

Student Handbook



American School

2200 East 170th Street

Lansing, IL 60438

708-418-2800

www.americanschool.org

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A Message from American School's President

Dear Student,

Congratulations on choosing to enroll with American School, a leader in distance education since 1897. For more than 125 years, American School has helped students in all 50 states and more than 65 countries around the world. Now we have the privilege to serve you whether you have enrolled in our accredited middle school program or accredited high school diploma program or are taking individual courses for credit recovery or enrichment.

You will be studying with a quality institution—one that is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools (MSA-CES), Accreditation International (Ai) and the National Council for Private School Accreditation (NCPA) and recognized as a non-public school by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). More than 20,000 students are currently enrolled in our courses or programs, and since our founding, more than 3 million students have taken American School courses. We are happy to include you in those numbers.

Our aim is to help you reach your educational goals whatever they may be. Middle school students have found that our middle school program prepares them for what lies ahead in high school. Many of our high school graduates have gone on to attend four-year colleges and universities, while others have earned a high school diploma at home and then joined the workforce or enrolled in a community college. Some students who take individual subjects use our courses to recover credit and graduate with a high school diploma from a resident school, while others take individual subjects simply to learn new things. Whatever your educational goals, we want to help you reach and surpass them.

Your first step toward reaching your goals is to read this handbook carefully. You should do so before you begin your first course and refer to this handbook as often as needed during your time as an American School student. This handbook contains policies and procedures which will be in effect throughout your time as an American School student, and becoming familiar with them will save you time and effort. The handbook also answers many questions about American School and tells you how to get the most value from your courses. American School staff members are exceptionally well-qualified for their jobs and are sincere in their desire to help you succeed in your courses. Feel free to call, write or email whenever you need help. We will be glad to assist you.

Thank you for making us your school of choice. We wish you success.

Sincerely,



Valerie J. Riley
President

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History

American School was founded in 1897 by R.T. Miller, Jr. and a group of selected graduates and faculty members of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard University. From its beginning, American School was chartered as an educational institution “not organized for the distribution of profits to its members.” It has continued on that basis for more than 125 years, having no owners or stockholders but controlled by a Board of Trustees and a Corporation.

The original purpose of American School was to “bring much needed training to America’s wage earners” (American School Charter, 1897). Growth was rapid. The program began with five courses and soon more were added at the request of students and employers. By 1900, students had enrolled from all over the United States. In 1902, at the invitation of the Armour Institute (now the Illinois Institute of Technology), American School moved to Chicago to conduct a five-year educational experiment. During that period, American School added several more courses, and conducted extension classes in six social settlements, including the well-known Hull House.

On its tenth anniversary in 1907, American School moved to 58th Street and Drexel Avenue in Chicago where it remained for almost 90 years until July 1996 when it moved to 2200 East 170th Street in Lansing, Illinois. During its time in Chicago, American School greatly expanded its course offerings for students in grades 9-12, began an independent study program to serve students who attend traditional schools, and became the first distance education school to receive accreditation. During its time in Lansing, American School has added online courses, began a middle school program to serve students in grades 6-8 and continues to adapt to the changing educational landscape.

Legal Governance

American School’s Board of Trustees is comprised of the following members:

- Jeffrey E. Cox, Trustee
- Gary R. Masterton, Trustee
- Valerie J. Riley, Trustee

American School’s Corporation is comprised of the following members:

- Jeffrey E. Cox
- Paul Czapkowicz
- Gary R. Masterton
- Thomas Mehrl
- David Perry
- Judy Piscione
- Valerie J. Riley

Accreditation and State Recognition

Accreditation:

American School is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools (MSA-CESS). The Middle States Association is a voluntary, non-profit organization of educational institutions committed to excellence in all levels across the continuum of education, whose purposes are to encourage, advance, assist and sustain the quality and integrity of education.

www.msa-cess.org

American School is also accredited by the National Council for Private School Accreditation (NCPSA). The National Council for Private School Accreditation (NCPSA) has established accreditation procedures to facilitate the appropriate application, review, and recognition of qualified and credible accrediting associations serving private schools.

www.ncpsa.org

Finally, American School is accredited by Accreditation International (Ai). Accreditation International (Ai) assures the educational quality of schools and plans for continuous school improvement to increase student learning. Ai standards are based on international research, best practices, and historical accreditation processes.

www.aiaccredits.org

State Recognition:

American School is fully recognized as a non-public school by the Illinois State Board of Education.

www.isbe.net

Mission Statement

The mission of American School, a not-for-profit 501 (c) (3) institution, is to provide quality educational programs and individual courses to individuals and schools at a reasonable cost using various distance learning methods.

Philosophy and Purpose

The American School, a not for profit distance learning institution utilizing various distance education methods, is dedicated to providing quality instruction at a reasonable cost to those students who are seeking an alternative means of attaining their education.

Privacy Rights

American School takes privacy matters very seriously. The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) protects your educational records and ensures that information is not released without your permission.

If you are under 18, your parents and/or guarantor have the right to access your records and make requests on your behalf. If you are 18 or older, you are solely responsible for your account. If you turn 18 while in our program, you will receive a letter informing you of this change along with a form on which you must indicate anyone who you wish to have access to your records.

There are several instances in which FERPA allows schools to release your information without your express consent. Please refer to the U.S. Department of Education website for more information about these FERPA exceptions (<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>). You may also contact our Student Service department if you have questions about privacy or FERPA law.

Non-Discrimination Policy

American School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, or disability in educational programs and employment practices. There is no minimum or maximum age to enroll. American School accepts students of all ages for American School middle school courses, but students under the age of 18 must have the approval of a parent or guardian before enrolling in American School high school courses.

Social Media Policy

American School will not request or require a student to provide user names or passwords for any private social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter, etc.), nor to give access to any private account. If a student is asked to cooperate in an investigation, according to the anti-bullying investigation procedure, the School may require sharing of the content as part of that investigation.

American School Anti-Bullying Policy Effective September 1, 2024

American School (the School) finds that a safe, civil and healthy school environment is necessary for all students to learn and achieve. Bullying causes physical, psychological and emotional harm to students which interferes with this safe, civil and healthy learning environment. Additionally, bullying has been linked to other forms of antisocial behavior such as vandalism, shoplifting, skipping or dropping out of school, fighting, use of drugs/alcohol, sexual harassment and sexual violence. (105 ILCS 5/27-23.7)

Bullying on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, physical appearance, socioeconomic status, academic status, pregnancy, parenting status, homelessness, age, marital status, physical or mental disability, military status, sexual orientation, gender-related identity or expression, unfavorable discharge from military service, association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristic is prohibited.

Bullying is contrary to state law and the policies of American School. No student should be subjected to bullying:

1. During any school-sponsored education program or activity.
2. While in school, on school property, on school buses or other school vehicles, at designated school bus stops waiting for the bus, or at school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities.
3. Through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network, or other similar electronic school equipment.
4. Through the transmission of information from a computer that is accessed at a non-school-related function, activity, function or program or from the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a school district or school if the bullying causes a substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of a school. This item (4) applies only in cases in which a school administrator or teacher receives a report that bullying through this means has occurred and does not require a district or school to staff or monitor any non-school-related activity, function or program.

Nothing in this policy is intended to infringe upon any right to exercise free expression or the free exercise of religion or religiously based views protected under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution or under Section 3 of Article I of the Illinois Constitution.

Definitions

Bullying includes cyber-bullying and means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect on one or more of the following:

1. Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' persons or property;
2. Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or student's physical or mental health;
3. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' academic performance; or

4. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Bullying may take various forms including without limitation one or more of the following: harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. This list is meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive.

Cyberbullying means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including without limitation any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photoelectronic system or photo optical system, including without limitation email, internet communications, instant messages or fax communications. Cyberbullying includes the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying. Cyberbullying also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons if the distribution or posting creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying.

Retaliation means any form of intimidation, reprisal including but not limited to the submissions of knowingly false bullying allegations, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying. Retaliation is prohibited and will result in the imposition of appropriate interventions/consequences according to this policy.

Restorative measures are a continuum of school-based alternatives to exclusionary discipline such as suspensions and expulsions that

1. are adapted to the particular needs of the school and community
2. contribute to maintaining school safety
3. protect the integrity of a positive and productive learning climate
4. teach students the personal and interpersonal skills they will need to be successful in school and society
5. serve to build and restore relationships among students, families, schools and communities
6. reduce the likelihood of future disruption by balancing accountability with an understanding of students' behavioral health needs in order to keep students in school
7. increase student accountability if the incident of bullying is based on religion race, ethnicity or any other category that is identified in the Illinois Human Rights Act.

School personnel are persons employed by, on contract with, or who volunteer in a school district, charter school or non-public non-sectarian elementary or secondary school, including without limitation school and school district administrators, teachers, school social workers, school counselors, school psychologists, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, school resource officers and security guards.

