to prevent academic dishonesty, most teachers reported circulating the room during a test, and most teachers are moderately confident in the various measures that they take to prevent academic dishonesty. The

greatest number of teachers also reported being highly likely to approach their administrator about an issue of academic dishonesty.

Most teachers reported a moderate level of internal conflict in response to issues dealing with academic dishonesty. Most teachers respond to the internal conflict brought about by academic dishonesty by discussing the matter with other teachers. The highest number of teachers expressed that their level of internal conflict had little effect on their attitudes toward their profession and toward education in general. However, through responding to open-ended questions, some teachers whose attitudes were affected by academic dishonesty expressed extreme dissatisfaction with both administrators and parents in regards to academic dishonesty.

According to teachers' responses, external stakeholders can play an important role in an instance of academic dishonesty, both positively and negatively. Most teachers agreed that students were more likely to be a negative factor in an instance of academic dishonesty. Teachers also expressed that administrators were more likely to be positive factors in instances of academic dishonesty. Again, however, some teachers used their responses to the open-ended question addressing this issue to express their disagreement with the majority and gave instances of both administrators and parents being negative factors in a situation of academic dishonesty.

## CHAPTER 5

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

#### Summary

The research study was conducted for the purpose of evaluating teachers' perceptions of and experiences with academic dishonesty. The study was conducted during the 2006-2007 school year. The research was modeled after a study conducted by Dr. Jonathan Burke (1997), which sought to discover teachers' perceptions of academic dishonesty at the junior college level. Findings of the current research were not consistent with Burke's findings in that Burke found that junior college professors did not feel that academic dishonesty was a serious issue on their campus. Current research indicates that Georgia high school teachers do feel that academic dishonesty is a problem in their schools.

Public high school teachers in Georgia were surveyed, and data were gathered to evaluate actions teachers consider to be academically dishonest, teachers' responses to academic dishonesty, how teachers' experiences with academic dishonesty affect their levels of internal conflict and attitudes toward their profession, and what pressures external stakeholders place on teachers during an occurrence of academic dishonesty. Teachers responded to both closed-ended and open-ended questions. Response rates for open-ended questions are listed in Table 19.

The overarching research question addressed in this study was: What are teacher's perceptions of academic dishonesty? The research sample was 809

Table 19 *Open-Ended Question Response Rates*

Survey Item	Research Question	Response Rate
31	4	65
32	4	64
33	3	61
34	none	46
35	5	51
N=101		

Georgia public high school teachers. Of those, 101 responded by completing a survey. This yielded a response rate of 12.5%.

#### Analysis of the Research Findings

High school teachers across the state of Georgia expressed the perceptions that a variety of acts constitute academic dishonesty. Teachers revealed that they perceive some acts as more serious than others. Teachers also reported the belief that academic dishonesty is a serious issue in Georgia's public high schools.

Most teachers, who were certain that academic dishonesty had occurred, responded by giving the student an "F" on the assignment. There were others, however, who expressed pressure from various external stakeholders to ignore such behavior or to allow students an opportunity to revise an existing

assignment. Subsequently, some teachers reported feeling internal conflict based on the act of academic dishonesty itself or the pressure received from an external stakeholder. In spite of the fact that academic dishonesty is an issue for so many teachers, most teachers responded that academic dishonesty, in and of itself, had little effect on their attitudes toward the teaching profession and education in general.

For many teachers, pressures placed on them by external stakeholders during instances of academic dishonesty were both disheartening and threatening. Teachers reported a variety of types of pressure from suggestions from administrators to threats of legal action from parents. These types of situations seemed negatively to affect teachers' perceptions of the quality of Georgia's public education.

### Discussion of the Research Findings

#### *Actions Teachers Consider to be Academically Dishonest*

Teachers perceive a variety of student actions to be academically dishonest, from copying another student's homework to stealing an answer key before a test. Teachers also view some academically dishonest actions as worse than others. For example, teachers perceive academic dishonesty in a testing environment as "worse" than a student copying someone else's homework. Of the ratings that teachers give different types of academic dishonesty, most teachers find actions that infringe on their personal rights

and/or space as the most serious. Stealing an answer key and stealing a copy of a test in advance were both rated higher in severity than using a “cheat sheet,” text messaging during a quiz/test, and using camera phones during a quiz/test.

A research study by Dixon, Hayes, and Aban (2000) indicated that students who are repeatedly exposed to rules do not increase instances of rule following behavior. In support of Dixon, Hayes, and Aban (2000), results of the current research study suggested that while teachers may feel that they adequately address the rules of academic dishonesty and make requirements for assignments clear to students, students commit academic dishonesty and disregard the rules of the classroom. Williams (2001) found that students do not receive adequate training in what is academically dishonest and what is not. In contrast to Williams (2001), results of the current research revealed that teachers who responded to the survey feel that they adequately explain rules and academic expectations to students.

### *Teachers' Experiences with Academic Dishonesty*

Although stealing an answer key before a test was perceived by the highest number of teachers as an “extremely serious” infraction of academic dishonesty, it was the action fewest teachers were certain had ever happened in their classrooms. While 7% of teachers reported academic dishonesty to be “not serious” at their schools, 26% of teachers reported academic dishonesty to be “not serious” in the courses they taught. Therefore, it seems that teachers perceive academic dishonesty to be an issue that is more prevalent in courses across the school than in their own classrooms. Conversely, teachers who

responded to open-ended questions deemed academic dishonesty to be rampant in both the school and their personal classrooms.

Studies conducted by Bowers (1964) and the Josephson Institute (2002) indicated that roughly 75% of students admit to having been academically dishonest at some point. In support of the previous research, results of the current research study suggested that 94% of teachers have suspected students of copying someone else's homework, and 91% of teachers have been certain of students' copying someone else's homework. Nine teachers suspected a student of stealing an answer key, and seven teachers were certain that a student had stolen an answer key.

