

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

What's News

Business & Finance

- ◆ **Consumer prices surged** in April by the most in any 12-month period since 2008, shaking investors although the data partly reflect a recovery that is picking up steam as the pandemic eases. **A1, A2**
- ◆ **U.S. stocks extended** their losses, with the S&P 500, Dow and Nasdaq falling 2.1%, 2% and 2.7%, respectively. U.S. government bond yields jumped. **A1, B11**
- ◆ **U.S. tariffs have** led to a sharp decline in Chinese imports and significant changes in the types of goods Americans buy from China. **A1**
- ◆ **China is considering** whether to replace Vice Premier Liu as its top economic envoy to Washington. **A7**
- ◆ **Amazon notched** a victory as the European Union's second-highest court sided with the company over a \$300 million tax bill. **B1**
- ◆ **SoftBank smashed** profit records in Japan, riding a series of blockbuster IPOs to full-year net income equivalent to nearly \$46 billion. **B1**
- ◆ **Tesla CEO Musk said** that the company has suspended taking bitcoin as payment for its vehicles. **B1**
- ◆ **A Facebook-backed** digital currency project is being revamped in a bid to address U.S. officials' concerns that it could be used for illicit purposes. **B10**
- ◆ **The Pentagon agreed** to remove Xiaomi from a blacklist banning U.S. investment in the Chinese tech giant. **B4**
- ◆ **Boeing is nearing** a fix for engine covers like the one that broke apart on a United Airlines 777 jet over Colorado earlier this year. **B3**

World-Wide

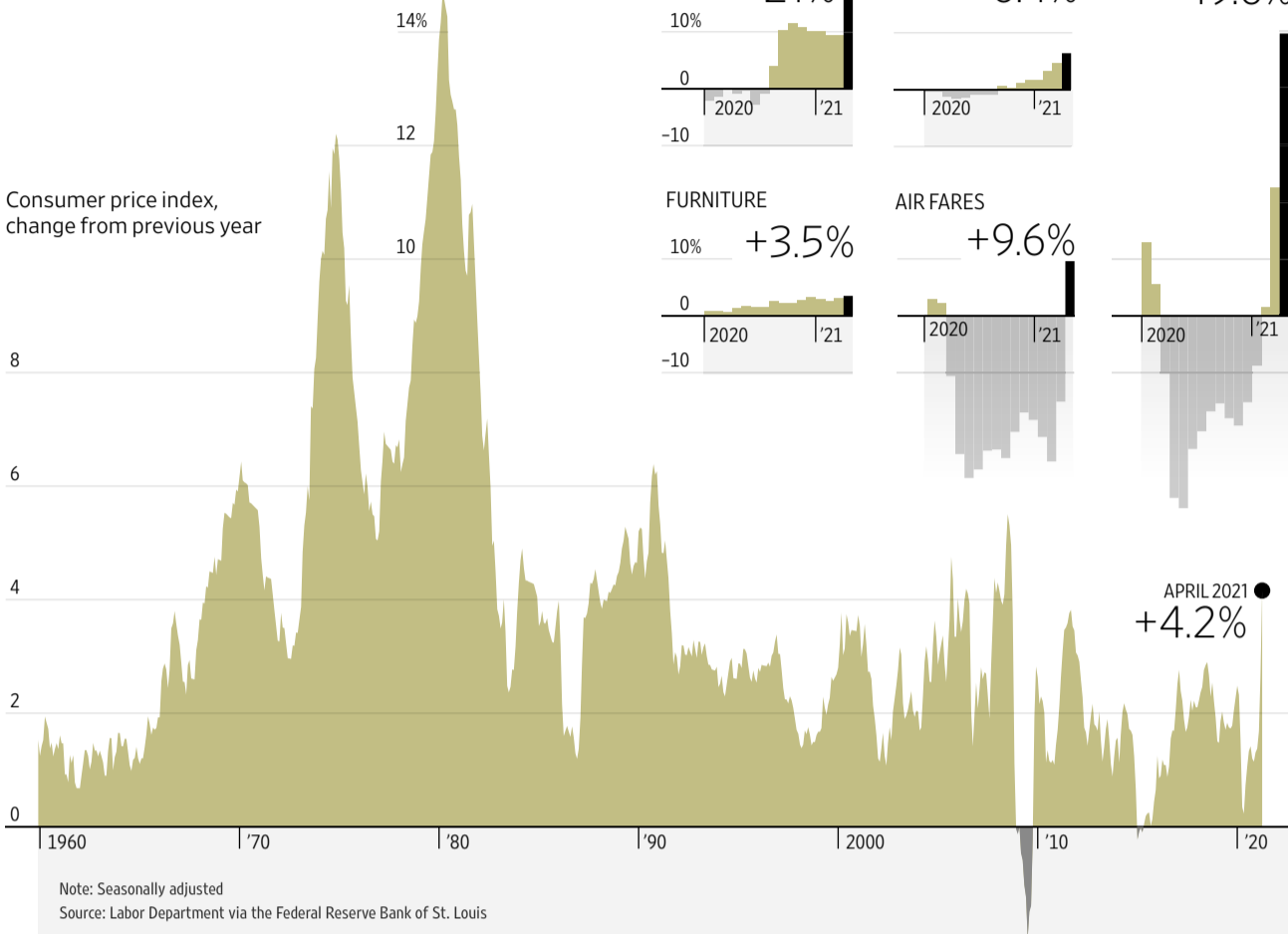
- ◆ **Israel's military said** it killed 14 senior Hamas commanders and officials as it intensified its airstrikes targeting the militant group in Gaza, as a wave of clashes between Jewish and Arab Israelis on the streets spread within the country's borders. **A1, A8**
- ◆ **Republicans ousted** Rep. Liz Cheney from party leadership, sidelining the Trump critic in a bid to preserve party unity as the GOP works to win back the House. **A6**
- ◆ **The CDC recommended** that 12- to 15-year-olds receive the Covid-19 vaccine from Pfizer and BioNTech. **A3**
- ◆ **The owner of the Colonial Pipeline** said that it has begun restarting operations following a cyberattack that shut down the conduit. **A3**
- ◆ **Biden ordered** U.S. agencies and software contractors that supply them to boost their defenses against cyberattacks. **A4**
- ◆ **The top Republicans** on Capitol Hill told Biden they would oppose any effort to raise taxes to pay for an infrastructure proposal. **A4**
- ◆ **The federal government** is launching a temporary \$3.2 billion program to help needy families pay for high-speed internet service. **A4**
- ◆ **A review board** established by the WHO's leadership said the agency took too long to declare Covid-19 a public-health emergency. **A9**
- ◆ **Mexico said** it is invalidating a union vote at a GM truck factory after the U.S. asked for a review under the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement. **A7**