Bullying Report Process

Students, parents and school personnel are encouraged to immediately report bullying to any administrator within American School. Alternatively, reports may be made orally or in writing to the Bullying Report Manager:

David Perry, Director of Instructional Services
American School
2200 East 170th Street
708-418-2800
dperry@americanschool.org

Anonymous reports are accepted by calling the contact listed above and specifically indicating that you would like to remain anonymous. However, formal disciplinary action cannot be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

Response to Bullying Reports

In the decision whether or not inappropriate behavior constitutes bullying, administrators will consider the student's intent, the frequency or reoccurrence of the inappropriate behavior, and whether there are power imbalances between the students involved. Although bullying is often characterized by repeated acts, in some cases, a single incident may constitute bullying depending on the student's intent and power imbalances.

Responsibilities of American School Staff

All American School staff who witness incidents of bullying or school violence or who possess reliable information that would lead to a reasonable person to suspect that a person is a target of bullying must:

1. Intervene immediately in a manner that is appropriate to the context and ensures the safety of all persons involved;
2. Report the incident of bullying or retaliation to the Bullying Report Manager as soon practicable, but within 24 hours, using the American School Bullying Complaint Form; and
3. Cooperate fully in the investigation of the incident and in implementing any safety plan established by the Bullying Report Manager.

Responsibilities of Students and Parents/Guardians

Any student that witnesses bullying may not stand by or participate in the bullying, but must notify an adult at the School and an adult at home as quickly as practicable. Any parent/guardian who witnesses or is notified of bullying has an obligation to advise the Bullying Report Manager as quickly as practicable, but within 24 hours. Reports can be made to any American School employee or contractor in person, by completion of an American School Bullying Complaint Form, by calling the Instruction Department at 708-418-2860, or by emailing instructiondept@americanschool.org. Anonymous reports will be accepted by the Bullying Report Manager. No disciplinary action will be taken on the sole basis of an anonymous report.

Investigation

1. American School and/or its Bullying Report Manager shall select a designee to perform the investigation who is knowledgeable about bullying prevention and intervention.
2. Investigation of bullying incidents will be initiated within five business days of receipt of a report and completed within 10 business days, unless the Bullying Report Manager grants in writing an additional 5-day extension due to extenuating circumstances. The Bullying Report Manager shall document the extension in the investigation report and shall notify the parties involved.
3. The investigation shall include:
 - a. Identify the perpetrator(s), target(s), and bystander(s), as well as any adult who witnessed the incident or may have reliable information about it.
 - b. Individual interviews, allowing the alleged perpetrator and target to provide their complete history of the report incident.
 - c. A determination of how often the conduct occurred, any past incident or continuing pattern of behavior or whether the target's education was affected.
 - d. Assessing the individual and school-wide effects of the incident relating to safety and assigning school staff to create and implement a safety plan that will restore a sense of safety for the target and other students who have been impacted.
 - e. When appropriate, preparing a Misconduct Report identifying his/her recommendation for individual consequences.
 - f. Documenting full details of the investigation.
4. When the investigation is complete, the Bullying Report Manager shall ensure the investigation report is placed in the permanent record of the both the perpetrator and target.

Notification

The Bullying Report Manager shall report to the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) of all students involved within 24 hours of the investigation being initiated via telephone and/or in writing, the occurrence of any alleged incident of bullying as well as all threats, suggestions or instances of self-harm determined to be the result of bullying, and shall document these notifications in the permanent record of the both the perpetrator and target. The Bullying Report Manager also shall collect, maintain, and submit non-identifiable data regarding verified allegations of bullying to the Illinois State Board of Education.

When the investigation is complete, the Bullying Report Manager shall notify the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) of all students involved the outcome of the investigation via telephone and/or writing.

Parent(s)/legal guardian(s) of the students who are parties to the investigation may request a personal conference with the Bullying Report Manager to discuss the investigation, findings of the investigation, the actions taken to address the reported incident of bullying, and of possible resources outside the School to help the students address the underlying reasons for the bullying.

If the investigation results in the imposition of consequences, the Bullying Report Manager may advise the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) of students other than the perpetrator that the Student Code of Conduct was followed. Parent(s)/legal guardian(s) of students other than the perpetrator will not be advised of specific consequences imposed, as that would be a violation of confidentiality of school-record information required by law.

When an investigation determines that bullying occurred, the Bullying Report Manager shall explain the consequences in a non-hostile manner, and shall impose any consequence immediately and consistently. The Bullying Report Manager shall keep communicating and working with all parties involved until the situation is resolved.

When communicating incidents of bullying to the target's parent(s)/guardian(s), the Bullying Report Manager will consider whether the student may want to keep certain information confidential.

Assigning Interventions and/or Consequences

American School will respond to bullying in a manner tailored to the individual incident, considering the nature of the behavior, developmental age of the student, and the student's history of problem behaviors and performance. Appropriate responses and consequences are outlined in the Student Code of Conduct and can include suspension and or dismissal from American School.

Referrals

Consistent with Federal and State laws, the Bullying Report Manager may refer students who bully to the School Counselor. The counselor, as appropriate, will inform and discuss with the parent(s)/guardian(s) the availability of social work, counseling, and psychological services, and other intervention and restorative measures in the student's local area.

Appeal

Any party who is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal to the American School Executive Committee within 15 calendar days of notification of the Bullying Report Manager's decision. The Executive Committee will render a final determination within 10 days of receipt of the appeal. The Executive Committee may return the incident to the Bullying Report Manager for further investigation or reconsideration of the consequence(s), direct the imposition of other consequence(s), or deny the appeal. The Executive Committee shall notify the party requesting the appeal and the Bullying Report Manager that its decision is final and shall document that notification in permanent record of the both the perpetrator and target.

Consequences

When it is determined that an employee or contractor was aware that bullying was taking place but failed to report it, the employee will be considered to have violated this policy. The Bullying Report Manager will report the incident the Human Resources Supervisor for employee discipline as outlined in the *American School Employee Handbook*.

Reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying is prohibited. Such reprisal or retaliation will be treated as bullying for the purpose of determining appropriate consequences. No person will be subject to making a good-faith report of bullying. However, making a false accusation of bullying as a means of retaliation or as a means of bullying is prohibited and will be treated as bullying for the purpose of determining appropriate consequences.

Policy Evaluation

This policy is based on the engagement of a range of school stakeholders including students, parents and guardians. Furthermore this policy is consistent with other policies of American School.

Notice and Dissemination of Requirements

This policy shall be posted on American School's web site (www.americanschool.org), included in American School's Student Handbook and Employee Handbook, and will be distributed on a yearly basis to parents, guardians, students, and school personnel (including new hires).

American School will conduct a review and re-evaluation of this policy every two years to assess the outcomes and effectiveness of this policy and shall make any necessary and appropriate revisions. As part of this process American School shall review various factors including but not limited to

1. The frequency of victimization
2. Student, staff and family observations of safety at school
3. Identification of areas of a school where bullying occurs
4. The types of bullying utilized
5. Bystander intervention or participation

American School may use relevant data and information it already collects for other purposes in the policy evaluation. The information developed as a result of the policy evaluation must be made available on American School's web site (www.americanschool.org).

No later than September 30 of the subject year, the policy must be filed with the Illinois State Board of Education after being updated.

Date of Adoption: September 1, 2024

Date of Most Recent Review: September 1, 2024

References

105 ILCS 5/27-23.7—Bullying Prevention

23 Illinois Administrative Code § 1.295



Bullying and Retaliation Reporting Form

Date of Submission: _____

Victim or Target Information

Name(s) of Victim/Target:

Reporting Information*

Name and Title of Person Reporting: _____

Relationship to Victim/Target: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Incident Information

Name(s) of student(s) accused of engaging in bullying behaviors:

Course in which bullying/retaliation took place: _____

Date and time of incident: _____

Dates, times and frequency of prior incident(s): _____

Describe what happened and who was present in as much detail as possible (Required). _____

Faith's Law

Faith's Law is named after prevention advocate and child sexual abuse survivor Faith Colson, who graduated from an Illinois high school in the early 2000s. Faith was sexually abused by a teacher at her high school. Years later, during the course of legal proceedings related to the abuse, Faith learned that several adults within her high school suspected that the teacher's relationship with her was inappropriate but did not take appropriate action to report their concerns. As a result of her experiences, Faith pushed for change to state laws related to educator sexual misconduct in K-12 schools. Faith's Law was passed by the 102nd General Assembly as two separate pieces of legislation.

The first legislation, Public Act 102-0676, took effect on December 3, 2021, and, for the first time, established the definition of sexual misconduct within the School Code. It further outlined the requirements for schools to develop and post employee code of professional conduct policies, which were to include the definition of sexual misconduct, and required ISBE to develop a resource guide for schools to make available to pupils, parents/guardians, and teachers. Public Act 102-0676 also expanded the definition of "grooming" in the Illinois Criminal Code, added "grooming" to the list of conduct that qualifies a child as an "abused child" under the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act, and added professional development training opportunities for employees seeking to renew their professional educator license.