A study conducted by Taylor, Pogrebin, and Dodge (2002) indicated that elite students are more likely to be academically dishonest. In support of these findings, some teachers' responses to open-ended questions in the current research suggested that honors students are more academically dishonest than lower achieving students. Conversely, research conducted by Finn and Frone (2004) indicated that there is an inverse relationship between school performance and academic dishonesty. Current research did not support these findings.

In his study, Tony (2003) found that discipline problems are negatively correlated with perceived value of education. Supporting his research, some teachers' responses to open-ended questions in the current research indicated that students who commit academic dishonesty do not place a high value on education.

In their study Taylor, et al. (2002) stated that students find academic dishonesty on an exam more wrong than copying homework. In concurrence with Taylor, et al. results of the current research indicated that teachers also rated academic dishonesty in testing situations “extremely serious” more often than they did copying homework.

In his study, Eisenberg (2004) reported that morally aware students are less approving of academic dishonesty than non-morally aware students. Current research supports these findings because some teachers who responded to open-ended questions indicated that they perceive students to be on a moral decline and that academic dishonesty is increasing.

#### *Teachers’ Reactions to Academic Dishonesty*

When academic dishonesty was suspected, most teachers responded with addressing the issue with the student one-on-one. However, when teachers were certain that academic dishonesty occurred, most teachers responded with giving an “F” on the assignment. Hence, when teachers are certain that academic dishonesty has occurred, they are more likely to give the student an academic consequence than when they merely suspect that academic dishonesty occurred. Also, in situations when teachers were certain of academic dishonesty, no one reported that they did nothing about the matter. Therefore, regardless of the consequences deemed appropriate by the teacher, teachers who encounter academic dishonesty seem to issue consequences to the student because of it.

Teachers are also proactive in preventing academic dishonesty in their classrooms. The majority reported circulating the classroom during a test, and the second highest number of teachers reported distributing different copies of the same test. As a respondent replied to an open-ended question, teachers may know that academic dishonesty occurs, but they attempt to make it difficult for the students to accomplish. Furthermore, the majority of teachers felt at least “moderately” confident of measures taken to prevent academic dishonesty.

In their study, Evans and Craig (1990) found that teachers and students felt skeptical of measures taken to prevent academic dishonesty. In contrast, results of the current research indicate that the majority of teachers feel at least moderate confidence in measures taken to prevent academic dishonesty. In his study, Williams (2001) reported that teachers use a wide variety of methods to authenticate student work. Results of the current research support these findings because responses indicated that teachers use a various methods of preventing academic dishonesty.

#### *Teachers' Internal Conflict and Attitudes Toward Teaching and Education*

In response to academic dishonesty, teachers reported a moderate to high level of internal conflict. Internal conflict was defined as moral discomfort, anger, uncertainty, frustration, or emotional distress. Most teachers responded that in response to this internal conflict, they discussed the matter with other teachers. The second highest number of teachers reported that they discussed the matter with their administrators. Teachers who responded to the open-ended questions

also reported discussing the matter with family and friends, speaking to a therapist, drinking more, and feeling less responsibility toward students.

The circumstances of teachers who felt little or no internal conflict may have been that they were supported by their administration in instances of academic dishonesty and, therefore, did not identify with the question, or these teachers may have expressed an alternate set of values concerning academic dishonesty. As one respondent to an open-ended question wrote, "Making a cheat sheet is a review strategy."

Teachers seem to feel strongly about academic dishonesty, and for some teachers these feelings transcend into their attitudes toward teaching and education in general. Most teachers reported feeling little change in their attitudes toward both teaching and education. However, the second highest number of teachers reported feeling a moderate change in their attitudes toward teaching and education. As evidenced in responses to the open-ended questions, some teachers feel less responsibility toward students and are skeptical about the ultimate value of education.

Results of a study done by Tennessee Tomorrow Inc. (2002) indicated that the primary reasons teachers report for leaving the education workforce are children/pregnancy, lack of administrative support, and low salary/benefits. In support of these findings, results of the current research suggested that some teachers do not feel that they are supported by their administration when addressing issues of academic dishonesty and that, for some, this lack of support is enough to cause them to seek employment elsewhere.

In their study Webb, Vulliamy, Hamalainen, Saria, Kimonen, and Nevalainen (2004) reported that teachers are discouraged by work intensification, low pay, deterioration of student behavior, and a decline in public respect of teachers. Liu and Meyer (2005) also reported in their study that teachers are dissatisfied with low pay and student behavior. Concurrent with these findings, responses to the open-ended questions in the current research indicated that some teachers perceive the academic dishonesty facet of student behavior to be a serious problem in the courses that they teach and their school in general.

### *External Stakeholders*

The majority of teachers reported perceiving their administrators as external stakeholders who were positive when addressing issues of academic dishonesty. The lowest number of teachers reported their administrators to be external stakeholders who were negative in addressing issues of academic dishonesty. While most teachers may be supported by their administrators in instances of academic dishonesty, other teachers, as reported in open-ended questions, feel threatened by their administrators, a lack of administrative support, and pressured to allow or commit acts of academic dishonesty.

Based on their study, Taylor, Pogrebin, and Dodge (2002) reported that students are academically dishonest because of competition and pressure from their parents. Corresponding with this research, responses to the open-ended questions in the current research suggested that some teachers are aware of pressure placed on students by parents and that parents also place pressure on

teachers in instances of academic dishonesty. In their study Laird, Pettit, Bates, and Dodge (2003) reported that parental knowledge decreases the likelihood of delinquent behavior. In contrast to these findings, results of the current research indicated that even when parents are aware of their child's academic dishonesty, they do not feel that their child should be punished, or they feel that the infraction is not a moral or disciplinary issue.

Simon, Carr, McCullough, Morgan, Oleson, and Ressel (2003) reported in their study that faculty members who place more trust in their administrators are more likely to report academic dishonesty than teachers who have less trust in their administrators. In support of these findings, the results of the current research suggest that the majority of teachers are highly likely to approach their administrators about an instance of academic dishonesty. The second highest number of teachers reported being extremely likely to approach their administrators about an instance of academic dishonesty. However, there were some teachers who reported that they would not approach their administrator about academic dishonesty.