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Inflation Surge Rattles Markets

April's increase in consumer prices was driven partly by sharp rises in prices for used cars, gasoline and airline fares.



Consumer-price rise of 4.2% for year is biggest since 2008, fueling worries of a rate hike

By GWYNN GUILFORD

Consumer prices surged in April by the most in any 12-month period since 2008, shaking investors although the data partly reflect a recovery that is picking up steam as the Covid-19 pandemic eases. The Labor Department reported its consumer-price index jumped 4.2% in April from a year earlier, up from 2.6% for the year ended in March. On a month-to-month basis, which strips out the effect of price declines in April 2020, the early days of the pandemic, prices rose a seasonally adjusted 0.8% last month.

The index measures what consumers pay for goods and services such as clothes, groceries, restaurant meals, recreational activities and vehicles.

Higher prices for used autos surged 10% in April compared with the prior month—the largest monthly increase on record. That accounted for more than one-third of the increase, the Labor Department said.

The data sent the Dow Jones Industrial Average and S&P 500 to their steepest three-day declines in nearly seven months on Wednesday, on concerns that the Federal Reserve could move earlier than expected to tighten interest rates. Bond yields jumped, with the yield on the benchmark 10-year posting its largest one-day gain since March.

Policy makers are watching April's reading to gauge the extent of what many expect to be a monthslong rise in prices, after a year of anemic overall inflation.

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- ◆ Three price trends to watch closely..... A2

Stocks Log Worst Streak in Months

By KAREN LANGLEY AND JOE WALLACE

U.S. stocks extended their losses on Wednesday, with the Dow Jones Industrial Average and S&P 500 posting their steepest three-day declines in nearly seven months, after a sharp increase in consumer prices heightened concerns about inflation.

