



Press Release

September 16, 2010
American Fork Utah

In an effort to make the school more available to families worldwide, American Heritage School formally announced major advancements in its programs and offerings, including the pilot launch of an accredited, K-12, distance education program, a recently approved international student program, and the inaugural graduating 12th Grade class of American Heritage School's high school program.

"Growth at American Heritage School has been consistent since the school opened its doors in 1970, and we see that trend continuing," says principal, Grant Beckwith. "American Heritage School has become a model for families and educators nationwide who are seeking an educational atmosphere in which Christ-centered curriculum places God, Family, Country, and Academic Excellence deeply in the hearts and minds of the children."

At a time when economic and social conditions continue to put pressure on families, businesses, and schools alike, American Heritage School is taking steps to make itself more available to the increasing number of families that are seeking a faith-based education model, such as the one American Heritage School provides.

In connection with the school's strategic vision to be an "effective educational resource for parents worldwide" – American Heritage School launched a new international student program in the Fall of 2009 that has grown to include nearly 30 students from countries around the world, including China, Korea, Japan, France, India, Venezuela, and Mexico. Some of those students have come to American Heritage School from the Meridian School, which, closed its doors last month. Dan Smith, the former Head of School at Meridian, provided the following statement:

"It was with sadness and great concern for our students that Meridian School closed its doors this year. I was especially concerned about finding appropriate opportunities for our international students to continue their studies in the U.S. and found great comfort and relief in the generous help offered by American Heritage to assist these students in a smooth transition to a new school. My experience with American Heritage gives me great confidence that local and international students that transferred to American Heritage will continue with their academic success and growth of character through a strong independent school program. I am especially grateful to know that the blessings of school diversity and exposure to world cultures will be enriched through the increased participation of international students at American Heritage School."

Also, this coming Spring, American Heritage School will graduate its first high school class. "With approximately 20 students, it may seem small," said Mr. Beckwith, "but American Heritage School's total enrollment in high school has bloomed from 12 students in 2007 to nearly 100 hundred today,

representing countries from around the world, and with an average ACT score that is well above state and national averages.” In fact, early graduates American Heritage School have already gone straight from 10th and 11th grades over the past two years directly to universities such as BYU Provo, Utah State, Weber State, Southern Virginia University, and Utah Valley University, the vast majority on academic scholarship. Mr. Beckwith also unveiled the new school mascot, the Patriot, which he said “was a natural choice for us, embodying many of the character traits for which American Heritage students are known and valued: honor, sacrifice, self-government, and love of God, family, and country.”

American Heritage School is an independent, non-profit organization with 600 students in grades K-12. Another approximately 250 students attend award winning, community available orchestra and choir programs on an after-school basis.

“As a non-profit charitable organization that accepts no federal, state or local funding, we need the support of families and businesses who can help not just to preserve, but to further the mission of American Heritage School,” said Mr. Beckwith. “Our tremendous growth, and especially our Distance Education program, have been fueled by a few very generous supporters who have sacrificed much to advance the cause of the School for generations to come. As we grow, we need the support of others who share our vision. American Heritage School is not just a school, it’s a movement. If you can help us, we need you now as much as ever.”

In explaining the school’s unique approach, Mr. Beckwith stated that “American Heritage School takes the ‘principle approach’ to education – that is, that children learn best in an environment where they research, reason from, relate to, and are guided by moral truths.” He further explained that, “The school’s character-based education model promotes a belief that each child is a son or daughter of God, with a unique mission in life, and that by developing their unique gifts in languages, mathematics, sciences, or the arts, they magnify their divine potential to impact the world for good.”

And if test scores are any measure of the effectiveness of the principle-approach to education, American Heritage reports that its students perform in the top 15% in the nation on standardized exams. “When students are united in a view that learning is a spiritual experience, and that their education is preparing them for a divine purpose, then the classroom takes on a deeper sense of significance for them – and strong academic performance follows naturally,” stated Mr. Beckwith.

Founded in 1970 by a group of BYU professors and spouses after an announcement by Brigham Young University that it was closing the Brigham Young Academy in Provo (“B.Y. Elementary” and “B.Y. High”), American Heritage School is one of the longest operating LDS-oriented elementary and secondary schools in the nation, and the only school of its kind in Utah County offering kindergarten through high school.

Rolling admissions are conducted throughout the year, and more information can be obtained by visiting the school’s website www.american-heritage.org or by calling the school at 801-642-0055.