### Conclusions

According to information presented in the Review of Literature and in the current research, academic dishonesty is an issue of concern in education. Most teachers who responded to the survey in the current research study indicated that they perceive academic dishonesty to be a problem in both their individual classes and in their schools at large.

Most teachers who responded to the survey indicated stronger feelings toward student behaviors of academic dishonesty that were an infringement on teachers' personal privacy and personal space. For example, teachers rated actions such as stealing an answer key and stealing a copy of a test in advance as more serious than students' copying homework or falsifying research references.

Teachers' responses to the current research study also indicated that they believe academic dishonesty to be more of a moral issue than a discipline issue. Many teachers who responded to open-ended questions elaborated on their views of the morality of students, and subsequently parents. Most teachers seemed to believe that moral training is the responsibility of the parents and that students who are morally grounded in their homes participate in academically dishonest behaviors less often than students who do not receive moral training at home.

Administrators also play an important role in teachers' perceptions of their effectiveness in addressing academic dishonesty. Teachers who trust their administrators felt confident approaching them about the issue and addressing the issue in their classrooms. Conversely, teachers who did not trust their administrators did not feel confident in addressing the issue either in their classrooms or with their administrators. Some teachers also expressed doubts that their administrators would follow school board policy in addressing issues of academic dishonesty, and other teachers expressed a lack of faith in the school board and the policy itself.

## Implications

Results of this research study have shown academic dishonesty to be a major issue in Georgia's high school education system. In responses to open-ended questions, teachers presented methods they have developed for addressing this issue. In order to combat academic dishonesty, staff development opportunities could be offered on topics such as classroom honor codes and sanctions for individual infractions. On a broader scale, the information gleaned from this study could be used to develop standards of academic integrity to allow students and teachers clear guidelines and policy to follow for classroom instruction. District administrators and school board members could become involved in developing a system honor code or academic dishonesty policy that could be included in students' handbooks.

As teachers seem to consider infractions against their personal privacy and personal space the most serious of academically dishonest offenses, teachers could protect their tests by locking them in a secure environment. Teachers could also protect test software with passwords and could distribute multiple versions of the same test during a class testing period. Teachers could combat internet plagiarism by using the internet for their own purposes and take advantage of the plagiarism detecting software available online. Google is another viable option for this type of internet search.

A major concern of teachers that was revealed through their responses to open-ended questions in the current research study is the moral functioning of their students. Teachers seem to believe that moral training should begin with

parents, and in order to forewarn parents of the seriousness of academic dishonesty and the sanctions that result from it, schools could promote awareness of academic dishonesty through educational opportunities for parents. This type of opportunity for parents could include an explanation of honor codes, student handbooks, course requirements, and teacher syllabi. Also, teachers could send home information sheets for parents to read and sign, informing them of grading procedures and requirements for individual assignments.

Academic dishonesty seems to be a prevalent issue in education, and it seems that this phenomenon could affect teachers and their attitudes toward both teaching and education in general. Therefore, administrators could improve the quality of education and teachers' views of education by being proactive in preventing academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty could be addressed in administrative coursework so that administrators are prepared to appropriately address situations of academic dishonesty. Also, administrators could promote a stringent school board policy to direct outcomes of situations involving academic dishonesty and then support fellow administrators and teachers in following school board policy.

#### Recommendations for Future Research

1. The researcher suggests that the study be conducted with a traditional mail-out survey because of the low response rate. The sample of teachers who received the survey via e-mail could have been hesitant to respond because of the controversial nature of the topic or because of fear that district administrators could monitor their

internet use.

2. The researcher suggests that persons interested in exploring the issue of academic dishonesty in high schools in the future include a series of items addressing academic dishonesty and standardized tests.
3. The researcher suggests that persons interested in exploring the issue of academic dishonesty in high schools in the future include a series of items addressing teachers' locus of control.
4. Extensive research has been conducted which addressed students and academic dishonesty. The current research addressed teachers' perceptions of academic dishonesty. The researcher suggests that future research include addressing the issue of academic dishonesty with administrators, superintendents, school board members, and parents.
5. The Georgia Board of Education does not have a policy addressing academic dishonesty in public schools. Disciplinary sanctions are predominantly the arena of the local school board. The researcher suggests that school districts use the results of this study to address the issue of academic dishonesty and to implement policy constructed to prevent academic dishonesty in Georgia's public schools.

#### Concluding Thoughts

Information presented in the Review of Literature indicates that academic dishonesty is a problem in America's educational system. Responses from teachers in the current research support this precept. Some teachers who

responded to open ended questions used phrases such as “epidemic”, “moral decline,” and “but I am just one person.” These terms are simply words written on a page; however, they represent an attitude of frustration and despair that seems to be sweeping through the ranks of Georgia’s teachers in response to academic dishonesty.

Other teachers who responded to this research study indicated that they do not hold students responsible for the typical childish behavior of academic dishonesty. And still other teachers indicated that they feel hopeless in the face of such widespread behavior.

The majority of the teachers who responded to the survey instrument implied a personal desire to help students grow, learn, and succeed. Through policy change and administrative support, education can become a better environment for both teachers and students, where teachers inspire and students achieve.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A  
PANEL OF EXPERTS

## Panel of Experts

Amber Donnell  
Math teacher  
East Laurens High School

Dr. Hope Morris  
Career and Technical Education teacher  
East Laurens High School

Fay Price  
English teacher  
East Laurens High School

Jim Rowland  
Government teacher  
East Laurens High School

APPENDIX B  
COVER LETTER

August, 2006

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Amy Rowland, and I am a doctoral student at Georgia Southern University in the department of Leadership, Technology, and Human Development. For my dissertation project, I am evaluating Georgia high school teachers' perceptions of academic dishonesty. For comparison purposes, I am asking teachers to complete the on-line Academic Dishonesty Survey.

