The Noah Plan: Self-Directed Study in the Principle Approach

Dear Friends,

It is our great pleasure to provide you with this copy of *The Noah Plan: Self-Directed Study in the Principle Approach*. Whether you are a new parent to American Heritage School, or one who has been with us for a time, we hope that you will take an opportunity to read this manual (please **[1] download this iBook for iOS devices, such as iPad or iPhone,** or **[2] view this Canvas Web-based Course**) and come to understand why we feel so strongly about the pedagogical method called "The Principle Approach."

As you read, it is important to understand that the Foundation for American Christian Education ("FACE") is a Christian, non-denominational, non-profit organization based in Virginia that shares a tremendous amount in common with American Heritage School. Beginning in the 1980's when members of our Board of Trustees and Curriculum Committee became familiar with FACE founders Verna Hall, Rosalie Slater, and Carole Adams, it was clear to all that we had a surprisingly common view of education and its role in "restoring the heart and mind of a nation."

Over a decade ago, American Heritage School adopted the FACE "Principle Approach" as the primary *methodology* for instruction at American Heritage School. Of course, American Heritage School is an LDS-based school, and as such, our mission, philosophy, curriculum, and lesson content, are all based upon Restored Gospel principles. Principle Approach methodologies such as "The 4-R Method", "The Word Study Method", "The Notebook Method", and other Principle Approach techniques, are powerful tools for educators focused on changing hearts, and they are therefore uniquely suited to assist us in the *delivery* of our Christ-centered and Restored-Gospel-focused mission, philosophy, curriculum and lesson content. Importantly, these methods are not new—in fact they are very old—and have been commonly used in the cause of Christian education for centuries, including by the American Founders and many ancient and modern prophets for the education of their children as well as for their own self-education.

With this in mind, as you read FACE publications instructing in the "Principle Approach," please note the following:

- In most cases when you see the word "Bible" or "Biblical"—substitute the word "scriptures" or "scriptural". American Heritage School's Restored Gospel view of God's revealed word is more expansive than the Bible alone—but this certainly does not diminish the value of what wonderful fellow Christians (including the Founding Fathers) have been able to accomplish with the Bible! We take their work and add the beautiful perspective of the Restored Gospel to produce a truly "whole" approach to education.

- The FACE *Noah Plan: Self-Directed Study in the Principle Approach* ("the *Self-Directed Study")* is an excellent and succinct (116 pages) introduction to the Principle Approach. Written as a "seminar" manual, it contains references to various other FACE publications, such as *The Christian History of the Constitution of the United States of America,* and *Teaching and Learning America's Christian History*, among others. These are all excellent publications that are also used by American Heritage School as teacher references; however, please do not hesitate to simply read the *Noah Plan: Self-Directed*

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Study as a self-contained manual without the aid of other sources. It is a quick and enjoyable read—succinct, straight-forward, and powerful—a perfect introduction for the busy teacher or parent that wants a good foundational understanding of the Principle Approach!

- There is a CD supplement to the *Self-Directed* Study that, although not a full audio version of the *Self-Directed Study,* is a helpful commentary by Dr. Carole Adams that you could listen to while driving, folding laundry, doing dishes, etc. A detailed listing of the audio contents is on page 116 of the *Self-Directed Study* manual.

- FACE also operates a school in Chesapeake, Virgina: the "StoneBridge School" or the "StoneBridge FACE Demonstration School." In the course of reading FACE publications such as the *Self-Directed Study* (and especially if you choose to listen to the audio CD), you will be introduced to Principle Approach "ideas in practice" at StoneBridge. Multiple administrators, board members, and faculty at American Heritage have visited StoneBridge through the years. We are not striving to emulate the StoneBridge School in all aspects; however, we have been grateful for many good ideas that we have gleaned through the years from StoneBridge and from other excellent schools like it. American Heritage School has adopted some, but not all, of the recommended curriculum scope and sequence used by FACE and the StoneBridge School.

We find it interesting (and yes, even "providential") that one of the "anchor" scriptures for the Foundation for American Christian Education is Ephesians 1:10, stating "That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him." We, too, believe that we are living in the dispensation of the "fullness of times," which must include not just new educational methods for a 21st Century world, but time-tested, moral-based, and Christ-centered methods that must not be discarded as we and our children move into an ever uncertain, fast-paced, and morally perilous future.

In personal notes made shortly before he passed away, Gaylord Swim, Chairman of the American Heritage School Board of Trustees from 1995 to 2005, made a case for the continued emphasis on the Principle Approach at American Heritage School:

- It is inspired.
- It is compatible with the Restored Gospel.
- It is compatible with the principles of faith, sacrifice and patriotism.
- It develops character.
- It works on the mind and the heart of students and faculty.
- It sparks a love of learning.
- Is it the end-all-be-all? No. Therefore, we build upon it. We are strengthened by it but not limited by it.

May the Lord bless you and your family as you come to understand the urgency and significance of principle-based teaching and learning—both at school, and in your homes.

Sincerely,

Grant Beckwith
Principal

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