The second legislation, Public Act 102-0702, will take effect on July 1, 2023. It focuses on the prevention of "sexual misconduct" as defined in the first part of the legislation (Public Act 102-0676) by school employees, substitute employees, and employees of contractors. Specifically, the Act adds employment history reviews as part of the hiring and vetting process, requires notices to be provided to parents/guardians and the applicable student when there's an alleged act of sexual misconduct, and makes other changes to the process schools must follow when handling allegations of sexual misconduct. Public Act 102-0702 also adds that if a district superintendent has any reasonable cause to believe a license holder has committed an act of sexual misconduct, the superintendent must report this information to the state superintendent of education and the applicable regional superintendent of schools. Further, the state superintendent can initiate the process to revoke or suspend a license, endorsement, or approval issued under Article 21B for reasons including sexual misconduct.

The ultimate goals of Public Act 102-0702 are to give parents/guardians notice regarding allegations of sexual misconduct that involve their student; equip schools across Illinois with better information regarding the employment history of an applicant or employee of a contractor; give schools the resources necessary to make well-informed decisions about who they are employing/contracting with; and protect students from acts of sexual misconduct by school employees, substitute employees, and employees of contractors.

For more information, please consult the resource guides linked below.

Faith's Law English Resource Guide:

<https://www.isbe.net/Documents/Faiths-Law-Resource-Guide.pdf>

Faith's Law Spanish Resource Guide:

<https://www.isbe.net/Documents/Faiths-Law-Resource-Guide-Spanish.pdf>

School Employee Code of Professional Conduct

Pursuant to the State of Illinois's Faith's Law requirements, American School has adopted this Code of Professional Conduct for School Employees. American School is required to post this School Employee Code of Professional Conduct on American School's website and to publish this information in the American School Student Handbook and Employee Handbook, both of which are updated annually.

I. Educator Code of Conduct

All American School employees adhere to the following principles:

Principle 1: Responsibility to Students

American School employees are committed to creating, promoting, and implementing a learning environment that enables students to achieve their highest academic potential, and to succeed as a responsible member of society. They are committed to embodying standards of professionalism in the learning environment; respecting the inherent dignity and worth of each student by assuring that the learning environment is characterized by respect for each student; maintaining a professional relationship with students at all times; providing a curriculum based on high expectations for students; and fostering in each student the development of attributes that will enhance skills and knowledge necessary to be a contributing member of society.

Principle 2: Responsibility to Self

American School employees are committed to establishing high professional standards and striving to meet these standards through their performance. They are committed to assuming responsibility and accountability for their performance and striving to demonstrate proficiency and currency in both content knowledge and professional practice; developing and implementing personal and professional goals with attention to professional standards through a process of self-assessment and professional development; representing their professional credentials and qualifications accurately; and using sound professional judgment.

Principle 3: Responsibility to Colleagues and the Profession

American School employees are committed to collaborating with fellow educators in the interest of student learning and to meet state educational standards; working together to create a respectful, professional and supportive school climate for educators to maintain their individual professional integrity; seeking out and engaging in activities that contribute to the ongoing development of the profession; encouraging promising candidates to enter the education profession; and supporting the preparation, induction, mentoring and professional development of educators.

Principle 4: Responsibility to School Parents and Families

American School employees are committed to collaborating, striving to build trust, and respecting confidentiality with school parents and families; striving to develop and maintain professional relationships with school parents and families; and promoting collaboration and supporting student learning through communication with parents and families.

Principle 5: Responsibility to the ISBE

American School employees are committed to supporting the Administrative and School Codes as applicable to state and federal laws and regulations and the Illinois State Board of Education's standards for highly qualified educators. They are committed to providing accurate communication to the Illinois State Board of Education concerning all certification matters; maintaining appropriate certification for employment; and complying with state and federal codes, laws, and regulations.

Any employee who sexually harasses a student, willfully or negligently fails to report an instance of suspected child abuse or neglect as required by the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (325 ILCS 5/), engages in grooming as defined in 720 ILCS 5/11-25, engages in grooming behaviors, violates boundaries for appropriate school employee-student conduct, engages in sexual misconduct as defined in 105 ILCS 5/22-85.5, or otherwise violates an employee conduct standard will be subject to discipline up to and including dismissal. American School has no tolerance for any unprofessional conduct.

II. Sexual Misconduct and Grooming Behavior Definitions

I. Sexual misconduct is defined by Faith's Law as any verbal, nonverbal, written, or electronic communication or physical activity directed toward or with a minor for the purpose of establishing a romantic or sexual relationship with the minor, including but not limited to a sexual or romantic invitation; dating or soliciting a date; engaging in sexualized or romantic dialog; making sexually suggestive comments that are directed toward or with a minor; self-disclosure or physical exposure of a sexual, romantic, or erotic nature; and/or a sexual, indecent, romantic, or erotic contact with the minor (Illinois' Faith's Law, Public Act 102- 0676, (105 ILCS 5/22-85.5).

II. Grooming behavior is defined by Faith's Law and the Illinois Criminal Code as knowingly using a computer online service, internet service, local bulletin board service, or any other device capable of electronic data storage or transmission, or performing an act in person or by conduct through a third party, or using written communication to seduce, solicit, lure, or entice, or attempt to seduce, solicit, lure, or entice a child, or another person believed by the person to be a child, to commit any sex offense as defined in Section 2 of the Sex Offender Registration Act, to distribute photographs depicting the sex organs of the child, or to otherwise engage in any unlawful sexual conduct with a child or with another person believed by the person to be a child.

III. Expectations of School Employees

American School employees are expected to maintain professional relationships and boundaries, recognizing the age and the developmental levels of the students with whom they interact.

1. American School employees are strictly prohibited from using any form of communication with students (e-mails, letters, notes, text messages, phone calls, conversations) that includes any subject matter that would be deemed unprofessional and/or inappropriate between an employee and student.

2. American School employees are not permitted to transport students in the employee's privately-owned vehicle, unless the employee has obtained the prior permission of the students' parents and American School President to do so.
3. American School employees are not permitted to take or possess a photo or video of a student on their private devices that would be construed as inappropriate.
4. American School employees are expected to maintain a professional relationship in all interactions with students at all times.

IV. Mandated Reporter and Sexual Harassment Training

All American School employees are required to undergo mandated reporter training on an annual basis and must report suspected child abuse and suspected child neglect to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. Pursuant to the Illinois Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act, (325 ILCS 5/4), school employees are required to make a report of suspected child abuse and suspected child neglect to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services by calling the hotline number at 1-800- 25-ABUSE (1-800-252-2873) whenever the employee has reasonable cause to believe that a child known to the employee in the employee's professional or official capacity may be abused or neglected. All American School employees also are required to undergo sexual harassment training on an annual basis.

Effective 5/1/2024

Academic Integrity Policy (Honor System)

American School wants our students to understand a concept well enough to explain it in their own words, and we want them to develop and demonstrate an original academic voice. Our goal is to help our students maximize their potential and meet the highest performance standards through a uniquely individualized learning program. For these reasons, all students pursuing studies with American School are expected to follow the Academic Integrity Policy.

Students may discuss their classwork with other students, friends or family members, and they may use textbooks, study guides and other resources while working on assignments, , but any work submitted for grading must be the student's your own thoughts and ideas. Your work on assignments must show what you have learned. You may not represent someone else's work as your own.

Students who do not comply with this academic integrity policy should expect disciplinary action, which may include being required to retake an assignment or to drop a subject for another. Repeated violations may result in additional consequences, up to and including invalidation of exam grades, academic suspension, or dismissal from American School.

All materials printed or utilized by American School are copyrighted. Students must not post assessments, assignments, answers to assessments or assignments, or any other curricular materials on any media that can be seen by other students or other third parties. This is a violation of federal laws forbidding infringement of copyright and may be prosecuted thereunder. Therefore, you may not provide answers on exams to other people, whether they are students of American School or not, nor are you allowed to solicit or seek out answers from any online source.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious breach of academic honesty and may result in a failing grade or other disciplinary action.

What is Plagiarism?

According to the Merriam-Webster's online dictionary, to plagiarize means:

- to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own
- to use (another's production) without crediting the source
- to commit literary theft
- to present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source.

Given the serious nature of plagiarism, it is important for students to understand that they must give proper credit when they use other people's ideas, words or results. To avoid plagiarism, students must use quotation marks to indicate direct quotations, and they must cite their source using accepted citation standards for the academic discipline. Students must also acknowledge when they are paraphrasing or summarizing someone else's words or ideas.

