



August 19, 2009

All Parents  
American Heritage School  
2009-2010 Academic Year

### **Summary of Updated Policies and Reminders 2009-2010**

Dear Parents,

Welcome to American Heritage School for another exciting and enriching year! Following is a brief summary of some of the more important updates included in the current 2009-2010 Parent Handbook (in order of their appearance in the handbook), as well as some important reminders:

#### **New and Updated Policies**

*Code of Conduct (Section 6).* Section 6.1 has been updated to list each of the standards in *My Gospel Standards* (for ages 11 and younger) and *For the Strength of Youth* (for ages 12 and older) that had previously been incorporated only by general reference in the American Heritage School Code of Conduct. Section 6.2 has been updated with the five basic standards for self-governance that were memorialized last year in our all-student assemblies by the acronym "A.H.S." (Always Honor and Serve). Section 6.4 has been added to require that all students and employees of the School annually sign an "American Heritage School Honor Code Statement" acknowledging their commitment to the standards set forth in the AHS Code of Conduct.

*School Uniform Policy (Section 12).* The School Uniform Policy has been updated to reflect modifications outlined in the attached summary "*American Heritage School Student Uniform Modifications Effective for the 2009/2010 Academic Year*". The School's uniform committee, comprised of parents, teachers and administrators, made significant efforts this year to include more options and uniform functionality at all grade levels.

*Attendance and Punctuality (Section 13.4).* This section has been updated to clarify that there is no minimum required number of attendance days for a student in grades K-8 to advance to the next grade level; however, beginning in 9<sup>th</sup> grade, any high school student with more than 6 unexcused absences in a term may be subject to loss of credit in that class for the term. Also, high school students with an unexcused tardiness of more than 20 minutes will be counted as absent for purposes of the high school attendance policy.

*Student Drivers (Section 15.22).* As a result of agreements with the City of American Fork related to the safety of elementary school students on the School premises, student drivers at AHS (all students at the

School who have a driver's license or are in training to obtain their license) are restricted to the northwest access road and are required to park in the north parking lot.

*First Aid & Medications (Section 16.7).* This section has been added to provide information about the School's Health Office and Health Aid, and to instruct that all medications at the School must be stored, secured, inventoried, and administered by the AHS Health Aid. Also, for students to carry and self-administer medications (including asthma inhalers), a written authorization from both the parent and health-care provider must be completed and submitted to the AHS Health Office. Mrs. Wheeler is the School's Health Aid and has been trained in procedures necessary to serve as the School's Health Aid.

*Student Laptops and School Printers (Sections 17.18, 17.20, and 17.21).* These sections have been added to clarify how the School will address infractions of the student computer use policies. Only high school students are permitted to bring laptops to school under the School's laptop initiative. Students are not permitted to use school printers to print homework.

*Lockers (Section 21.10).* This section sets forth policies for student use of lockers, which are now available to students in grades 7-11. Please note that no items of any kind may be affixed to the outside of lockers, and students should only use magnets to affix personal items to the inside of lockers (no adhesives, including tape, glue, putties, "plastic-tack", etc.). Lockers remain at all times the property of the School and as such may be opened and inspected at will by administration per the guidelines set forth in this section.

#### Important Reminders

*Service Hours Requirement (Section 20.1).* The school depends on parent participation for everything from lunchroom assistance to special event costumes and design. This blesses students, teachers, and parents by creating a truly family-oriented school atmosphere and also by keeping tuition affordable. As in past years, parents who have not completed their 20-hour-per-family service hour commitment by April 1 will be contacted by administration to discuss plans for fulfilling their commitment before the academic year-end, which is a condition for readmission to the school each year. Don't forget to record your family's service hours on your family card in the front office.

*New Board Members, Administrators, and Faculty.* Please take a few moments to introduce yourself to the new board member, Danny Mason, and to re-introduce yourself to Jenet Jacob, who was recently married and is now Jenet Erickson (board member bios are included in the handbook, Appendix B). New faculty and staff bios are included on a separate hand-out tonight.

*Calendar.* The School calendar has been revised since previously circulated to you in your seating letters over the summer. Note the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Building Dedication Service has been moved to Thursday, September 17. The current version of the School calendar is always posted on the School website.