This letter is to request your assistance in collecting data using this instrument; it should take about 10-15 minutes for you to provide the requested information. There is, of course, no penalty should you decide not to participate. If you agree to participate, please complete the survey at the following hotlink. To respond to the survey questions, click on the box that most closely represents your answer, and then type your answers to the open-ended questions in the space provided.

Completion of the survey and questionnaire will be considered permission to use the information you provide in my analyses. Please be assured that your responses will be kept confidential. Only I will have access to any individual responses, and at the end of the study, all responses will be deleted. The data will be most useful to me if you respond to every item on the instruments.

If you have any questions about this research projector would like to request a copy of the results, please call me at (478)296-1147 or e-mail me at [a25rowland@yahoo.com](mailto:a25rowland@yahoo.com). If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant in this study, they should be directed to Office of Research Services and Sponsored Programs at (912) 468-7758 or by e-mail at [oversight@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:oversight@georgiasouthern.edu).

Let me thank you in advance for your assistance in this research effort. This information will be useful in evaluating educational trends in Georgia and in developing future educational policy.

Respectfully,

Amy Rowland, Ed.S.

APPENDIX C  
IRB APPROVAL LETTER

## Georgia Southern University

## Office of Research Services &amp; Sponsored Programs

## Institutional Review Board (IRB)

Phone: 912-681-5465

Administrative Annex

P.O. Box **8005**

Fax: 912-681-0719

Ovrsight~GeorgiaSouthern.edu

Statesboro, GA 30460

To: Amy Rowland 510 Eric Dr.  
Dublin, GA-3 1021

**CC:** Dr. James F. Burnham P.O. Box-8131

From: Office of Research Services and Sponsored Programs Awrrnnstrati~ e Support Office for  
Resea-ch 0 ersight Committees  
(IACUCIIBCIRB)

Date: November 28, 2006

Subject: Status of Application for Approval to Utilize Human Subjects in Research

After a review of your proposed research project numbered: H07091, and titled "A Descriptive Analysis of Georgia Teachers Perceptions of Academic Dishonesty", it appears that (1) the research subjects are at minimal risk, (2) appropriate safeguards are planned, and (3) the research activities involve only procedures which are allowable.

***Therefore, as authorized in the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, I am pleased to notify you that the Institutional Review Board has approved your proposed research.***

**This IRE approval is** in effect for one year from the date of this letter. If at the end of that time, there have been no changes to the research protocol, you may request an extension of the approval period for an additional year. In the interim, please provide the IRB with any information concerning any significant adverse event, **whether or not** it is believed to be related to the study, within five working days of the event. In addition, if a change or modification of the approved methodology becomes necessary, you must notify the IRB Coordinator prior to initiating any such changes or modifications. At that time, an amended application for IRB approval may be submitted. Upon completion of your data collection, you are required to complete a *Research Study Termination* form to notify the IRB Coordinator, so your file may be closed.

Sincerely,

Julie B. Cole  
Director of Research Services and Sponsored Programs

APPENDIX D  
TABLES OF MAJOR STUDIES

Table 20

*Studies Related to Honor Codes*

STUDY	PURPOSE	PARTICIPANTS	DESIGN	FINDINGS
McCabe (1993)	To examine several variables in relation to gambling behavior.	800 college/ university faculty	Logit-discreet-time hazard model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers at honor code schools report better student understanding of expectations.</li> <li>Students view teachers as unconcerned.</li> </ul>
McCabe, Trevino, Butterfield (1996)		318 college graduates		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Honor codes have a long-term effect on behavior.</li> </ul>
Dixon, Hayes, & Aban (2000)		45 undergraduate students		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased exposure to rules does not increase instances of rule-following.</li> </ul>

Table 21

*Studies Related to Rates of Academic Dishonesty*

STUDY	PURPOSE	PARTICIPANTS	DESIGN	FINDINGS
Bowers (1964)	To examine a variety of variables and academic dishonesty.	5,000 college/university students		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ¾ admitted to being academically dishonest</li> </ul>
McCabe & Trevino (1997)		9 colleges and universities		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replicated Bowers (1964) study; found a slight increase in the level of academic dishonesty</li> </ul>
Josephson Institute (2002)	To evaluate trends in various types of maladaptive social behavior.	12,000 high school students	Quantitative: survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 74% were academically dishonest</li> </ul>

Table 21(continued)

*Studies Related to Rates of Academic Dishonesty*

STUDY	PURPOSE	PARTICIPANTS	DESIGN	FINDINGS
Taylor, Pogrebin, & Dodge (2002)	To examine the influence of external pressure on h.s. students' academically dishonest behavior.	32 high school students	Qualitative: interviews and grounded theory techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students feel that academic dishonesty is common.</li> <li>• Elite high school students are often academically dishonest; not just low scoring students.</li> </ul>
Burton, Ray, & Mehta (2003)	To evaluate peers' influence on children's behavior.	160 elementary and middle grades students	2x2x2x5 mixed factorial design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Older children are more likely to be academically dishonest than younger children.</li> </ul>

Table 22

*Studies Related to Locus of Control*

STUDY	PURPOSE	PARTICIPANTS	DESIGN	FINDINGS
Gore & Rotter (1963)	To correlate internal vs. external locus of control & social action behavior.	116 college students	Mean square ratio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students with internal locus of control were more likely to participate in social action.</li> </ul>
Stevick, Dixon, & Wellingham (1990)	To explore the relationship between social interest and locus of control.	125 undergraduate students	Chi square	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People with internal locus of control are more interested in their social context than people with external locus of control</li> </ul>
Tony (2003)	To determine if discipline problems are a maladaptive response to the school environment caused by a deficit in locus of control.	384 students	Quantitative: one-way ANOVA and multiple regression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discipline problems are positively correlated with age &amp; external locus of control, but negatively correlated with perceived value of education.</li> </ul>