The jump in prices was

steeper than expected and exacerbated fears that inflation could prompt the Federal Reserve to accelerate its timeline for scaling back its easy-money policies. Near-zero rates have buoyed demand for stocks, which have hit dozens of records since the coronavirus pandemic sent them falling early last year.

"Not only is just inflation and unexpected inflation a bad

story for any type of real returns in your portfolio, it's also increasing the uncertainty around what the Fed's next moves are going to be over the next couple of months," said Matt Forester, chief investment officer of Lockwood Advisors at BNY Mellon Pershing.

The S&P 500 fell 89.06 points, or 2.1%, to 4063.04. The Dow Jones Industrial Average retreated 681.50 points,

or 2%, to 33587.66. The broad U.S. stock index is down 4% this week, while the blue chips are down 3.4%, the largest three-day drop for both indexes since late October.

The tech-heavy Nasdaq Composite slumped 357.75 points, or 2.7%, to 13031.68. The Nasdaq is down 5.2% this week—its worst three trading days since early March.

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U.S. Tariffs Bring Drop In Chinese Imports

By JOSH ZUMBRUN

WASHINGTON—U.S. tariffs have led to a sharp decline in Chinese imports and significant changes in the types of goods Americans buy from China, new data show, with purchases of telecommunications gear, furniture, apparel and other goods shifting to other countries.

Nearly two-thirds of all imports from China—or about \$370 billion in annual goods—were covered by tariffs imposed by the U.S. in 2018 and 2019. Tariffs now cover just half of Chinese exports to the U.S., or about \$250 billion in goods annually, as U.S. companies buy more from other countries, according to a Wall Street Journal analysis of information from Trade Data Monitor. The Trump administration imposed the levies in 2018-19, aiming to boost U.S. factory production by making Chinese imports more expensive for the U.S. companies that bring them in. That so-called reshoring of manufacturing hasn't happened in any appreciable way.

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Colonial Pipeline begins to restart operations amid strained gasoline supplies. **A3**



U.S. NEWS
Republicans in House oust Liz Cheney from party leadership over criticism of Trump. **A6**

Cheating at School Grows Rampant

Students isolated at home find academic dishonesty is easier than ever

By TAWNELL D. HOBBS

A year of remote learning has spurred an eruption of cheating among students, from grade school to college. With many students isolated at home over the past year—and with a mass of online services at their disposal—academic dishonesty has never been so easy.

Websites that allow students to submit questions for expert answers have gained millions of new users

over the past year. A newer breed of site allows students to put up their own classwork for auction.

"Consider hiring me to do your assignment," reads a bid from one site. "I work fast, pay close attention to the instructions, and deliver a plagiarism-free paper."

Some educators fear the new generation of cheaters will be loath to stop even after the pandemic recedes.

"Students have found a way

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Yearning for Pre-Pandemic Crowds? Head to the Airport

Flying revives, as do annoyances; 'selfishly, I like an empty airplane'

By ALISON SIDER

Air travel is coming back. So are things people hated about it.

Passenger volumes at U.S. airports hit pandemic records over the weekend, with more than 1.7 million people passing

through airport security Friday and again on Sunday.

Frequent fliers like Tim Slabough aren't thrilled. "We had this window in Covid where business travel was just wonderful," said the medical-supply company representative, who kept up his travel pace

throughout the pandemic.

"The airports themselves were empty," he said. "Now, it's like somebody turned the light switch back on."

Many people traveling now are vacationers and "older folks, hopped up on vaccines,"

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Clashes Rock Israel As Military Kills 14 Hamas Leaders

By FELICIA SCHWARTZ AND DOV LIEBER

TEL AVIV—Israel's military said it killed 14 senior Hamas commanders and officials as it intensified its airstrikes targeting the militant group in Gaza, as a wave of clashes between Jewish and Arab Israelis on the streets spread within the country's borders.

Palestinian health ministry officials said Israeli airstrikes have killed 65 people since Monday, including 16 children. Six Israelis, including one child, have died in intense

Hamas rocket barrages that began Monday evening, and one soldier died in an antitank-missile attack, Israeli officials said.