*"Flagpole" Cell Tower Proposal.* American Heritage School has received an offer from Clearwire LLC, a cell tower provider who plans to construct a "flag-pole" cell tower in the close vicinity of the school, or, with the School's permission, on the School's premises. As a result of technology advances in recent years, such a tower would have the appearance and functionality of an actual flag pole. The proposal also

includes significant cash payments to American Heritage School of approximately \$10,000 per year for up to 40 years. If American Heritage School chooses to accept this offer, those funds will be available for classroom uses (e.g. technology, textbooks, fieldtrips, etc.). If American Heritage School rejects the offer, we understand that Clearwire still intends to install the flagpole tower in the School vicinity along 700 North (likely on an existing telephone pole on 700 North) and will likely make the lease payments to Rocky Mountain Power per an existing agreement. American Heritage School values the input and opinions of the school community and invites the input of the School community regarding this opportunity. Interested individuals are encouraged to go to <http://american-heritage.org/Cell%20Tower.htm> where they can view pictures of the proposed “flagpole” cell tower, a draft form of the proposed lease agreement, and a few reports responding to health-related questions that have been raised concerning cell phones and cell towers.

We emphasize that the School has not made a decision on this proposal and will not make a final decision until its October 8 Board Meeting. In the meantime, we welcome your comments and will hold various “town-hall” style meetings, including one tonight as well as one or more before October 8, including a representative of Clearwire LLC who will be on hand to answer questions.

*Carpool Procedures (Section 15.21) and the First Week of School.* Please be aware that historically during the first week of school, many parents elect not to carpool and therefore vehicle traffic before and after school is heavier than normal until families adjust to their carpool groups and routines. Please take a moment to review all of the carpool procedures in Section 15.21 of the Parent Handbook. We are grateful to have the new parking facility this year and request your continuing patience as we monitor what kinds of traffic flow guidelines are necessary (if any) given the new parking capacity and traffic flow access around all sides of the building. Although we have not posted signage yet (and may not ultimately need to post signage) we continue to encourage clockwise traffic flow around the building during carpool times, and request once again that all patrons refrain from parking in red zones.

*Checking Students Out Early.* Sometimes families feel the need to call during class to check students out early. We realize that there are many legitimate and unexpected reasons for this; however, it is important that parents understand that the process of interrupting class to inform a teacher of a student who is being checked out early from class is disruptive – and can sometimes happen repeatedly in the same class particularly during the last half-hour of the day. If at all possible, please send your child to school with a note regarding early excusal. The student can then quietly gather his/her things and exit the class at the appropriate time, checking out at the front office on his/her way out.

*In-Vehicle Media During School Sponsored Events.* With the proliferation of in-vehicle video and gaming technology, including portable personal multi-media and video game devices, we remind you that the School multimedia policy requires administrative pre-approval of all movies (on campus or in vehicles during school sponsored events) and that video games are not permitted on campus or in vehicles during school sponsored events. Regular morning and afternoon carpool are not school sponsored events, but we encourage parents to be sensitive to the considerations underlying the school’s multimedia policy even during parent-arranged carpool. See sections 17.6 and 17.7 of the Parent Handbook.

*Development Report; Building & Facilities Expansion.* The fundraising and completion of the School’s new facilities over the last 18 months has been nothing short of a miracle. The final total cost of the

expansion, including the land acquisition and new parking facility, was just over \$5 million. We were informed by our contractors and various vendors that the timing of the construction (amidst one of the deepest recessions in history) led to savings of at least 50% and a completion schedule that was expedited as a result of many vendors in need of work.

Our fundraising efforts for the building were also very successful, including a higher rate of giving by patrons than ever in the history of the School. The vast majority of the funds raised came from a very few dedicated and visionary donors who were impressed with the parents and families at American Heritage School giving whatever they could give... including pennies, nickels and dimes from students. Without the support of ALL our precious givers, American Heritage School would likely not even exist today, let alone thrive in the way that it has over the last four decades.

But we are not through with fundraising for the mission of American Heritage School! On the contrary, we remain as committed as ever to gathering more resources to further our urgent mission. Two priorities in this year's annual campaign include raising funds to increase our teachers' benefits and raising funds to make our curriculum and methodologies internet-accessible to families who are either unable to afford tuition at the school or who are too distant to attend. Other priorities include acquisitions and improvements that we still desire to make to the building, such as acquiring another outdoor play-toy for the primary elementary students, and acquiring aluminum picnic benches under the new pavilion.

Can you help us? We need your help! Please know that as we honor the sacrifice that all families are making to pay tuition at the school, we will also continue to invite each other, and the larger community, to consider giving to our ongoing annual campaign as we are reminded that we all "drink from wells that we have not dug."

Thank you for carefully reviewing these policies and reminders! Let's make American Heritage School better every year, for every child and parent that is led to become a part of our wonderful mission.

Welcome to American Heritage School! May we always remember that we are the branches, and Christ is the vine - for without Christ, we can do nothing (John 15:5).

Yours very truly,



Grant Beckwith  
Principal