Table 23

*Studies Related to Student Reported Reasons for Academic Dishonesty*

STUDY	PURPOSE	PARTICIPANTS	DESIGN	FINDINGS
McCabe (1999)	To explore students' perceptions of academic dishonesty.	32 high school and college students	Qualitative: 4 focus group discussions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student decisions concerning academic dishonesty are influenced by school norms, teachers' attitudes, and peers.</li> <li>• Students do not receive instruction on academic integrity policies.</li> </ul>
Williams (2001)	To explore secondary teachers' methods of ensuring academic honesty.	120 teachers	Qualitative: semi-structured interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students do not receive adequate training in what is academically acceptable and what is not.</li> </ul>

Table 23 (continued)

*Studies Related to Student Reported Reasons for Academic Dishonesty*

STUDY	PURPOSE	PARTICIPANTS	DESIGN	FINDINGS
Taylor, Pogrebin, & Dodge (2002)	To examine the influence of external pressure on h.s. students' academically dishonest behavior.	32 high school students	Qualitative: interview and grounded theory techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competition leads students to academically dishonest behavior.</li> <li>• Students feel immense pressure to meet the academic demands of parents, peers, &amp; teachers.</li> <li>• The influence of adults is significant in student attitudes and participation in academic dishonesty.</li> </ul>
Burton, Ray, & Mehta (2003)	To evaluate peers' behavioral influence on children.	160 elementary & middle school students	2x2x2x5 mixed factorial design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rather than being a positive influence, some peer influence is largely negative.</li> </ul>
Laird, Pettit, Bates, & Dodge (2003)	To evaluate the relationship between parental knowledge & adolescent behavior.	396 adolescents & their parents	Cross-Lag & LGC models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parental knowledge decreases the likelihood that students will participate in delinquent behavior.</li> </ul>

Table 23 (continued)

*Studies Related to Student Reported Reasons for Academic Dishonesty*

STUDY	PURPOSE	PARTICIPANTS	DESIGN	FINDINGS
Pratt, Hunsenberger, Pancer, & Alisat (2003)	To examine the correlation between hs. students' internalization of morals as personal ideals.	896 high school students	Quantitative: 2x2 ANOVA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Authoritative parenting styles may contribute to delinquency in young males.</li> <li>• Lax parental supervision could contribute to adolescent delinquent behavior.</li> </ul>
Eisenberg (2004)	To evaluate the effects of moral orientation on students' attitudes toward two types of academic dishonesty.	196 12-14 year olds	Quantitative: Twp tailed t-test, one-tailed t-test, ANOVA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classroom norms help shape students' perceptions of academic dishonesty.</li> </ul>
Finn & Frone (2004)	To examine the relationship between academic performance and academic dishonesty.	315 adolescents	Quantitative: Mean, standard deviation, zero order correlations, regression equation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is an inverse relationship between school performance and academic dishonesty.</li> </ul>

Table 24

*Studies Related to Student Perceptions of Academic Dishonesty*

STUDY	PURPOSE	PARTICIPANTS	DESIGN	FINDINGS
McCabe (1999)	To explore students' perceptions of academic dishonesty.	32 high school & college students	Qualitative: 4 focus group discussions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students perceive teachers as unconcerned.</li> <li>• Students do not perceive teachers as technologically advanced enough to catch them being academically dishonest.</li> </ul>
Pulvers & Diekhaff (1999)	To examine the relationship between environment & academic dishonesty.	280 undergraduate students	Quantitative: t-test	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student perceptions of the classroom were related to their attitudes about academic dishonesty.</li> </ul>
Kennedy, Nowak, Raghuraman, Thomas, & Davis (2000)	To explore student & faculty perceptions of academic dishonesty in the distance learning environment.	172 college students & 69 faculty members	Quantitative: Chi-square	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Both students and faculty believe that it is easier to be academically dishonest in a distance-learning classroom.</li> <li>• Students perceive that it is easy to be academically dishonest in a traditional classroom</li> </ul>

Table 24 (continued)

*Studies Related to Student Perceptions of Academic Dishonesty*

STUDY	PURPOSE	PARTICIPANTS	DESIGN	FINDINGS
Taylor, Pogrebin, & Dodge (2002)	To examine the influence of external pressure on h.s. students' academically dishonest behavior.	32 high school students	Qualitative: interviews & grounded theory techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students find academic dishonesty on an exam more wrong than copying homework.</li> </ul>
Eisenberg (2004)	To evaluate the effects of moral orientation on students' attitudes toward two types of academic dishonesty.	196 12-14 year olds	Quantitative: Twp tailed t-test, one-tailed t-test, ANOVA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Morally aware students were less approving of academic dishonesty than non-morally aware students.</li> </ul>

Table 25

*Studies Related to Teachers' Perceptions of Academic Dishonesty*

STUDY	PURPOSE	PARTICIPANTS	DESIGN	FINDINGS
Evans & Craig (1990)	To compare/contrast the perceptions students & teachers have of academic dishonesty.	1,763 students & 107 teachers at middle and high schools	Quantitative: ANOVA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Both teachers and students indicated feeling skeptical of measures to prevent academic dishonesty.</li> </ul>
Williams (2001)	To explore secondary teachers' methods of ensuring academic honesty.	120 teachers	Qualitative: semi-structured interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers use a wide variety of methods to authenticate student work.</li> <li>Teachers could benefit from training in authenticating student work.</li> </ul>

Table 25 (continued)

*Studies Related to Teachers' Perceptions of Academic Dishonesty*

STUDY	PURPOSE	PARTICIPANTS	DESIGN	FINDINGS
Simon, Carr, McCullough, Morgan, Oleson, & Ressel (2003)	To examine the effect organizational practices have on teachers' efforts to stem academic dishonesty.	493 university faculty members	Quantitative: cluster analysis & f-test	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Faculty members who place more trust in their administrator are more likely to report academic dishonesty than faculty members who are less trusting of their administrator</li> </ul>