Meanwhile, chaos also spread inside Israel on Wednesday as the conflagration connected to tensions over the contested city of Jerusalem this week took on a new dimension, with clashes between Jews and Arab Israelis—the descendants of Palestinians who remained in Israel after the 1948 war that

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FROM PAGE ONE

Flying Is Back, With Annoyances

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he said, rather than travel pros. To get around obstacles such as a rental-cars shortage, Mr. Slabaugh said he has resorted to tricks like booking a car for longer than he needs.

Fares are rising, middle seats are no longer empty and everything from parking lots to security lines is getting more congested. Meanwhile, some airports are understaffed to handle demand, many airport restaurants are still closed or at limited capacity, some terminal seating remains blocked for social distancing, and passengers scuffle with airline staff over not wearing masks.

U.S. air-passenger traffic fell more than 60% in 2020 from 2019, and the outlook was grim at this year's start. That started to change this spring as the pace of vaccinations accelerated. Airlines and hotels say U.S. leisure bookings for this summer are nearly back to their pre-pandemic pace.

Now, domestic flights are nearly 77% full, on average, according to trade group Airlines for America.



Air travel is up—like somebody turned the light switch back on, says a traveler, O'Hare airport in April.

"I have definitely been pampered during the pandemic," said B.P. Perry, a political consultant who flew three or four times a week last year. Getting through airport security took no longer than five minutes, and he often had a seating row to himself.

Now some people seem to have forgotten how to travel, he said—neglecting to take laptops out or remove shoes or trying to shove oversize bags into the overhead compartments. "It will be interesting this summer if it's back-to-normal back to normal," Mr. Perry said. "I'm crossing my fingers that it's not."

Mr. Perry nearly missed a recent flight to Washington, D.C., from Atlanta because the security wait was so long, even with Clear, a service that speeds access through security lines.

Last year, customer satisfaction with North American airlines rose to an all-time high, according to J.D. Power's annual study, as passengers enjoyed more flexible tickets, attentive service and empty middle seats.

Shauna Brown of Mobile, Ala., is conflicted. As a travel adviser whose business helping plan romantic getaways and destination weddings thrived during the pandemic, she is

relieved to see passengers returning. "It's great for our industry to see no empty seats," she said, but "selfishly, I like an empty airplane."

For rental-car companies, which sold portions of their fleets to stay afloat, demand picked up "seemingly overnight" in March, and tight supplies prompted higher rates, Joe Ferraro, chief executive of Avis Budget Group Inc. told analysts last week. United Airlines Holdings Inc. said domestic leisure fares are starting to overtake 2019 prices for bookings beginning in mid-June.

Airlines have found it harder to plan, given the un-

certain outlook, and passengers like Angela Flynn are still having trips upended.

Ms. Flynn was booked to fly Southwest Airlines Co. from Raleigh, N.C., to New Orleans for a conference in July. Southwest told her last week that her non-stop flight would have a layover and that she would arrive hours later than she had planned, she said. She ended up being able to rebook, but now must leave at the crack of dawn.

"It's annoying," she said, but after a year of Covid anxiety: "That's just normal annoyance. Isn't that awesome?"

A Southwest spokesman said the airline is sorry for the inconvenience and believes that it has finished tweaking its summer schedule and that any additional changes would likely be in response to increased demand.

Airports still aren't as busy as before the pandemic. Most business travelers, who bring in a huge chunk of airline and hotel revenues, have yet to return, and many lucrative international markets are effectively closed.

At Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport, businesses aren't sure how long the travel recovery will last, and hiring has been a challenge, said Assistant Aviation Director Charles Reynolds.

Hiring at the Transportation Security Administration has been slow, despite ex-

pected higher passenger volumes this summer.

"While TSA is actively working to minimize impact to screening operations, passengers may experience longer wait times than they have experienced over the past year," a TSA spokesman said.

Airlines are calling back pilots and flight attendants, in some cases years sooner than expected. "I think we're all prepared for this to be messy," Southwest CEO Gary Kelly said during the company's earnings call last month.

At Delta Air Lines Inc., pilot-training bottlenecks have contributed to shortfalls. It took more than one call to Delta and hours of waiting for Cynthia Traina to change her family's reservation for a coming trip from San Francisco to Atlanta for a wedding. She gave up after one nearly three-hour wait, she said. On another attempt—after a wait of three hours and 18 minutes—she was able to make the change.

A Delta spokesman said the airline is "increasing staffing resources and providing self-service options."