Plagiarism.org lists the following examples of plagiarism:

- turning in someone else's work as your own
- copying words or ideas from someone else without giving credit
- failing to put a quotation in quotation marks
- giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation
- changing words by copying the sentence structure of a source without giving credit
- copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not

Citation standards are outlined in various guidelines, like the Modern Language Association (MLA) citation style, which is commonly used in humanities-based disciplines, or the American Psychological Association Publication Manual (APA), which is usually used in scientific fields. A course's syllabus will indicate the preferred citation method, and instructors can help students incorporate the correct citation style.

Instructors and students may also use plagiarism checking tools, like CheckMyWork or Turnitin. Instructors may use these tools extensively to ensure the academic originality of written work, including essay questions, portfolio assignments, and other assessed items.

Artificial Intelligence

American School considers presenting work created through the use of generative AI software and AI-powered writing assistants as one's own to be academic dishonesty. Any work a student submits for grading must be created entirely by that student. All outside sources referenced in that work must be properly cited and credited.

Procedures

1. Upon suspicion of academic dishonesty, the instructor shall refer the assignment to the Director of Instruction's office with documentation of suspicions.
2. The Director of Instruction's office shall review the referral. If that review confirms academic dishonesty, the student and/or parent/guardian and instructor will be informed in writing of these findings and any resulting course of action within two (2) business days.
3. The student may appeal the decision by writing the President's Office within ten (10) business days of receipt of the Director of Instruction's office's letter.
4. The President's Office will investigate the facts of the situation and notify both the student and instructor in writing with the results of the investigation within ten (10) business days.

Possible Consequences:

- A score of 0% on an assignment
- Removal from course
- Academic dismissal from American School

Academic Programs

Middle School

American School is pleased to offer a middle school program and courses for students in grades 6-8. Sample middle school schedules are below and on the following page.

Sixth Grade

Full Program Sample Schedule:

English: English 6

Math: Math 6

Science: Science 6 with Virtual Labs or Earth and Space Science

Social Studies: Contemporary World History or World Geography

Elective

Seventh Grade

Full Program Sample Schedule:

English: English 7

Math: Math 7

Science: Science 7 with Virtual Labs or Life Science

Social Studies: World History

Elective

Middle School (Continued)

Eighth Grade

Full Program Sample Schedule:

English: English 8

Math: Math 8 OR (with permission of American School) Algebra 1

Science: Science 8 with Virtual Labs or Physical Science

Social Studies: United States History

Elective

Middle School Electives

Middle School Earth and Space Science (online)

Middle School Health (online)

Life Science (online)

Physical Science (online)

Health Skills (print)

Career Explorations (online)

Electronic Communication Skills (online)

Family and Consumer Science (online)

Principles of Information Technology (online)

Professional Communications (Speech) (online)

Discovering Careers (print)

Money Matters (print)

Middle School Policies and Procedures

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR FULL-YEAR MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

Compulsory School Attendance: It is the responsibility of the student/parent(s)/guardian(s) to meet the compulsory school attendance requirements of the student's home state and comply with the legal requirements of the student's home state's homeschool laws.

Illinois Residents: Per 325 ILCS 50/Missing Children Records Act and 325 ILCS 55/Missing Children Registration Law, all students residing in Illinois are required to submit a birth certificate in order to enroll.

Accreditation: American School is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools (MSA-CESS), the National Council for Private School Accreditation (NCPA) and Accreditation International (Ai), and is recognized as a non-public school by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE).

The cost of tuition includes all study materials, grading services, access to the Online Student Center, and postage to U.S. locations.

With your standard down payment of \$250.00, you will receive one print-based course and/or access to all online courses. The standard monthly payment thereafter is \$160.00 per month until the entire \$1050.00 for the year is paid in full. Print-based courses will be sent based on payment schedule. For example, the second course will be sent when the second payment is received, the third course will be sent when the third payment is received, etc. Based on the payment schedule, a student will have access to all courses by the sixth month of enrollment. All book shipments will be made to United States shipping addresses only. No packages will be sent to addresses outside the United States. Special mail services are provided at an additional charge.

If a monthly installment plan is selected, all payments must be made when due regardless of the student's study progress. **If the account becomes delinquent 60 or more days, access to services will be denied. The enrollment period continues to elapse during periods of suspensions and delinquencies.** Tuition and other fees must be paid in full before a transcript of credit is released. The total balance must be paid in full before additional courses can be added to the student's enrollment. **This contract will cease to be in effect one year from the original date of acceptance, and no requests for refunds will be considered thereafter.**

Students are expected to complete at least five (5) units of credit per year. **Students must complete all courses within one (1) year (12 months) of the enrollment date.** For any course, students must complete all requirements. Any unfinished assignments will be assigned a grade of zero, which may result in a failing grade for the entire course. Students may begin the next year of the enrollment contract when all exams have been submitted or completed.

Middle School Policies and Procedures (Continued)

AMERICAN SCHOOL REFUND POLICY

We believe you will be pleased with your American School studies; however, should you decide within the first 30 days after your enrollment is accepted that you wish to discontinue your studies, you must:

Notify American School in writing that you wish to cancel.

We will retain a \$100.00 processing fee and refund all other monies paid.

For any paper-based course, all study materials must be returned in a new, unused condition before any refund is issued. No refund will be issued if any exams have been submitted for grading.

For any online course, no refund will be issued if any assignments have been submitted.

Enrollments may not be transferred from one student to another.

HONOR SYSTEM AGREEMENT

In pursuing your studies with American School, you are expected to follow the honor system. Under the honor system, it is permissible to benefit from the exchange of ideas with other students, friends or family members. Although you may study with others, any work on the exams is expected to be of your own thoughts and ideas. Your exams must show what you have learned. You may not represent someone else's work as your own. You may not buy, sell, or provide in any way, answers from graded assignments and exams to anyone else. You may not share your login information with anyone else other than the guarantor on the account, for the purpose of making course content available.

If you do not adhere to the honor system, you should expect disciplinary action, which may include retaking an exam or dropping a course for another. Repeated violations may result in invalidation of any exam grades and/or your dismissal from American School.

All materials published by American School are copyrighted. Supplying copies of questions and answers to other people is a violation of federal laws forbidding infringement of copyright and may be prosecuted thereunder. Therefore, you may not provide answers on exams to other people, whether they are students of American School or not.

High School

American School is pleased to offer high school programs and courses for students in grades 9-12.

Choosing a Diploma Program

American School offers two high school diploma programs – the General High School program and the College Preparatory program. You must complete at least 20 units of required and elective credits in order to earn your diploma. At least 5 of those credits must be completed with American School.

Once your application has been processed, an enrollment advisor will contact you about your program. You will need to submit any transcripts for review to help pick the correct track and courses for your program.

Inside your Welcome Packet are outlines of your program. These outlines list your specific required courses for your diploma program. On the reverse side of the outline is a list of available elective courses. Course offerings may change, so you can also visit www.americanschool.org/courses for a current list of available courses. Select the number of elective courses as indicated on the outline, then mail back the copy marked “Return to School” for processing. Keep the other outline for your records.

Full-Time Enrollment

To achieve full-time enrollment status, a student must complete at least 5 Carnegie units of credit a year and have submitted work consistently during at least nine months of the year. If achieved, American School will verify a student’s full-time enrollment status for federal and state programs, medical insurance, child support agencies, Social Security Administration, and/or any other program requiring such verification, if requested. If a student has fallen below this standard, the student must submit work consistently for three consecutive months before American School will verify full-time enrollment status. The Social Security Administration requires that students complete at least one exam per week for three consecutive months to be considered a full-time student.

Choosing Your Electives

If you need assistance choosing your elective courses, please contact us. This is especially important if you are planning to attend college after graduation. You want to be sure that you are fulfilling the entrance requirements of the school(s) you wish to attend.

Changing Diploma Programs

You may choose between the General High School or College Preparatory Diploma Programs. You may make one transfer between high school diploma programs at no additional charge unless you need additional courses to meet the specific graduation requirements of the program you are transferring into. Additional fees may apply if replacement courses are needed. There is a \$50.00 administrative fee for subsequent transfers between the two diploma programs to help cover administrative costs in changing a student’s program.

High School (Continued)

GENERAL HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM

English: 4 units of credit

Math: 3 units of credit

Science: 2 units of credit with lab

Social Studies: 2 units of credit

Computer Literacy: 1 unit of credit

Consumer Education/Financial Literacy: .50 units of credit

Government/Civics: .50 units of credit

Health: .50 units of credit

Art, Music, Foreign Language or Vocational Education (CTE): 1 unit of credit

Electives: 5.5 units of credit

TOTAL CREDITS: 20

High School (Continued)

COLLEGE PREPARATORY HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM

English: 4 units of credit

Math: 4 units of credit

Science: 3 units of credit (2 of which must be lab courses)

Social Studies: 3 units of credit

Computer Literacy: 1 unit of credit

Consumer Education/Financial Literacy: .50 units of credit

Government/Civics: .50 units of credit

Health: .50 units of credit

Art, Music, Foreign Language or Vocational Education (CTE): 1 unit of credit (2 units of foreign language recommended)

Electives: 2.5 units of credit

TOTAL CREDITS: 20

Illinois residents are encouraged to complete the Public Law 195 Exam covering the United States and Illinois Constitutions plus flag etiquette in accordance with Illinois State Board of Education guidelines.