Table 26

*Studies Related to Teacher Internal Conflict*

STUDY	PURPOSE	PARTICIPANTS	DESIGN	FINDINGS
Tennessee Tomorrow, Inc. (2002)	To understand why new teachers leave the work force.	487 former TN public school teachers	Frequency distribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary reasons for leaving: children/pregnancy, lack of admin. support, low salary/benefits</li> </ul>
Webb, Vulliamy, Hamalainen, Sarja, Kimonen, Nevalainen (2004)	To explore the impact of education reform on teachers' work.	24 British teachers & 13 Finnish teachers	Qualitative: interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers are discouraged by work intensification, low pay, deterioration of student behavior, and a decline in public respect</li> </ul>
Schlichte, Yssel, & Merbler (2005)	To discover if there are any protective factors that may reverse teacher attrituion.	5 first year special ed. teachers	Qualitative semi-structured interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admin. Should be aware of teacher stress</li> <li>• Admin. Should foster collegial environment</li> <li>• When teachers give up, so do students.</li> </ul>

Table 26 (continued)

*Studies Related to Teacher Internal Conflict*

STUDY	PURPOSE	PARTICIPANTS	DESIGN	FINDINGS
Liu & Meyer (2005)	To determine areas of teacher satisfaction and dissatisfaction	6,279 teachers nationwide	Hierarchical linear model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers are dissatisfied with low pay and student behavior</li> </ul>

Table 27

*Studies Related to Accountability, Academic Dishonesty, and Standardized Tests*

STUDY	PURPOSE	PARTICIPANTS	DESIGN	FINDINGS
Jacob (2002)	To evaluate teacher responses in practice to mandated standardized testing.	3 <sup>rd</sup> , 6 <sup>th</sup> , & 8 <sup>th</sup> grade students in Chicago's public schools from 1993 - 2000		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High Stakes Testing increases student math &amp; reading performance</li> <li>• HST costs less per student than other means of increasing student achievement</li> <li>• Teachers respond to HST by placing marginally performing students in special education classes so that their test scores will not be reported</li> </ul>

Table 27 (continued)

*Studies Related to Accountability, Academic Dishonesty, and Standardized Tests*

STUDY	PURPOSE	PARTICIPANTS	DESIGN	FINDINGS
Figlio & Getzler (2002)	To investigate whether schools reshape the student test pool upon the institution of high stakes testing.	Public schools in 6 large counties in FL, 1991-1999, K-5 – 8 <sup>th</sup> grade	Regression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upon the institution of high stakes testing, disability classification increased</li> <li>• Low-achieving students were more likely to be placed in special education environments</li> <li>• High poverty schools had more instances of reclassifying students than affluent schools</li> </ul>

Table 27 (continued)

*Studies Related to Accountability, Academic Dishonesty, and Standardized Tests*

STUDY	PURPOSE	PARTICIPANTS	DESIGN	FINDINGS
Jacob & Levitt (2002)	To explore cheating by teachers and administrators on high stakes testing	All 3 <sup>rd</sup> – 7 <sup>th</sup> grade students in Chicago’s public schools in 1993	Algorithm to detect teacher cheating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cheating on high stakes tests occurs in 4-5% of classrooms annually</li> <li>• Teachers respond to incentives and punishments</li> </ul>

Table 27 (continued)

*Studies Related to Accountability, Academic Dishonesty, and Standardized Tests*

STUDY	PURPOSE	PARTICIPANTS	DESIGN	FINDINGS
Figlio (2005)	To determine whether or not schools can use discipline for misbehavior as a tool to increase standardized test performance	41,803 incidents of student suspension in a FL public school system		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools respond to high stakes testing by increasing the punishment of low-achieving students to prevent them from participating in the test and reducing the punishment of high performing students so that they may participate in the test</li> </ul>

Table 27 (continued)

*Studies Related to Accountability, Academic Dishonesty, and Standardized Tests*

STUDY	PURPOSE	PARTICIPANTS	DESIGN	FINDINGS
Cullen & Reback (2006)	To explore the extent to which schools manipulated the test-taking pool in TX.	6,207 TX public schools		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools increase the suspensions of low-performing students</li> <li>• Schools target low-performing black and Hispanic students for suspensions</li> <li>• Schools reclassify students as special needs to avoid test participation</li> <li>• Schools encourage absences of low-performing students</li> </ul>

APPENDIX E  
ITEM ANALYSIS

*Item Analysis*


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Survey Question	Concept	Literature	Research Question
1	Student actions that are academically dishonest	McCabe, 1999; Sycamo & Marcelo, 2003	1
2	Suspected student behaviors	Frery, 1993	2
3	Certain student student behaviors	Frery, 1993	2
4	Teacher responses to suspected occurrences of academic dishonesty	Simon, Carr, McCullough, Morgan, Oleson, & Ressel, 2003; Von Dran, Sangrey, & Taylor, 2000; McCabe, 1999; Willimas, 2001; Evans, Craig, & Meitzel, 1993; Godfrey & Waugh, 1998; Dichtl, 2003; Petress, 2003; Strichertz, 2001; Callahan, 2004	3
5	Teacher responses to certain occurrences of academic dishonesty	Simon, Carr, McCullough, Morgan, Oleson, & Ressel, 2003; Von Dran, Sangrey, & Taylor, 2000; McCabe, 1999; Williams, 2001; Evans, Craig, & Meitzel, 1993; Godfrey & Waugh, 1998; Dichtl, 2003; Petress, 2003; Strichertz, 2001; Callahan, 2004	3
6	Measures taken to prevent academic dishonesty	Evans & Craig, 1990; Christe, 2005; Strichertz, 2001	3