Hal Berenson, a software-startup founder, was taken aback when he arrived at the Denver airport to find it, he said, looking like the day before Thanksgiving. "The shock value was super high," he said. "Where'd these people come from?"

Cheating At School Surges

Continued from Page One

to cheat and they know it works," said Thomas Lancaster, senior teaching fellow in computing at Imperial College in London, who has studied academic integrity issues for more than two decades. He said cheating sites number in the thousands, from individuals to large-scale operations.

Concerned about his North Carolina State University students cheating in a statistics class, Tyler Johnson launched a plan.

For the final exam, Mr. Johnson, a course coordinator, said he used a computer program that generated a unique set of questions for each student. Those questions quickly showed up on a for-profit homework website that helped him to identify who posted them.

About 200 students were caught cheating—one-fourth of the class. Cases of academic dishonesty more than doubled in the 2019-20 academic year at NC State, with the biggest uptick as students made the transition to online learning, according to the school.

Growing cases

Texas A&M University had a 50% increase in cheating allegations in the fall from a year earlier, with one incident involving 193 students self-reporting academic misconduct to receive lighter punishment after faculty members caught on, a university official said. The University of Pennsylvania saw cheating case investigations grow 71% in the 2019-20 academic year, school data shows.

Dozens of cadets at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point were caught cheating on an online calculus exam last year, sharing answers with each other from home. The school said in April it was ending a policy that protected cadets who admitted honor code violations from being kicked out.

Educators say stress and pressure, both significant effects of the pandemic, are a big reason why students cheat. "Especially in a time of stress, they make poor choices," said Camilla Roberts, president of the International Center for Academic Integrity and director of the Kansas State University Honor and Integrity System.

There is a line between students turning to homework help sites that offer study resources to better understand a subject, and copying answers found on those sites onto homework and tests or hiring others to do their work.

Erik Johnson, an 18-year-old freshman at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, who isn't related to Mr. Johnson of NC State, said he knows students who have used homework help sites for studying—and for cheating. He said he hasn't cheated himself.

He said students, including himself, are frustrated with virtual learning because there's less interaction with instructors and it's not as structured. "I haven't struggled this way with learning material, ever," he said.

At the K-12 level, some schools block a range of homework help websites from district computers to prevent cheating—though that doesn't stop a student from visiting the site from a different device. Middle-school teacher Suzanne Priebe in Riverside, Calif., has put less emphasis on testing during online learning to alleviate stress and the desire to cheat. "We have no control of what is going on when you're on a computer," she said.

Online cheating has boosted another industry: surveillance-type companies that hire online proctors to watch students take tests from home. The proctors look for suspicious behavior, such as a student disappearing from camera view or being slipped answers. Some use facial-detection software to check for wayward eyes and unusual movements.

Proctorio, based in Scottsdale, Ariz., said it proctored 21 million exams in 2020 worldwide, up from 6 million exams in 2019.

ProctorU, based in Hoover, Ala., said students are finding unique ways to cheat. Some of its busts include a student suspected of trying to use a drone's camera to take images of a test to possibly share with others; another who was trying to cheat by using information on sticky notes on his dog; and a female student who sneezed and disappeared from view, to suddenly be replaced by a male wearing a blond wig, impersonating her.

Among the newer ways to cheat are homework auction sites, which give students a say in who does their work and at what price. Students post their assignment on a website, along with a deadline; the website acts as a marketplace for bidders who offer to do the assignment.

The bidders, who often refer to themselves as tutors, can tout degrees and other credentials. Some companies allow students to rate their work and post reviews online.

While educators can use software to check for plagiarism, such tools aren't much help against services that produce original work.

Up for auction

In February, auction website homeworkforyou.com featured one student post looking for someone willing to do weekly school assignments, exams and a project for a business class at York College in Queens, N.Y., over a two-month span. The winning bidder would also need to pose as the student and respond to classmates in a group assignment. The student specified that an "A" was the desired outcome, and that the "willing to pay" fee was \$465.

By the next day, 29 bids had come in. The average was \$479.41.

