



March 18, 2020

“...and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ.” - 1 Corinthians 10:4 (ESV)

Dear Upper School Parents and Students,

Greetings to you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ! These are indeed trying times in the world but we know that we have a Rock on which we can stand even in the face of uncertainty. Praise God! On Monday, March 30, AACCS will begin providing virtual teaching and learning. Just like most everything that is happening around us, these are uncharted waters for AACCS but we have been preparing in earnest since March 13th. While we acknowledge that this mode of schooling is not a perfect substitute for school, it is the best option under these circumstances. As someone who has taken and taught online classes, I (Dr. McCollum) understand this will be an adjustment for our students but I also know that virtual teaching and learning can be quite effective. May the Lord be with all of us in all of this!

As previously communicated by Superintendent Rick Kempton, virtual schooling with AACCS teacher instruction and guidance will begin Monday, March 30, and run at least through Friday, April 3. (AP classes have already begun online teaching and learning this week to keep pace in preparing for the May exams.) Today we want to communicate some of the expectations, guidelines, suggestions, and a framework for this process for Upper School students. There is a lot to cover, so please bear with the length of this letter and keep it for future reference.

How will this virtual schooling look?

On Monday, March 30, Spring Break will have ended and students will resume school—virtually. While the teaching-learning mode will be different, much about virtual schooling remains the same: Teachers will give instruction, feedback and assessments,

and students will have assignments to complete and some scheduled meeting times. Teachers will be in regular communication with their students using Google Classroom, class emails, and/or Veracross. In addition, teachers will be answering student emails during the school day, Monday-Friday.

Students will be expected to do the work for each class each week, and should expect to put in roughly the same amount of time as usual. The traditional school week involves four class hours per week, plus 20-30 minutes of homework per class meeting in most core courses. In virtual schooling there will be just two “meeting hours” per week for each class, but more than just two assignments or activities. Adding the two meeting hours to their outside study hours, students should still expect to invest a total of 5-6 hours per week per course. AP and honors courses will require more; non-core courses such as PE and art may require less.

Weekly Schedule

Each day Monday through Thursday there will be a designated hour (see schedule below) during which a teacher may require students to be “present” for a check-in, a Google Classroom discussion board, a class meeting using Google Meet or Zoom, or perhaps an assessment done in real time. Students should check email regularly for a communication from their teacher about if and/or how the class will use that period on a given day. On Fridays, each teacher will set a 2-hour window when the teacher will be at the computer to answer emails, engage in Google chats, do a Google Meet or Zoom meeting to answer a quick question, etc. in “real time.”

<i>Time</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>
<i>9:00-10:00am</i>	Period 1	Period 5	Period 1	Period 5	Office Hours*
<i>10:00-11:00am</i>	Period 2	Period 6	Period 2	Period 6	
<i>11:00am-12:00pm</i>	Period 3	Period 7	Period 3	Period 7	
<i>12:00-1:00pm</i>	Period 4	Period 8	Period 4	Period 8	

Attendance in Virtual School

We still need a record of attendance to satisfy state Board of Education requirements. During this virtual learning season we will measure attendance by students’ weekly completion of assignments and their class participation. Teachers will assess students’

attendance on a weekly basis. Remember that class participation may include a time-specific event, such as joining the Google Meet on a Tuesday Period 5 if that's what the teacher requests. Excused "absence" may also occur during this season. If your student is sick one day, please email Mrs. Beall as usual (abeall@aacsonline.org) to let us know. She will mark them absent, and then they should focus just on getting better that day.

Good Friday, April 10, and the following Monday, April 13, are currently days off on the AACS school calendar. If virtual schooling is extended beyond April 3, we will forgo the "Office Hours" day during the 4-day weeks of April 6-9 and April 14-17 so that each class can still meet two times each week.

Communication

Direct your questions about...

