



Formats and Guidelines for

Interacting with AHS Distance Education Teachers

American Heritage School distance education courses are interactive. The level of interaction with course instructors varies with a student's age and the course's format:

Grades K-2

For each student enrolled in K-2 courses, American Heritage School provides a packet of curriculum information and consumable materials along with online audio and visual resources to help children and parents complete the activities and learn together. The home is the classroom, and parents are the primary teachers. AHS distance education teachers set up regular parent and teacher conferences to offer assistance, answer questions, review student work (if desired), and describe observations about the student's progress. The total consultation time equates to approximately 90-120 minutes over the year, per subject matter. By default this time is spread evenly over 9 months, although a parent may request that more of this consultation time be placed toward the beginning or end of the course.

Grades 3-6

Parents remain the primary teachers in grades 3-6. American Heritage School's distance education curriculum offers increasing numbers of teacher-graded writing assignments and computer-graded quizzes and learning activities. AHS distance education teachers hold parent-teacher or student-teacher conferences, typically 20-30 minutes per month, for each subject matter in which a student has enrolled. These conferences are held in consultation with and at the discretion of the parents, and they allow teachers, parents, and students to describe observations about student progress, review student work, discuss learning strategies, answer questions, and offer assistance.

Grades 7-12

American Heritage School strives to make available three formats of distance education for students in grades 7-12: Independent Study, Consulted, and Live distance education courses. These are described below:

Live courses are the most interactive, offering (1) access to online and print curricula, (2) frequent scoring and feedback on written assignments, (3) personal consulting (mentoring) sessions with the instructor, and (4) opportunities to participate in live class discussions on a fixed schedule.

Consulted courses include (1) access to pre-recorded online and print materials at your own rate, (2) frequent scoring and feedback on written assignments, and (3) personal consulting (mentoring) sessions with the instructor.

Independent Study courses also provide you (1) access to online and print materials and (2) frequent scoring and feedback on written assignments.

The following table summarizes these course formats:

	Access multimedia and printable materials in AHS's online learning management system	Receive personalized teacher feedback on written assignments	Consult regularly with the instructor in mentoring sessions focused on student writing and Q&A	Participate in "Live" online classes
<i>Live</i>	√	√	√	√
<i>Consulted</i>	√	√	√	
<i>Independent</i>	√	√		

American Heritage School distance education teachers use the following technologies to interact with students:

BrainHoney. BrainHoney is American Heritage School's designated learning management system that serves as a database for assignments and grades. Teachers post assignments and other instructional resources for students to experience, including tests which are automatically administered and drop-boxes for teacher-graded work.

SKYPE. American Heritage School distance education courses will use SKYPE™ as a primary consulting tool. SKYPE™ is free to families and includes screen-sharing capacity, which will be the primary use of this software as teacher focus their consultations on helping students improve their researching, reasoning, relating, and recording. AHS teachers each have a SKYPE account dedicated solely to AHS distance education. Teachers schedule SKYPE consultation calls ahead of time. Teachers' SKYPE screen names resemble the following pattern when possible: ahsdistance.teacherfirstinitiallastname (e.g. ahsdistance.landerson).

GoToMeeting or BigBlueButton. During 2010-2011, American Heritage School distance education teachers will use GoToMeeting or BigBlueButton as a primary screen-sharing platform for "live" course sessions (different from SKYPE consulting calls). Sessions are recorded and then posted in BrainHoney within 24 hours of the live session.

Email. American Heritage School teachers use the student email address that was provided at the time of enrollment to communicate with students, unless requested otherwise by the parent. To change active email accounts for the purposes of these courses, please call the AHS Office of Distance Education at 801-642-0055.

Parent Involvement

Whenever possible, students should hold consultations in open areas, within earshot of their parents. Students are encouraged by AHS administration and teachers to conduct consultations in high-traffic places within their homes and leave doors open to allow maximum awareness and participation by others.

Schedule of Consultations

AHS distance education teachers maintain a regular schedule of student consultations for “live” or “consulted” sections of courses. This schedule is shared with the AHS Director of Distance Education and other AHS administrators, who may join consultations at any time. Each consultation is scheduled for a fixed amount of time and should not extend beyond the scheduled time limits to avoid disrupting family time for all involved (teachers, students, and parents!). Consultation appointments are set through email or phone conversations between teachers, students, and parents. Consultation schedules are similar to “office hours.” And AHS teachers and students interact as flexibly as possible, within “office hour” times. Teachers are expected to respond to all student and parent email requests within two business days whenever possible.

Grading

Unless there are extenuating circumstances, AHS Distance Education teachers provide grades and feedback for all teacher-graded assignments within 72 hours of the assignment’s submission/

Administrative Supervision

AHS Distance Education Administrators regularly and randomly monitor courses and chats, including gradebooks and teacher comments.