If you wish to add courses to your program beyond those required in your diploma program, you may do so at the individual subject price. We recommend that you do not add any additional courses to your program until after you have completed the eleventh (11th) grade, as the time limit for completion of added courses ranges from six months to one year. You may not add additional courses until your original account balance has been paid in full. Please contact our Student Service Department for more information.

High School Policies and Procedures

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR FULL-YEAR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

With your standard down payment of \$250.00, you will receive one print-based course and/or access to all online courses. Print-based courses will be sent based on payment schedule. The standard monthly payment thereafter is \$160.00 per month until the entire \$1050.00 for the year is paid in full. For example, the second course will be sent when the second payment is received, the third course will be sent when the third payment is received, etc. Based on the payment schedule, a student will have access to all courses by the sixth month of enrollment. All book shipments will be made to United States shipping addresses only. No packages will be sent to addresses outside the United States. Special mail services are provided at an additional charge.

If a monthly installment plan is selected, all payments must be made when due regardless of the student's study progress. **If the account becomes delinquent 60 or more days, access to services will be denied. The enrollment period continues to elapse during periods of suspensions and delinquencies.** Tuition and other fees must be paid in full before a transcript of credit is released. The total balance must be paid in full before additional courses can be added to the student's enrollment. **This contract will cease to be in effect one year from the original date of acceptance, and no requests for refunds will be considered thereafter.**

Students are expected to complete at least five (5) units of credit per year. **Students must complete all courses within one (1) year (12 months) of the enrollment date.** For any course, students must complete all requirements. Any unfinished assignments will be assigned a grade of zero, which may result in a failing grade for the entire course. Students may begin the next year of the enrollment contract when all exams have been submitted or completed.

An Academic Advisor will contact you once your application has been accepted to schedule your first year of courses. If you are claiming previous credits, it is best to send your transcript with your enrollment application for processing to avoid delays in finalizing your course selections. American School will need a copy of your official high school transcripts to evaluate for transfer credits. We only accept credits from other accredited schools. We do not accept credits in physical education, driver's education, religion, performing arts (choir, band, etc.) and ROTC. Official transcripts must come directly from the issuing high school in a sealed envelope. Transcripts will be considered unofficial if the envelope has been opened. You may send a copy of the transcripts with your enrollment application or you may contact your previous high school(s) to request the transcript(s) be mailed to us. We will contact you once the transcript has been evaluated to inform you of the results and of any possible changes to the enrollment contract.

We strive to provide our students with the most current version of courses; therefore, courses are subject to change. Availability of courses is dependent on educational providers and publishers. Notices are often provided via the American School blog and official American School Facebook page.

After enrollment, you will be asked to select elective courses. Please respond to the request within 30 days of receiving the request in order for your program to be finalized and allow yourself ample time to complete your courses. Visit www.americanschool.org/courses to see a list of available courses.

High School Policies and Procedures (Continued)

Illinois Residents: Per 325 ILCS 50/Missing Children Records Act and 325 ILCS 55/Missing Children Registration Law, all students residing in Illinois are required to submit a birth certificate in order to enroll. In addition, all students residing in Illinois are strongly encouraged to complete the Public Law 195 Exam covering the U.S. and Illinois Constitutions plus flag etiquette because the exam is required by public schools in Illinois and is an entrance requirement at the majority of Illinois-based community colleges.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Compulsory School Attendance: It is the responsibility of the student/parent(s)/guardian(s) to meet the compulsory school attendance requirements of the student's home state and comply with the legal requirements of the student's home state's homeschool laws.

Graduation Requirements: You must complete 20 units of required credits in order to earn a diploma from American School. Though you may transfer credit from other accredited institutions, you must successfully complete at least 5 units of credit with American School in order to earn a diploma from American School.

Students must complete at least 5 units of credit with American School and fulfill all graduation requirements in order to be eligible to earn an American School diploma. Graduation requirements are listed on www.americanschool.org/high-school. Students must complete all diploma requirements within six (6) years of the original enrollment date. Graduation requirements may change if a student does not complete all requirements within that timeframe.

Accreditation: American School is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools (MSA-CESS), the National Council for Private School Accreditation (NCPSA) and Accreditation International (Ai), and is recognized as a non-public school by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE).

AMERICAN SCHOOL REFUND POLICY

We believe you will be pleased with your American School studies; however, should you decide within the first 30 days after your enrollment is accepted that you wish to discontinue your studies, you must:

Notify American School in writing that you wish to cancel.

We will retain a \$100.00 processing fee and refund all other monies paid.

For any paper-based course, all study materials must be returned in a new, unused condition before any refund is issued. No refund will be issued if any exams have been submitted for grading.

For any online course, no refund will be issued if any assignments have been submitted.

Enrollments may not be transferred from one student to another.

High School Policies and Procedures (Continued)

STUDENT'S RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The cost of tuition includes all study materials, grading services, access to the Online Student Center, and postage to U.S. locations.

Students must earn a minimum of five (5) units of credit with American School in order to obtain an American School diploma. The price of the program depends on the ability of American School to verify the number of credits you have claimed through transcripts from schools attended. The school agrees to make an allowance for previous high school credits except for physical education, driver's education, religion, performing arts (chorus, band, drama, etc.) or ROTC. You will be given a \$210.00 tuition reduction for each full unit of verified transfer credit.

American School agrees to allow you up to six years to complete the requirements of this program following the guidelines established on the enrollment contract. Students can have a maximum of six (6) one-year contracts.

Upon successful completion of all academic and financial requirements, a diploma from American School, a school which is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools (MSA-CESS), the National Council for Private School Accreditation (NCPSA) and Accreditation International (Ai), and is recognized as a non-public secondary school by the Illinois State Board of Education, will be awarded to you.

HONOR SYSTEM AGREEMENT

In pursuing your studies with American School, you are expected to follow the honor system. Under the honor system, it is permissible to benefit from the exchange of ideas with other students, friends or family members. Although you may study with others, any work on the exams is expected to be of your own thoughts and ideas. Your exams must show what you have learned. You may not represent someone else's work as your own. You may not buy, sell, or provide in any way, answers from graded assignments and exams to anyone else. You may not share your login information with anyone else other than the guarantor on the account, for the purpose of making course content available.

If you do not adhere to the honor system, you should expect disciplinary action, which may include retaking an exam or dropping a course for another. Repeated violations may result in invalidation of any exam grades and/or your dismissal from American School.

All materials published by American School are copyrighted. Supplying copies of questions and answers to other people is a violation of federal laws forbidding infringement of copyright and may be prosecuted thereunder. Therefore, you may not provide answers on exams to other people, whether they are students of American School or not.

Individual Subjects

Students may take American School's accredited middle school and high school courses individually for credit recovery or enrichment.

INDEPENDENT STUDY PROGRAM

American School's **Independent Study Program** is designed for students who attend public or private high schools. Individual subjects may be taken through the Independent Study Program for credit recovery purposes, to avoid scheduling conflicts, to challenge the accelerated student, to assist the home-bound student, or to take the place of summer school. Students who enroll in individual subjects through the Independent Study Program must have the approval of their counselor or other school official prior to enrolling.

Tuition includes all study materials, grading and access to the Online Student Center, where students can view academic records, sign up for e-mail notification of grades, download help sheets and access homework Web sites. Counselors and school officials will have access to the Online Counselor Office where they can view academic records for each of their students and sign up for weekly student progress report e-mails.

Once a course is completed and the student has met all academic and financial obligations per the terms of the enrollment contract, American School will send a transcript to the student's school. This keeps the student on track to earn a high school diploma and participate in his or her high school graduation ceremony.

For more information, call us at 708-418-2800 or email independentstudy@americanschool.org.

INDIVIDUAL SUBJECTS FOR ENRICHMENT

American School's courses also may be taken individually to enhance an existing homeschool program or simply for enrichment purposes.

Individual Subjects Policies and Procedures

ACCREDITATION:

American School is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools (MSA-CES), National Council for Private School Accreditation (NCPA) and Accreditation International (Ai) and is recognized as a non-public secondary school by the Illinois State Board of Education.

CREDIT VALUE AND COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Courses are worth either a half-unit (semester) or full unit (two semesters) of Carnegie credit. Each full-unit course (equal to two semesters) is also available in half-units (semesters), unless otherwise indicated.

All unit exams/modules/levels/units, projects, and final end-of-course exams if required must be successfully completed in order to earn credit. A module, unit, or level is a course section that can consist of lessons, discussions, lab/text questions, quizzes and/or post tests. For any course, students must complete all requirements. Any unfinished assignments will be assigned a grade of zero, which may result in a failing grade for the entire course.