- Class-specific questions to the teacher of that class.
- General academic topics to Don Wiley at dwiley@aacsonline.org
- Tech Support to Steve Deterding at sdeterding@aacsonline.org
- Student life topics to Eric Hansen at ehansen@aacsonline.org or one of our grade level deans:
 - (Grade 9) Jason Burrell at jburrell@aacsonline.org
 - (Grade 10) Jake Palumbo at jpalumbo@aacsonline.org
 - (Grade 11) Cynthia Tilghman-Lee at ctilghmanlee@aacsonline.org
 - (Grade 12) Either Mr. Burrell, Mr. Palumbo, or Dr. Lee based on dean assignment in Veracross.
 - Transcripts and college related questions to Sunny Caton at scaton@aacsonline.org

Students, speaking of communication, it now becomes critical for you to check email daily and throughout the week. Email will now be a primary way for us to communicate with you.

How to Submit Work

In virtual schooling, most assignments are submitted online, but there will be times when a student is asked to complete work by hand and then send an image to their teacher. This may be often done in math classes, for instance. We understand that not every home has a printer or scanner. Some families may not have a printer available to print a quiz, for instance. In that case, the student can put their answers on a separate sheet of paper, clearly labeling the question/problem being answered and submit an image of the paper to their teacher. Since most students have access to a phone along

with their Chromebook, we believe they can meet submission requirements either by sending a screenshot from their phone, or by sharing a Google document with their teacher. If difficulties arise with these options, please let the teacher know so we can work out a best alternative. We understand there may be hiccups along the way.

Quarter 3 and Quarter 4 Grades

As a reminder, these are the updates about adjustments to Quarter 3 and Quarter 4 that were shared previously.

- Thursday, March 12, is now considered the end of Quarter 3 instruction, which is one week earlier than scheduled.
- Upper School teachers may require electronic submission for long-term papers/projects that were originally due this week (March 16-20), as well as Late Work (due by end of day March 19), so that these assessments can be counted in Quarter 3. We will continue to accept recent test corrections and essay revisions through Monday, March 30.
- Quarter 4 instruction will begin on March 30 as originally scheduled through virtual teaching and learning.
- To attain a fuller picture of student progress, teachers will have the latitude to include assessments that they give during the first week of Quarter 4 into the Quarter 3 grades if necessary. As a result, Quarter 3 reports cards will be delayed until April 10.

Virtual School Expectations

Obviously, AACS virtual schooling will require some adjustments. We'll be using technology more frequently, and our daily rhythms will change. Our AACS community life is now altered. Although it looks different, we are still in community. It will be all the more crucial now for us to help one another learn, to communicate with each other well, and as Colossians 3:14 urges, to "put on love" as our true daily uniform. Let's remember that the community life expectations of our AACS handbook still apply. Be careful to show respectful treatment of one another even online, and continue to show academic responsibility and integrity.

Here are three general tips for virtual schooling success:

- Set new rhythms, but keep the same goals. Get dressed, eat breakfast, "go" to school.
- Select a workplace for your daily schoolwork, away from distractions--and work there.
- Check email each morning and evening; read each school email carefully.

Parents, we encourage you to oversee your students' schoolwork a bit more than usual. Since assessments will now be completed at home, we may ask you to confirm that a test is completed as directed. We're not asking you to become the helicopter parent, but we do encourage some accountability checks on your students' daily work. And students, we ask you to accept a bit more academic supervision from your parents during this virtual learning season.

Our school leadership team continues to meet regularly in virtual conferences, and Mr. Kempton will be sending K-12 email updates to all school families as new information becomes available. We will also keep you updated with Upper School-specific information as the plan for virtual schooling evolves over the next few weeks.

Throughout this unique time of global disruption and anxiety, believers in Jesus draw comfort remembering His unchanging character, His sovereignty over all events, and His steadfast love for His people no matter what happens. As a community, let's all embrace the learning God has for us during this time, both via designed school lessons and through other opportunities He may provide. Though there is much to be concerned about, we can trust in our Lord at all times, even now. Let's expect Him to keep helping us all learn and grow together.

In His Service and Yours,

Robert J. McCollum, Upper School Principal
Don Wiley, Upper School Academic Dean

We engage students in an education of excellence, enabling them to impact the world through a growing relationship with Jesus Christ.