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*Item Analysis (continued)*

Survey Question	Concept	Literature	Research Question
7	Teacher response to internal conflict	Tennessee Tomorrow Inc., 2002; Webb, Vulliamy, Hamalainen, Sarja, Kimonen, & Nevalainen, 2004; Schelichte, Yessel, & Merber, 2005; Liu & Meyer, 2005	4
8	External stakeholders who were positive	Pratt, Hunsenberger, & Alisat, 2003; Taylor Pogrebin, & Dodge, 2002; Burton, Rey, & Mehta, 2003; Laird, Pettit, Bates, & Dodge, 2003	5
9	External stakeholders who were negative	Pratt, Hunsenberger, & Alisat, 2003; Taylor Pogrebin, & Dodge, 2002; Burton, Rey, & Mehta, 2003; Laird, Pettit, Bates, & Dodge, 2003	5
10	Seriousness of academic dishonesty at high school	Evans & Craig, 1990; Godfrey & Waugh, 1998	2
11	Seriousness of academic dishonesty in courses	Evans & Craig, 1990; Godfrey & Waugh, 1998	2
12	Occurrences of suspected academic dishonesty	McCabe, 1999; Evans & Craig, 1990	2

*Item Analysis (continued)*


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Survey Question	Concept	Literature	Research Question
13	Occurrences of certain academic dishonesty	McCabe, 1999; Evans & Craig, 1990	2
14	Copying homework	Frary, 1993	1
15	Looking on another student's paper	Frary, 1993	1
16	Cheat sheets	Frary, 1993	1
17	Turning in someone else's homework	Frary, 1993	1
18	Falsifying research	Frary, 1993	1
19	Copying without proper references	Frary, 1993; Conradson & Hernandez-Ramos, 2004	1
20	Stealing the answer key	Frary, 1993	1
21	Stealing a copy of the test	Frary, 1993	1
22	Using technologically stored information	Frary, 1993	1
23	Text messaging	Frary, 1993	1
24	Cell phones	Frary, 1993	1
25	Camera phones	Frary, 1993	1

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*Item Analysis (continued)*

Survey Question	Concept	Literature	Research Question
26	Level of internal conflict	Tennessee Tomorrow, Inc., 2002; Webb, Vulliamy, Hamalainen, Sarja, Kimonen, & Nevalainen, 2004; Schelichte, Yessel, & Merbler, 2005; Liu & Meyer, 2005	4
27	Attitude toward teaching	Tennessee Tomorrow, Inc., 2002; Webb, Vulliamy, Hamalainen, Sarja, Kimonen, & Nevalainen, 2004; Schelichte, Yessel, & Merbler, 2005; Liu & Meyer, 2005	4
28	Attitude toward education	Tennessee Tomorrow, Inc., 2002; Webb, Vulliamy, Hamalainen, Sarja, Kimonen, & Nevalainen, 2004; Schelichte, Yessel, & Merbler, 2005; Liu & Meyer, 2005	4
29	Teacher confidence in measures to prevent academic dishonesty	Evans & Craig, 1990; McCabe, 1993; McCabe, Trevino, & Butterfield, 1996; Dixon, Hayes, & Aban, 2000; Christe, 2005; Strichertz, 2001	3
30	Teacher trust in administrator	Simon, Carr, McCullough, Morgan, Oleson, & Ressel, 2003	3

*Item Analysis (continued)*

Survey Question	Concept	Literature	Research Question
31	Teacher response to internal conflict	Tennessee Tomorrow, Inc., 2002; Webb, Vulliamy, Hamalainen, Sarja, Kimonen, & Nevalainen, 2004; Schelichte, Yessel, & Merbler, 2005; Liu & Meyer, 2005	4
32	Attitude toward teaching and education	Tennessee Tomorrow, Inc., 2002; Webb, Vulliamy, Hamalainen, Sarja, Kimonen, & Nevalainen, 2004; Schelichte, Yessel, & Merbler, 2005; Liu & Meyer, 2005	4
33	School board Policy		3
35	Pressures placed on teachers by external stakeholders	Pratt, Hunsenberger, & Alisat, 2003; Taylor, Pogrebin, & Dodge, 2002; Burton, Rey, & Mehta, 2003; Laird, Pettit, Bates, & Dodge, 2003	5

APPENDIX F  
SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Academic dishonesty is an issue that all teachers must face. Research reveals that it is a problem on all educational levels, but that high school students report the highest rate of academic dishonesty. Classroom teachers are the educators who most often come into contact with such dishonesty; therefore, your answers to the following questions are important in helping me to complete my study on teachers' perceptions of academic dishonesty and any feelings, either positive or negative, which result from situations involving academic dishonesty.

What student actions do you consider to be academically dishonest?

- copying another student's homework
- looking on another student's paper during a quiz/test
- using a "cheat sheet" during a quiz/test
- turning in another student's work
- falsifying research references
- copying from another work without proper references
- stealing an answer key
- stealing a copy of a test in advance
- using technologically stored information during a quiz/test (graphing calculator, etc.)
- text messaging during standardized tests
- using cell phones during standardized tests
- using camera phones during standardized tests

Which student behaviors do you suspect have happened in your classroom?

- copying another student's homework
- looking on another student's paper during a quiz/test
- using a "cheat sheet" during a quiz/test
- turning in another student's work
- falsifying research references
- copying from another work without proper references
- stealing an answer key
- stealing a copy of a test in advance
- using technologically stored information during a quiz/test (graphing calculator, etc.)

Which student behaviors are you certain have happened in your classroom?

- copying another student's homework
- looking on another student's paper during a quiz/test
- using a "cheat sheet" during a quiz/test
- turning in another student's work
- falsifying research references
- copying from another work without proper references
- stealing an answer key
- stealing a copy of a test in advance
- using technologically stored information during a quiz/test (graphing calculator, etc.)

How did you respond the last time you suspected academic dishonesty in your classroom?

