

Historic church building to become downtown Salt Lake City's newest school

By American Heritage School | Posted - Feb. 15, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.



This fall, one of downtown Salt Lake City's venerable church buildings will get a fresh lease on life as a school. American Heritage School will welcome students to a new downtown Salt Lake City campus just northwest of Temple Square in August 2022.

The church building, located at 142 West 200 North, has served for decades as a meetinghouse for members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and features an iconic stained-glass window depicting the faith's First Vision scene.

"We are grateful to be able to provide students access to the rich educational opportunities that a downtown location provides, and to do so in a building with such a storied past," said Grant Beckwith, head of school.

"This is a uniquely powerful model of education that blends faith, a deep appreciation for America's founding, and rigorous academics to create a transformational experience not only for students but for entire families. If a family feels strongly about this kind of education, we want you to apply. We have significant financial aid available and we will find a way to help you be a part of our school community."

The school's academic results are impressive at every level, including elementary, middle, and high school standardized test scores that are well above state and national averages.

Founded in 1970, American Heritage School is Utah's largest private K–12 school with nearly 1,100 students attending its 40-acre campus in American Fork. The school is funded entirely by tuition and private donations and accepts no local, state or federal government tax dollars.

AHS also operates an online education program reaching thousands of students in dozens of countries around the world. The new campus provides even more access to families living in the Salt Lake area.

"The core of our mission is to assist parents in developing the whole child—heart, mind and body," said Leland Anderson, the principal of the Salt Lake City campus. "We've found that our parents really appreciate the support our teachers provide. Teachers reinforce foundational values and concepts, and the parents and teachers form a unified partnership of home and school working together."

Anderson first joined American Heritage School in 2008 after finishing a master's degree in school leadership at Harvard University. From 2017 to 2021, Anderson served as the principal of RDF International School in Shenzhen, China. He returned to American Heritage School in June 2021 to help open the Salt Lake City campus.

The Salt Lake City campus will mirror American Heritage School's curriculum and honor code, which cultivate a learning atmosphere consistent with the values of The Church of Jesus Christ. All students are expected to adhere to the school's honor code, whether or not they are members of the Church. All families are welcome to apply.

"There are three steps to apply for admission," says Kristen Jansen, the school's Admissions Director. "Complete an application, attend an admissions interview in person or online, and participate in a new student assessment."

The application can be completed online. New student assessments are scheduled on February 26, March 19, April 16, June 13, and July 7. Assessments help the teachers know how to help the incoming students.

Initially, the Salt Lake City campus will enroll 200 students in grades K–8 in traditional academic subjects such as language arts, math, history, literature, science, computer science, art, music, PE, drama, and social dance. Grades 9–12 will be added in future years.

Extracurricular activities will include basketball, choir, constitutional studies, debate, electronics and robotics, family history, moot court (mock trial procedure), orchestra, soccer, student government, and volleyball. There will also be writing and math labs available after school.

Extracurricular orchestra will be available for students in the community, not just enrolled students. Students in grades 8–12 will also be eligible to audition for the annual Lyceum Music Festival and other summer orchestra offerings. American Heritage School's Lyceum Philharmonic is Utah's premier youth orchestra and regularly performs with top artists such as The Piano Guys, Nathan Pacheco, Lexi Walker, and Jenny Oaks Baker.

Extracurricular choir will be open to the community. Students in grades 8–12 who participate in the choir will also be able to participate in the annual AHS summer choir tours.

Employment opportunities are available for full-time teachers and staff. Employment applications are managed online through [American Heritage School's employment system](#). Interested candidates are invited to apply.

Jansen invites all interested families to an open house on Feb. 24, 7–8 p.m. at 736 N. 1100 E. in American Fork. "Come, meet our teachers, parents, students, and administrators," says Jansen. "Attending an open house is a great way to learn about the school. You can tour the classrooms and ask questions to learn specifically how AHS can partner with your family to provide an exceptional academic, faith-based education."

The open house is taking place in American Fork because the SLC campus will not open until after remodeling is completed this summer. A [virtual tour](#) of the new campus is available on the school's website. Tuition ranges from \$6,698 for full-day kindergarten, to \$8,670 for grades 1–5, and \$9,010 for grades 6–8.

"Significant aid is available for families who need [financial assistance](#)," says Beckwith. Information about financial aid is available on the school's website. Enrollment is limited and seats are filling, so Jansen encourages families to [apply](#) soon. For more information, please contact the campus at slcadmissions@ahsmail.com or 801-642-0055 x 503.