

Dear Heritage Family,

Welcome to a new semester! At Heritage High School, unless at the Advanced Placement level, students enrolled in the following subjects are automatically placed at the honors level:

English I, II, III, IV	Civics	Biology
American History I, II	World History	Earth and Environmental Science

This placement gives students immediate access to instruction that leads to increased skills in writing, communication, and critical thinking. This allows us to better differentiate instruction and push all students to grow as learners. Improved test scores overall have shown this approach to be fruitful. **While we firmly believe that students can rise to the challenge and be successful, we also understand the needs of diverse learners. Thus, students have the option to “OPT-OUT” of Honors level courses (and take the Academic level instead) with parent permission.**

Students who have struggled in the past in a content area or who are not committed to the academic challenge associated with earning Honors credit should consider opting out. To assist in this decision, please review the requirements to earn an Honors credit in this course below. In addition, please note that the first two weeks of this course will be taught at an honors level. This will give your child the opportunity to experience the rigor of the course. Should they decide to opt-out, any graded assignments will be rescored using academic course standards.

The rigorous expectations of the Honors-level of Earth and Environmental Science will require students to complete and be successful on differentiated tests and quizzes as well as other daily assignments. Honors students will also complete a variety of additional extension assignments per unit, and some independent research and project work. *For example*, for our first unit – **“Introduction to the Earth”** – students will be expected to demonstrate mastery of all core course content **AND** complete the following extension assignments:

- 1. Plan, carry out, and document an at-home experiment, including a digital product to show the procedure, data collected, results, and possible conclusions that can be drawn from these results.**
- 2. Collect, analyze, and share at least three current News articles that represent different aspects of Earth and Environmental Science, how the Earth and its systems work, and important global environmental issues.**

(Due dates and additional details for these assignments will be provided soon.)

Opting out of **Honors Earth and Environmental Science** will not change your student’s schedule. However, for this section, opting out will require a change of teacher. Please discuss these options with your student and decide which level of rigor is appropriate for them at this time. Then, return this signed letter indicating your selection **no later than Monday, February 10, 2020.**

Please check one of the options below:

_____ **I have reviewed the Honors course requirements and wish for my student to OPT OUT of Honors Earth and Environmental Science and take the Academic level of this course instead. I give permission for my student to be transferred to an appropriate section.**

_____ **I have reviewed the Honors course requirements and wish for my student to remain in Honors Earth and Environmental Science. I understand that this will require extra work, time, and energy during and outside of my student’s class. I will support them as they seek to meet this academic challenge.**

Student name (printed): _____

Parent Name (printed): _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Contact (email/phone): _____