

Toronto District School Board

Operational Procedure PR.590

Title: **PLAGIARISM DETECTION SERVICE**

Adopted: June 17, 2008

Revised:

Authorization: EPP

1.0 OBJECTIVE

To provide a process for ensuring compliance with the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* when confirming the originality of work assignments submitted by students using a plagiarism detection service

2.0 RESPONSIBILITY

Executive Superintendent, Student Success

3.0 PROCEDURES

Schools currently have the option of using a plagiarism detection service offered through Turnitin to confirm the originality of work assignments submitted by students in the classroom. If this program is used, it is recommended that the following steps be taken in order to comply with the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

3.1. Notice to Students

Turnitin requires students to submit certain information through its website in order to administer the service including the student's name, a contact e-mail address, and the student's class assignment. Upon completion of the class, Turnitin deletes the student name and address. However, student assignments may be maintained in the database at the request of the school in order to permit Turnitin to use the assignments as a comparator for future classes. The *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA)* requires that students be notified of (a) the purpose for collecting personal information, (b) the statutory authority for the collection, and (c) the title, business address and telephone number for an individual who may answer questions about the collection. It is recommended that the following written notice be provided to students who will be required to submit work to Turnitin.

Dear Student:

In order to ensure that the work you submit for evaluation is original, you will be required to submit selected assignments to the school's service pro-

vider Turnitin through its website. Turnitin's detection software will alert the classroom teacher of assignments which appear to contain other source material. Where appropriate, the teacher will follow up with you to determine whether the information has been obtained from another source and whether the source material is appropriately recognized in the assignment. An academic penalty and/or additional school consequence may be applied if a teacher determines that plagiarism has taken place.

Turnitin's website will require you to submit your name, and an email address. This will allow your teacher to identify who has submitted an assignment for the purposes of evaluation, and will ensure the originality of the work assignment. This will also permit Turnitin to send you a copy of the originality report for your assignment, or to send to you the information about any changes to your account information or password. Your name and email address are not maintained for any other reason. Assignments will be scanned as noted above. Both your name and e-mail address will be deleted from Turnitin's files after completion of the class. A copy of each student assignment will be kept on file for the purposes of comparing the assignment to future assignments submitted to schools in the Board should an instance of potential plagiarism be detected. Should such an event occur, you may be contacted by the school as part of its investigation into an instance of potential plagiarism. This information is collected under s.264 of the *Education Act* and Regulation 298, s.20. Questions with respect to the collection of information for Turnitin may be referred to the Board's Freedom of Information Coordinator at the following address:

Senior Manager Board Services
Toronto District School Board
5050 Yonge Street
Toronto, Ontario
M2N 5N8
(416) 397-3288

3.2. Letter of Agreement

The Toronto District School Board has authorized its schools to retain iParadigms LLC for the purpose of investigating the originality of student assignments. As you are aware, the Board is subject to the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

In order to ensure the Board's obligations under the Act are met, we ask that you confirm your agreement to comply with the following requirements, to which the Board is subject, when handling personal information (as defined by the Act) pursuant to a retainer from one or more of the Board's schools:

- (a) iParadigms LLC will collect only personal information necessary to administer the services retained by the school.

- (b) iParadigms LLC will only use or disclose personal information for purposes consistent with the purposes for its collection or as otherwise permitted by law and authorized by the Board¹.
- (c) iParadigms LLC will take all reasonable measures to prevent unauthorized access, loss or theft of personal information. iParadigms LLC will notify the Board immediately of any such event.
- (d) Upon request of the Board, iParadigms LLC will return or destroy any personal information maintained in its database.
- (e) iParadigms LLC will notify the Board of any access request or request for correction made for personal information collected by iParadigms LLC on behalf of the Board.

Please confirm your agreement to comply with these requirements by returning a signed copy of this letter.

I, _____, on behalf of iParadigms LLC Inc. acknowledge the legal requirements imposed on the Toronto District School Board and agree on behalf of the iParadigms LLC Inc. that the company will comply with the requirements identified above when handling personal information on behalf of the Board. I understand that failure to do so may result in a discontinuance of the company's services by the Board.

4.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Fresh AER Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting in Secondary Schools 2006

¹ The purposes for collection will be identified by the Board to the student as follows: "Dear Student: In order to ensure that the work you submit for evaluation is original, you will be required to submit selected assignments to the school's service provider Turnitin through its website. Turnitin's detection software will alert the classroom teacher of assignments which appear to contain other source material. Where appropriate, the teacher will follow up with you to determine whether the information has been obtained from another source and whether the source material is appropriately recognized in the assignment. An academic penalty and/or additional school consequence may be applied if a teacher determines that plagiarism has taken place. Turnitin's website will require you to submit your name and email address. This will allow your teacher to identify who has submitted an assignment for the purposes of evaluation, and will ensure the originality of the work assignment. This will also permit Turnitin to send you a copy of the originality report for your assignment, or to send to you the information about any changes to your account information or password. Your name and email address are not maintained for any other reason. Assignments will be scanned as noted above. Both your name and e-mail address will be deleted from Turnitin's files after completion of the class. A copy of each student assignment will be kept on file for the purposes of comparing the assignment to future assignments submitted to schools in the Board should an instance of potential plagiarism be detected. Should such an event occur, you may be contacted by the school as part of its investigation into an instance of potential plagiarism. This information is collected under s.264 of the *Education Act* and Regulation 298, s.20. Questions with respect to the collection of information for Turnitin may be referred to the Board's Freedom of Information Coordinator.