TUITION:

The cost of tuition includes all study materials, grading services, access to the Online Student Center, and postage to U.S. locations. Special mail services are provided at an extra charge.

All book shipments will be made to United States shipping addresses only. No packages will be sent to addresses outside the United States.

Tuition for individual subjects is required to be paid in full at the time of enrollment. Tuition and other fees must be paid in full before a transcript of credit is released.

The total balance must be paid in full before additional courses can be added to the student's enrollment.

The enrollment contract will cease to be in effect per the maximum completion times and original date of acceptance, and no requests for refunds will be considered thereafter.

Individual Subjects Policies and Procedures (Continued)

AMERICAN SCHOOL REFUND POLICY:

We believe you will be pleased with your American School studies; however, should you decide within the first 30 days after your course enrollment is accepted that you wish to discontinue your studies, you must:

Notify American School in writing that you wish to cancel.

We will retain a \$100.00 processing fee and refund all other monies paid.

For any paper-based course, all study materials must be returned in a new, unused condition before any refund is issued. No refund will be issued if any exams have been submitted for grading.

For any online course, no refund will be issued if any assignments have been submitted.

Enrollments may not be transferred from one student to another.

COMPLETION TIMES:

All Courses:

Minimum time for completion: 5 weeks per course from date of course enrollment

Maximum time for completion: Half-unit course – 6 months from date of course enrollment

Full unit course – 12 months from date of course enrollment

For students in American School's Independent Study Program, local school deadlines must be met within these guidelines. Courses can be completed before the minimum time for completion; however, no official transcripts will be released until minimum enrollment times have been met for all courses (see above). **Courses cannot be extended beyond the maximum time allotted for completion (see above).** For any course, students must complete all course requirements. Any unfinished assignments will be assigned a grade of zero, which may result in a failing grade. Please note that these courses contain study materials equivalent to a half or full unit of course credit. Students should plan adequate time to complete all exams and assignments. In fairness to all students, exams are graded in the order received. **There are no exceptions to this policy.**

Before You Begin

After you enroll you will receive a welcome letter in the mail. If you have elected to complete paper-based courses or online exams for paper-based courses, with your first shipment of course materials, you will receive a welcome envelope with your student number and important information about your program. Students enrolled in online courses will receive a welcome email with additional information.

Student Number

All students will be identified by a student number. In order to help us keep accurate records, it is very important that you always put your student number and full name on any correspondence sent to American School including exams, letters, emails, or payments. Not including your student number can cause a delay in our response to you.

Pre-addressed Envelopes

If you opted to complete paper-based courses, you should use the pre-addressed white envelopes to mail your exams to the school for grading. You are responsible for using the proper amount of postage on your exam envelopes to ensure that your exams are delivered to us.

We highly recommend that you make copies of your exams for your personal files before mailing them. American School will not be held responsible for any exams lost in the mail.

Course Delivery Options

American School knows that flexibility is important in helping you meet your education goals. That is why we are proud to deliver our courses and administer our exams in a variety of ways. No matter the course delivery method you chose, it is important to pace yourself. You should develop a schedule that allows you to work steadily through the course. This will help you to do your best work by keeping the concepts you are learning fresh in your mind.

Paper-Based Courses

For most paper-based courses, students are sent a textbook and study guide. The study guide contains unit discussions, skill activities, review questions, self-check tests, and the unit examinations which the students will complete and mail to the school for grading. Students may start working the moment they receive their study materials in the mail, and they work entirely at their own pace throughout the duration of their program.

American School paper and online exams are designed to be taken with an open book; however, this does not take the place of reading and studying all of the unit materials. Often you will need to apply what you have learned to answer a question. We recommend that your first try to answer the questions on an exam without using your study materials. Then if you have difficulty answering a question, refer to your textbook and/or study guide for help.

You should only do one exam at a time. While you wait for your graded exam to be returned to you, start studying the next unit or work on another subject. When you receive your graded exam, go over the comments and page references in order to learn from your mistakes. This will also help you to prevent errors on future exams.

When you complete an exam, be sure to double-check your work. Check your spelling, grammar, calculations, and make sure that you have answered all questions in their entirety before submitting the exam.

You should mail in exams as you complete them. This allows us to know how much work you have on-hand and will assist us in keeping you supplied with study materials at all times. If you need more study materials, please notify us. It is your responsibility to make sure you have enough study materials on hand and are making payments on time so that you may complete your required courses per the terms of your enrollment contract.

Always use blue or black ink to complete your exams. Never use red ink; your instructors use red ink to correct your exams. Do not use pencil unless directed to do so in specific courses. You may type your answers to short answer or essay type questions, but you must attach them to your original exam pages.

When submitting an exam, be sure that your name, address and student number are printed correctly at the top of the first page of the exam. Also, be sure that your name and student number are printed on the top of each exam page as well as any separate pages that you are sending for grading. You must mail your entire exam in one envelope. We are not able to match pages of an exam that are sent in separately.

Course Delivery Options (Continued)

Access to online exams, online courses, and Rosetta Stone language courses is secured through the American School Online Student Center. A valid email address is required for access to the Online Student Center. Directions, information guides, and policy overviews are emailed to students or posted in the online sites.

Online Exams for Paper-Based Courses

The majority of our high school paper-based courses have online exams available. Courses that require math or drawing are not available online. Students receive the same printed materials for the course in the mail; however, exams are submitted online rather than through the mail. American School uses Moodle through OpenLMS to deliver your online exams. Students will be able to complete exams and quickly communicate with instructors through the messaging system.

In the online exams, the objective questions are graded by the computer and offer immediate feedback. Questions that require written answers are graded by the instructor. If a course requires specialized activities, such as large essays or photography projects, the exams will have several parts. Directions for special activities will be in the course. While you wait for your instructor to grade your written answers, you may continue to read the next unit in your study guide and textbook.

Online Courses

American School's online courses are robust, rigorous, and all-inclusive. American School uses the Edmentum LMS to deliver online courses and Rosetta Stone® to deliver online world language courses. Students will be able to complete courses and quickly communicate with their instructors through the Edmentum messaging system.

While it is possible to work on some items in your course out of order, we strongly recommend that you consistently work through each unit in sequential order.

Online Learning Requirements

For online exams and courses, your computer must meet these minimum requirements

Operating System	Current, actively supported version of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Windows® • macOS® • iPadOS® • Google Chrome™ OS
Browser	Up-to-date version of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chrome • Safari® • Firefox® • Edge®
Device	Devices running supported operating systems including desktops, laptops (including Chromebooks™), or tablets. Mobile phone devices are not supported. CPU: Minimum Intel® i-series 2nd generation or equivalent Memory: Minimum 4 GB (8 GB recommended), 2 GB minimum on Chromebooks™ Video RAM: Minimum 256 MB Screen resolution: Optimized for 1024 x 768 or greater
Network Connection	Minimum: 768kbps download per active user Recommended: 2Mbps download per active user
Sound	OS Supported Sound Card Headphones or Speakers, Microphone

Web Browser

All online exams and online courses require the most up-to-date web browser. American School recommends Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, or Safari. You will need to disable pop-up blockers. Check your web browser's preferences or settings for how to disable pop-up blockers. Some American School online courses will require the use of special software for completing course requirements. Instructions for obtaining this software will be included in the courses. These are the basic requirements at the time of printing. As the programs update, the minimum requirements might change, too.

Mobile Devices

Mobile Devices can be used to view the online exams and online courses and complete some activities. However, some functions will not work, such as uploading documents, taking some exams, or completing written activities in Rosetta Stone®. It is strongly recommended that you use a desktop or laptop computer to complete the online exams and online courses.

Rosetta Stone

Rosetta Stone requires a headset/microphone in order to complete the course.

Online Student Center

With a valid email address, all students will have access to the Online Student Center.

In the Online Student Center, you will be able to:

- Access your student record to see your grades
- Enroll for grade notification emails
- Access online courses and online exams
- Access an email directory of American School Departments that you may use to contact us for assistance

Please keep your access information private and secure: Your original password will always work in the Online Student Center.

Course Completion

Students in either of our high school diploma programs have 6 years to complete their entire program.

Students enrolled in online courses have one year from the date the course is opened to complete the course.

Students in our Independent Study program or who take individual courses for enrichment have one year from the date of enrollment to complete full-unit courses and six months from the date of enrollment to complete half-unit courses.

Regardless of your program, you can work at your own pace and may be able to finish in less than the maximum completion time.

Grading Policies

American School Grading Scale

93 to 100 - A

85 to 92 - B

76 to 84 - C

65 to 75 - D

Below 65 - F

Incomplete - I

For Paper Based Courses

Failed Exam and Subsequent Attempts

If your grade is less than 65, you are required to make corrections or do additional work in order to receive a passing grade. You will receive directions from your instructor regarding the work you must do. You have up to three attempts to achieve a passing score. After any third attempt, the highest grade will stand whether passing or not. Students may also accept non-passing scores in unique circumstances.