- did not encounter academic dishonesty
- did nothing
- confronted student but didn't pursue the matter further
- dealt with the student one-on-one
- gave the student a warning
- lowered the grade on the item in question
- gave an "F" on the assignmet
- reported the incident to the administrator
- other

How did you respond the last time you were certain academic dishonesty occurred in your classroom?

- did not encounter academic dishonesty
- did nothing
- confronted student but didn't pursue the matter further
- dealt with the student one-on-one
- gave the student a warning
- lowered the grade on the item in question
- gave an "F" on the assignment
- reported the incident to the administrator
- other

Which of the following measures have you taken to prevent academic dishonesty?

- circulate the classroom during a test
- distribute different forms of the same test
- lock tests in secure locations
- protect test software with passwords
- use plagiarism detecting software
- check references on research papers

How did you respond to any internal conflict that you experienced as a result of situations of academic dishonesty? *Please note: For the purpose of this study, internal conflict is defined as moral discomfort, anger, uncertainty, frustration, or emotional distress.*

- discussed the matter with fellow teachers
- discussed the matter with my administrator
- addressed the superintendent
- addressed the school board
- changed schools
- other

If you addressed or reported academic dishonesty, which of the following external stakeholders were a positive factor in your experience?

- the student(s)
- the parent(s)
- the administrator(s)

If you addressed or reported academic dishonesty, which of the following external stakeholders were a negative factor in your experience?

- the student(s)
- the parent(s)
- the administrator(s)

How serious a problem is academic dishonesty at your school?

not serious	somewhat serious	moderately serious	quite serious	very serious
<input type="checkbox"/>				

How serious a problem is academic dishonesty in the courses you teach?

not serious	somewhat serious	moderately serious	quite serious	very serious
<input type="checkbox"/>				

How often have you suspected academic dishonesty occurred in your classroom?

never	seldom	occasionally	often	frequently
<input type="checkbox"/>				

How often have you been certain that academic dishonesty occurred in your classroom?

never	seldom	occasionally	often	frequently
<input type="checkbox"/>				

How serious an offense do you consider copying another student's homework?

not serious	somewhat serious	moderately serious	highly serious	extremely serious
<input type="checkbox"/>				

	not serious	somewhat serious	moderately serious	highly serious	extremely serious
How serious an offense do you consider looking on another student's paper during a test?	<input type="checkbox"/>				

	not serious	somewhat serious	moderately serious	highly serious	extremely serious
How serious an offense do you consider using a "cheat sheet" during a quiz/test?	<input type="checkbox"/>				

	not serious	somewhat serious	moderately serious	highly serious	extremely serious
How serious an offense do you consider turning in another student's work?	<input type="checkbox"/>				

	not serious	somewhat serious	moderately serious	highly serious	extremely serious
How serious an offense do you consider falsifying research references?	<input type="checkbox"/>				

	not serious	somewhat serious	moderately serious	highly serious	extremely serious
How serious an offense do you consider copying from another work without proper references?	<input type="checkbox"/>				

How serious an offense do you consider stealing an answer key?

not serious	somewhat serious	moderately serious	highly serious	extremely serious
<input type="checkbox"/>				

How serious an offense do you consider stealing a copy of the test in advance?

not serious	somewhat serious	moderately serious	highly serious	extremely serious
<input type="checkbox"/>				

How serious an offense do you consider using technologically stored information during a quiz/test, e.g. graphing calculators?

not serious	somewhat serious	moderately serious	highly serious	extremely serious
<input type="checkbox"/>				

How serious an offense do you consider text messaging during standardized tests?

not serious	somewhat serious	moderately serious	highly serious	extremely serious
<input type="checkbox"/>				

How serious an offense do you

not serious	somewhat serious	moderately serious	highly serious	extremely serious
<input type="checkbox"/>				

consider using cell phones during standardized tests?

	not serious	somewhat serious	moderately serious	highly serious	extremely serious
How serious an offense do you consider using camera phones during standardized tests?	<input type="checkbox"/>				

	no intensity	low intensity	moderate intensity	high intensity	extreme intensity
In your experience with academic dishonesty, rate your level of internal conflict. <i>Please note that for the purpose of this study, internal conflict is defined as moral discomfort, anger, uncertainty, frustration, or emotional distress.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

	no effect	little effect	moderate effect	high effect	extreme effect
To what extent did your experience with academic dishonesty affect your attitude toward the teaching profession?	<input type="checkbox"/>				

	no effect	little effect	moderate effect	high effect	extreme effect
To what extent did your experience with academic dishonesty affect your attitude toward education?	<input type="checkbox"/>				

	no confidence	low confidence	moderate confidence	high confidence	total confidence
How confident are you of measures taken by teachers and administrators to prevent academic dishonesty (e.g., curriculum, honor codes, school board policy, student handbooks, etc.)?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	not at all	slightly likely	moderately likely	highly likely	extremely likely
How likely would you be to approach your administrator about issues concerning academic dishonesty?	<input type="radio"/>				

As a result of your experiences with academic dishonesty, how did you address any internal conflict that you experienced?

Describe how your experiences with academic dishonesty affected your attitude toward your profession or education in general.

In your experience with academic dishonesty, to what extent was local school board policy, if any existed, followed?

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What additional comments would you like to share about your experiences with academic dishonesty?

An empty rectangular text input box with a light beige background and a thin black border. It features standard scrollbars on the right and bottom edges.

Describe, if applicable, a situation in which you received pressure from external forces (e.g., administrator, parents, etc.) when addressing a situation of academic dishonesty.

An empty rectangular text input box with a light beige background and a thin black border. It features standard scrollbars on the right and bottom edges.

## Race

- African American
- Asian
- Caucasian
- Hispanic/Latino
- Native American
- Other

## Sex

- Female
- Male

## Number of years experience

- 1-3
- 4-8
- 9-12
- 13+

## Educational level

- Bachelor's
- Master's

- Specialist
- Doctorate

Primary content area

- Art
- Career and Technical Education
- English
- Foreign Language
- Health and Physical Education
- Math
- Science
- Social Studies