Homeworkforyou.com didn't respond to requests for com-

Bidders	Average bid
13	\$389.62
ExcellentTutor Rated 9.14 earned 135003.21 around 4090 assignments.	\$55.00
Respectwriter Rated 8.93 earned 23441.54 around 703 assignments.	\$15.00
kingz Rated 9.39 earned 32876.26 around 792 assignments.	\$80.00
Herbert Rated 9.73 earned 957.04 around 32 assignments.	\$500.00
User 5522 Rated 10.0 earned 217.02 around 13 assignments.	\$15.00
Augustine24 Rated 9.13 earned 16880.09 around 671 assignments.	\$300.00
masheti Rated 9.44 earned 9268.73 around 366 assignments.	\$1500.00

Some websites allow students to auction off assignments. The bids above came in to a Wall Street Journal post on homeworkforyou.com. Tyler Johnson of North Carolina State University, below, caught about 200 students cheating on a statistics exam—one-fourth of the class.



ment. It, like many other sites, warns against users submitting work done as their own.

The Wall Street Journal put up a post on the site, titled "Wall Street Journal Needs Help Cheating For Article." The post noted the Journal was reporting on cheating and was interested in talking to bidders, and wouldn't pay the indicated \$15 starting bid.

Bids started rolling in within seconds of the posting—seemingly, without bidders having read the description. Bids reached a total of 13, at an average of \$389.62, before the Journal removed the post about 30 minutes into the auction. One bidder offered to do it for \$2,005.

Bidders contacted by the Journal didn't respond for comment or declined to be interviewed.

Lesley Vos, a blogger and content strategist for Bid4Papers.com, a site where students can auction out writ-

ing assignments, said its terms prohibit academic fraud and plagiarism. She said the site is for educational purposes, with a hope to improve students' grades using methods such as guiding them on ideas, research and proper citations to avoid plagiarism.

She said she supposes cheating can happen, but it would be on a student's conscience. "Students will never tell us how they've used our writers' help," she said.

One self-described independent tutor listed as Daniel Amaro in a Craigslist ad said in an interview by text message that business was booming during the pandemic. The tutor disavowed the label of a cheater for students, and said that the tutor helps students learn by providing written tutorials and explanations for math problems.

"I suspect most of the students who reach out to me intend on turning in my work as their own," the tutor said. "But

expert to quickly answer, or by searching a database of previous answers—include Chegg and Brainly, which said they have seen a big increase in users during the pandemic.

Officials at the sites said the majority of subscribers aren't cheating but trying to fill in gaps left by remote learning, with parents also turning to the sites to help their children study. Rules on the sites warn against cheating, such as copying content for use on essays or other classwork.

"If you break any of those rules, your account can be deleted and you can be banned from the community," said Jakub Piwnik, Brainly's communications director. "Most of the kids out there know what is allowed and what is not. It's sad that some of them want to break the rules."

Mr. Piwnik said users grew to 350 million monthly in 2020, from about 200 million in 2019. The basic service is free, while a \$24 annual subscription is ad-free and gives access to premium features.

Caught

Chegg, a publicly held company based in Santa Clara, Calif., prides itself on a willingness to help institutions determine the identities of those who cheat. It allows educators to report copyright information found on the site. The company saw total net revenue of \$644.3 million in 2020, a 57% increase year over year. Subscribers hit a record 6.6 million, up 67%.

Chegg allows students to send in photos of questions they want answered. Monthly subscription costs range from \$9.95 to \$19.95.

Mr. Johnson at NC State said Chegg helped identify the 200 students that used its website to cheat on his final exam. Some posted exam questions to get answers while others accessed the information.

The students were given three options: accept responsibility, meet with Mr. Johnson over Zoom to review the evidence, or dispute it with the Office of Student Conduct. The punishment would include a zero on the exam and academic integrity probation, with a second violation resulting in suspension for a semester.

"A lot of the students responsible said, 'It's unfair to put us through this, because we're going through a pandemic,'" Mr. Johnson said.

He said about half the students requested the Zoom meeting, with many admitting responsibility. About 30 to 35 went with the hearing, he said, and only one was fully vindicated.

Some parents threatened legal action, Mr. Johnson said. An online petition with 786 signatures by April 1 criticized him, saying a misinterpretation of instructions led to confusion of what could be used to complete the exam. He disputes that.

Even after the bust, the cheating didn't stop.

"In the fall semester, of 1,000 students, I still had academic integrity issues with 70 or 80," he said. "It's still an ongoing thing."

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