Incomplete Exam

If one or more pages are missing from your exam, you will be given a grade of Incomplete. Duplicate copies of the missing pages will be sent to you to complete. You must then return the entire exam (all pages) for grading.

Completed Exam

Your exam cover sheets are proof of your passing grade. Do not discard any of your graded exams until you have received your diploma. You may not retake an exam once a passing score of 65 or higher has been achieved.

Grading Policies (Continued)

For Online Courses and Online Exams

Subsequent Attempts

For each activity, exam, or post test, you will need a score of at least 65. If you do not receive a passing score, your instructor will give you directions for correcting your activity, exam, or post test. You must follow all directions given by your instructor before another attempt will be unlocked. After any third attempt, the highest grade on a test or assignment will stand.

Completed Exam/Unit

Your grade for your online course will be a combination of all scores earned for the activities in the unit. You can view your grades at any time in your student progress report in the Online Student Center. You may not retake an activity, exam, or post test once a passing score of 65 or higher has been achieved.

For Rosetta Stone World Language Courses

Your grade for your Rosetta Stone world language course is the final overall score for all completed activities in the course. The passing minimums vary among the types of activities. You can retake an activity as many times as needed to achieve a passing score.

For All Students

Completed Course

Once you have passing and complete scores in all of the activities for the course you are enrolled in, you will be complete with the course.

Grade Review

If at any time you wish to dispute a graded exam, you may submit a grade review request with the Instruction Department.

Paper Exams: You must return the entire graded exam, including the cover sheet with your grade and instructor's signature. Include a note about the specific question(s) that you question. You should make a copy for your records and mail everything to the attention of the Instruction Department. Once processed, it will be determined if the grade stands or should be changed. You will be informed of the findings and the exam will be returned to you.

Online Courses and Online Exams: You must email the Instruction Department with the Course, Exam/Unit number or activity name, and the specific question(s) that you question. Once processed, it will be determined if the grade stands or should be changed. You will be informed of the findings.

Response Times

Although you may work in your online course and online exams at any time, please keep American School's business hours in mind as you submit work that must be reviewed by a teacher or when you send a teacher messages.

With online exams, you skip the mailing process which can save you time. However, how fast you complete a course depends on the amount of time you devote to studying, your own learning ability, and the ease or difficulty of the subject.

All emails, messages, and submissions are handled in the order in which they are received. You can expect a reply to emails within one business day and a grade for your submitted online work within two business days. Depending on submission volume, your submission may be graded quicker, but please keep the policy timeline in mind when planning your study schedule. During especially busy times of the year, it may take additional time for grading.

Etiquette and Privacy

You are expected to communicate in a polite and respectful manner in all interactions with your teachers and fellow students. Posting or emailing inappropriate, offensive or harassing messages will result in disciplinary action, including but not limited to suspension or permanent removal from the course. Likewise, please do not repeatedly send your teacher messages asking the same question or asking for exceptions to American School grading policies.

We value your privacy and safety. While we use your full name to identify you in your courses, we encourage you to avoid sharing any other identifying information (e.g., home address, personal photographs, ID numbers, etc.) when communicating with other students. Access to your online courses is secure when you sign on through the American School Online Student Center.

Receiving More Materials

Experience has shown that students do their best work when they have no more than two courses to study at one time. Payments must be current and up-to-date in order to receive continued service. If you wish to receive courses at a faster rate, you must notify the school in writing giving reasons why you require more rapid service. You will also need to make additional financial arrangements if you are requesting coursework at an accelerated pace.

If you claimed previous high school credits, access to additional courses may be limited until your official transcript has been received and evaluated.

Paper-Based Courses and Online Exams

You will be sent your first course as soon as your enrollment has been processed. When you need more course materials sent to you, please contact the Student Service Department by phone or email at studentservice@americanschool.org. You can request online exams for available courses at that time.

Online Courses

When you enroll, you will have access to all online courses. If your transcript needs to be evaluated before your program is confirmed, you will have access to your first course. Once your evaluation is complete and your program confirmed, you will have access to all of the courses for the year. You will receive an email for each course.

School Services

American School can provide the following documents at the request of the student or guarantor:

- Progress Reports
- Enrollment Verification for:
 - Health and Auto Insurance
 - Social Security Benefits
 - Child Support
 - Housing Aid
 - Driver's Permits/Licenses
 - Work Permits
 - Local Homeschooling Requirements

College Planning

If you plan to attend a four-year college or university after graduation, we recommend that you enroll in the College Preparatory Diploma Program. Keep in mind that college admission relies on many factors that you, the student, control. Each college has distinct application processes and admission requirements. It is your responsibility to check with each college in advance to find out what these are and plan your American School program accordingly. Common admission requirements for four-year colleges and universities are:

- 4 years of English
- 3-4 years of Math at the Algebra 1 level or higher
- 2-3 years of Science
- 2-3 years of Social Science
- 2+ years of elective credits that may include art history, fine art, or 2 years of a language

American School can assist you in selecting your electives in a way that meets college admission requirements. American School can also assist you with other parts of college planning including conducting a college search, completing college applications, finding and applying for scholarships and financial aid and more. Finally, American School can also provide you with information about preparing and registering for the ACT and/or SAT tests. Please visit the Online Student Center for helpful college planning resources. Since American School is accredited, our diplomas are recognized by the College Board and most colleges and universities. American School's CEEB code is 140650. Be sure to include that number when you register for the ACT or SAT so that we may track your results and further assist you with college planning.

NCAA Core Courses

At this time, American School courses may not be used to meet the NCAA core course requirements for initial eligibility for Division I or Division II sports. The NCAA decision was not based on the content of our courses but, rather, on issues involving interaction with students in "nontraditional" courses. If you have further questions about NCAA eligibility please visit our FAQ page.

Transcripts

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) protects your educational records and ensures that information is not released without your permission. Therefore, in order to release your transcript, you will need to complete a Transcript Release Form. The form is available on the American School's website and in the Online Student Center. You can also email the Transcripts Department to make your request. Your email will need to include your name, student number and the address where you would like the transcript sent.

We will not issue transcripts if any monetary fees are due on your account in accordance with the enrollment contract. Your first transcript is supplied at no charge. There is a nominal fee that must be paid in advance for all subsequent copies.

Please note that transcripts issued directly to students are stamped "Issued to Student". These are generally not regarded as official copies. Schools only regard a transcript as official if it is mailed directly to them or sent to them in the original sealed envelope.

Requests for transcripts should be made at least two (2) weeks in advance of any deadlines. We do not fax transcripts. Expedited mail services are provided for an additional fee.

Students should be aware that acceptability of credit rests with the receiving institution. It is always a good idea to contact the school you plan to attend in the future to make certain that credits will transfer.

Diplomas

When you have completed all of your required courses, your file will be referred to our Diploma Desk for review. Your diploma will be mailed to you within three weeks of your graduation date (the date your last exam grade posts) provided that you have successfully completed all program requirements and fulfilled all financial obligations.

Like all legal documents, keep your diploma in a safe place. Duplicate diplomas can only be issued in extenuating circumstances. Duplicate diploma fees apply.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is American School accredited?

American School is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools (MSA-CES), Accreditation International (Ai) and the National Council for Private School Accreditation (NCPSA). American School is also recognized as a non-public secondary school by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). Visit our accreditation page for more information.

I graduated from American School or am currently a student. Can you send me my transcript?

Please download the transcript release form on our web site and follow the directions on it. If you need assistance, please contact us during regular business hours. You may also order paper or electronic transcripts through Parchment.

I graduated from American School but lost my diploma. Can you send me a replacement?

American School offers duplicate diplomas at a cost of \$50 each. The \$50 covers the cost of a duplicate diploma only and does not include a case or tassel. Payment must be received before duplicate diplomas are sent. If you need assistance, please contact us by email or by phone during regular business hours.

How old do I have to be to enroll?

There is no minimum or maximum age to enroll. Students planning to enroll in middle school courses must have an enrollment application or notarized letter signed by a parent or guarantor stating they are ready to begin sixth grade courses. Students planning to enroll in high school courses must have an enrollment application or notarized letter signed by a parent or guarantor before enrolling in ninth grade courses.

How soon after I enroll can I start my courses?

Enrollment applications are not processed immediately and students do not receive instant access to their courses. Typically, enrollment applications take 2-3 business days to process and students should receive course materials within approximately one week of enrolling.

Will I get credit for the work that I have completed at another high school?

American School accept most credits from other accredited schools. The exceptions are religion, physical education, band, choir, driver's education and ROTC. To begin the transcript evaluation process, please have an official transcript sent to our Registrar's Office by email or through postal mail to 2200 East 170th Street, Lansing, IL 60438. There is a \$25 transcript evaluation fee that will count toward your tuition should you choose to enroll with American School.

Frequently Asked Questions (Continued)

Does American School accept homeschooling credit?

If you have been home schooled or attended a non-accredited school, you may be eligible to establish up to 5 units of credit by successfully passing (with a grade of 75% or better) comprehensive examinations offered by American School. There is a \$50 non-refundable fee for each comprehensive examination, and you must be enrolled for at least 10 units of credit from American School to be eligible to take comprehensive examinations. Please note that the American School does not provide review materials for comprehensive examinations. We do not send comprehensive examinations to students who have already received American School materials for the subject(s). Students enrolled in supervised or tutorial programs are not eligible to receive comprehensive examinations. Contact our Instruction Department for more information or if you wish to take these comprehensive examinations.

How does American School work?

For most paper-based courses, students are sent a textbook and study guide. The textbook is often produced by a major textbook publisher, but some are custom-published exclusively for American School. The study guide contains unit discussions, self-check tests and the unit examinations which the students will complete and send to the School for grading. For other print-based courses, students are sent a textbook and examination booklet. In these courses, the textbook contains unit discussions and self-check tests, and the examination booklet contains the unit examinations which the students will complete and send to American School for grading. Students may start working the moment they receive their study materials in the mail, and they work entirely at their own pace throughout the duration of their program. Please note that policies and procedures for our online courses are slightly different. Refer to our Online Learning page for more information.

Does American School offer GED courses?

No.

How do I see samples of American School's online courses?

Visit our Online Learning page for details.

What is American School's academic integrity policy (honor system)?

American School students are expected to follow the honor system. Under the honor system, it is permissible to benefit from the exchange of ideas with other students, friends or family members and to use your textbook, study guide and other resources while you work on your courses and complete your exams, but any work on examinations is expected to be your own thoughts and ideas. Your examinations must show what you have learned. You may not represent someone else's work as your own.

If you do not adhere to the honor system, you should expect disciplinary action, which may include retaking an examination or dropping a subject for another. Repeated violations may result in your dismissal from American School or an invalidation of any examination grades.

Frequently Asked Questions (Continued)

All materials printed by American School are copyrighted. Supplying copies of questions and answers to other people is a violation of federal laws forbidding infringement of copyright and may be prosecuted thereunder. Therefore, you may not provide answers on examinations to other people, whether they are students of American School or not.

What is American School's grading scale?

For students in the General High School program and the College Preparatory program, our grading scale is:

A: 93-100

B: 85-92

C: 76-84

D: 65-75

F: Below 65

I: Incomplete

Who is considered a full-time student?

To achieve full-time enrollment status, a student must complete at least 5 Carnegie units of credit a year and have submitted work consistently during at least nine months of the year. If achieved, American School will verify a student's full-time enrollment status for federal and state programs, medical insurance, child support agencies, Social Security Administration, and/or any other program requiring such verification, if requested. If a student has fallen below this standard, the student must submit work consistently for three consecutive months before American School will verify full-time enrollment status. Please contact us by email or by calling 708-418-2800 if you have further questions regarding this matter.

What are the graduation requirements?

American School offers two high school diploma programs – the General High School Program and the College Preparatory Program. In each program the student is required to complete 20 units of credit. At least 5 credits must be completed with American School to receive our diploma. Specific graduation requirements are listed on high school diploma program enrollment applications.

Frequently Asked Questions (Continued)

How long do I have to complete my course(s)?

In general, students in either of our diploma programs have 4 years to complete their entire 20-unit program. Students in our Independent Study program or who take individual courses for enrichment have 1 year from the date of enrollment to complete their full-unit courses and 6 months from the date of enrollment to complete half-unit courses. Regardless of your program, you can work at your own pace and may be able to finish in less than the maximum completion time.

Can I go to college with an American School diploma?

Many American School graduates go on to college after completing our college preparatory course. They are usually admitted – as are students from any high school – on the basis of their scores on tests such as the SAT or the ACT and their grades with American School. Some states, such as New York, however, have public universities which will not accept students holding a distance education diploma, and these public universities will require such students to take the GED, TASC or another high school equivalency exam to gain admission. We suggest that you review the admissions standards with the college of your choice prior to enrolling and contact us if you have questions or need further assistance. If you are interested in attending an accredited online college or university, please visit www.accreditedonlinecolleges.org for a list of accredited online colleges and universities.

What is American School's ACT-SAT code?

140650

May credits earned for American School courses be used for NCAA initial eligibility to participate in college sports?

At this time, American School courses may not be used to meet the NCAA core course requirements for initial eligibility for Division I or Division II sports or for NJCAA and NAIA purposes. This decision was not based on the content of our courses but, rather, on issues involving course structure and interaction with students in “nontraditional” courses. American School believes students should have the ability to work at their own pace, while the NCAA prefers students take courses which are teacher-driven and stick to a stricter schedule. You should not apply to take our courses if you plan on playing sports for a school affiliated with the organizations listed above.

Frequently Asked Questions (Continued)

What is American School's position on the Common Core State Standards Initiative?

American School, a not for profit distance learning institution utilizing the home study method, is dedicated to providing quality secondary instruction at a reasonable cost to those students who are seeking an alternative means of completing their high school education. We fulfill our mission, in part, informed by the Common Core State Standards Initiative, but we are not bound by those standards. Common Core State Standards are simply learning goals and are not a curriculum. They do not dictate instructional methodologies or paper-based or online materials used within subjects. Rather, Common Core State Standards establish clear and measurable goals for what students should know, understand and be able to accomplish at the end of a course or grade. American School reaffirms its commitment to allowing students to study at their own pace and to utilize, as they see fit, the paper-based or online study materials given to them so that they may reach or exceed any goal that is placed before them.

After I enroll can I transfer from one high school program to another?

Students may make one transfer between high school programs at no additional charge unless they need to add additional units to meet the specific requirements of the program into which they are transferring. That is, a student in the General High School program may transfer into the College Preparatory High School program or vice versa with no charge for making the transfer itself. For any subsequent transfer between the two programs, there is a charge of \$50 to help cover our administrative costs in changing a student's program.

Can I take more subjects than I am required to take for graduation?

Students may add additional units to their program of study beyond what they are required to take for graduation at the prevailing rate for taking individual subjects with the School. Please contact the Student Service Department for additional information.

What if I just want to take individual subjects with American School?

Information on enrolling in individual subjects for credit recovery or enrichment is available on our Enrollment page.

Can I enroll in American School if I reside outside the United States?

American School welcomes students from outside the United States. International students who have taken high school courses overseas and wish to transfer high school credit to us should have their transcripts evaluated by NACES and have the evaluations sent to us. All American School students outside the United States must take online courses only unless they have a shipping address within the United States. This is due to the rising cost of shipping and delays in customs.

Frequently Asked Questions (Continued)

What is American School's cancellation or refund policy?

American School's cancellation or refund policy is clearly stated on every enrollment application. Please refer to your enrollment application for more information.

Academic Year

American School programs are year-round and self-paced, meaning that students may start and complete their studies at any time within the maximum allowable timeframe set by the enrollment contract.

American School is closed on the following days:

- Martin Luther King Day (third Monday in January)
- Presidents' Day (third Monday in February)
- Good Friday (Friday before Easter)
- Memorial Day (last Monday in May)
- Juneteenth (June 19)
- Independence Day (July 4)
- Labor Day (first Monday in September)
- Columbus Day (second Monday in October)
- Veterans Day (November 11)
- Thanksgiving (fourth Thursday in November) and the day after
- Christmas Eve (December 24) through and including New Year's Day (January 1)

American School is located in the Midwest. There may be some days where extreme weather conditions prevent us from opening. School closures will be announced on our phone system and on our social media pages.

Hours of Operation

American School is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. CST.

Visiting American School

American School is open to visitors by appointment only. If you, your family or friends wish to visit American School to conduct business or to take a tour of the School, please call 708-418-2800 or email customerrelations@americanschool.org at least 24 hours in advance so that we may prepare for your visit.

Contact Email Addresses

Include your full name, student number, and a current phone number where you can be reached between 8:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. CST in all emails that you send.

Questions regarding applying for enrollment:

enrollments@americanschool.org

Questions regarding course progress, needing additional course materials regarding your program of study or to request duplicate diplomas:

studentservice@americanschool.org

Questions about technical issues for online courses or online exams:

americanschoolonline@americanschool.org

Questions regarding preparation for college and careers, ACT/SAT exams, enrollment verification or insurance matters:

guidance@americanschool.org

Questions regarding grade reviews, disciplinary matters, accreditation or general issues with academic courses:

instructiondept@americanschool.org

Questions regarding billing-related issues:

studentaccounts@americanschool.org

Questions about transcripts:

transcripts@americanschool.org

For all other general inquiries:

customerrelations@americanschool.org

Other Contact Information

Mailing Address: American School
2200 East 170th Street
Lansing, IL 60438

General Phone Number: 708-418-2800

Enrollments Fax Number: 708-418-2180

General Fax Number: 708-418-2831

Website: www.americanschool.org