



SAGE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL BOISE NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 22, 2025



We are enrolling! We have an exciting opportunity for your family to win some Sage Swag. We have openings in several grade levels, and are offering a referral incentive! Refer a family who enrolls between now and September 5th, and we will outfit your whole household with FREE Sage t-shirts! Ask them to list your name when completing the application, which can be found [here](#).



Attendance: If your student will be tardy or absent, please let us know as soon as possible by sending an email to boise.attendance@sageintl.org with your student's full name, grade, estimated date of return, and reason for the absence. If due to an appointment, please provide a note from the provider's office to excuse the absence.



Playground: Thank you to everyone who voted by completing the playground survey in June! We are so excited that after years of saving, we have been able to purchase some new playground structures for use by all ages. They are on order and will be professionally installed in the fall.



Volunteering: We LOVE our parent volunteers! If your student is in grades K-5, you can reach out directly to their classroom teacher. Our PTO is always looking for helpers for their various events, check out their [website](#) here!



Text opt-in: In order to receive urgent messages via text, you must opt-in from your cell phone. To do so text "y" to the number 67587.



The Sage Spirit Store is open year-round, stock up on Sage swag for the new school year! Shop [HERE](#). We always welcome donations of Sage items in good condition that your students have grown out of. Feel free to drop them off at any front desk during school days.

Check out our [WEBSITE](#)
and find us on social
media via the links below!



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

August 27: PYP Back to School Night

September 1: Labor Day - No School

September 17: College Night

September 22-26: Fall Break - No School

[2025-26 Academic Calendar](#)

FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, EMILY DOWNEY

Dear families and staff of Sage International Schools,

Welcome to a new school year! We have been eagerly anticipating the return of students and it is a joy to find our hallways full of energy again. It's going to be a fantastic year!



I am honored to be writing to you as the new Executive Director at the Sage International Network. For over 11 years, I've had the privilege of being part of this remarkable community, first as a parent, then as a board member, and most recently as the Chief Financial and Operating Officer. Each role has deepened my commitment to Sage and broadened my understanding of what it takes to sustain and grow excellent schools. Most importantly, it has strengthened my appreciation for our mission, the people who bring it to life, and the profound impact of the work we do together.

As a parent of three sons who each graduated from Sage with their International Baccalaureate (IB) Diplomas, and have all completed college as of May, I feel an overwhelming sense of gratitude for the rich learning environment and the academically rigorous and supportive culture that helped shape them. Today, all three are thriving in meaningful, highly valued careers. I couldn't be more proud or more convinced of the transformative power of a Sage education.

The global perspective and academic challenge of an IB education prepares students not just for academic success, but for lives of purpose and contribution. The fact that we provide this through a free, public charter school is truly extraordinary! At Sage, we are incredibly fortunate to have a team of dedicated educators and staff whose passion, talent, and tireless commitment make a lasting difference in the lives of our students. Their belief in what's possible for each child and for our community as a whole is what makes this place so special. They inspire me every day and I know they will you too.

We have lofty goals at Sage this year focused on reading, writing and mathematics. Literacy remains an evergreen priority across all grade levels, and we have ambitious goals to ensure all students are *engaged*, challenged, and supported in their learning. You will hear me speak often about *engagement* at all levels - students, families and staff - as it is absolutely central to the success and well-being of our students. As a start, I will ask you, probably over and over again, to prioritize regular attendance at school and to read with your children every day. Whether they're five or fifteen, your time spent reading together makes a lasting impact.

Thank you for your trust, your partnership, and your belief in our mission. I look forward to working with you this year and continuing to build a school community where every child feels seen, supported, and empowered to thrive.

With warmth and gratitude,
Emily Downey



CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER, JOSH NOTEBOOM



We are thrilled to welcome Josh Noteboom as our Network Chief Academic Officer. Josh brings more than 15 years of leadership experience as an Idaho teacher and administrator. Most recently, he served as the Federal Programs Director at the Idaho State Department of Education, including leading the Idaho Principals Network by providing ongoing mentoring and coaching to school leaders across the state. As CAO, Josh will directly impact student learning and achievement, providing a clear academic vision for both Sage Schools that aligns with and advances our mission. We feel so fortunate to have him on our team. Welcome Josh!

A note from Josh:

Joining Sage International Schools this year as your Chief Academic Officer, I have been inspired by the warmth, positivity, and strong commitment to serving all students that our staff and teachers demonstrate each and every day. Thank you to everyone who has taken a moment to connect, share a story, or offer a kind word. Sage is truly a special place to be!

This year, we are excited to continue delivering rigorous, engaging, inquiry-driven learning experiences while ensuring that every one of our students feels challenged, supported, and seen for who they are. We are especially focused this year on strengthening the International Baccalaureate Programmes across all grades. Whether we are sparking curiosity in our Primary Years classrooms, making interdisciplinary connections in the Middle Years, engaging in a Career-related Programme, or exploring complex global issues in the Diploma Programme, we are committed to holding high expectations and providing exceptional learning opportunities for every student.

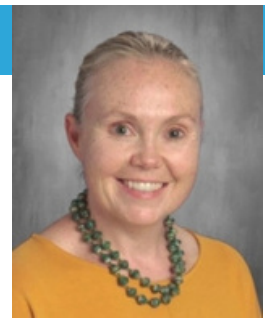
We are incredibly thankful that you entrust your students to us each day. We look forward to connecting with you throughout the year as we celebrate the learning journey we are on with our students.

Thanks,

Josh Noteboom

Mission: "Engaging students within an inclusive IB learning community, challenging all members to take risks and contribute locally and globally through open-minded inquiry."





Strong Start

We are off to a strong start in the PYP! We want to acknowledge the efforts of each and every community member to ensure that students are safe, secure, and positively engaged everyday. We know that maintaining a consistent and positive environment is the foundation for all learning, and we cannot do that with all hands on deck. Thank you for everything you have done and are doing to create a positive community.

August's IB Attribute Trait: Principled

Right along with ensuring a strong start, we focus on being **principled** in August. The IB defines being principled as "We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of

fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences".

We love that the IB programme encourages us to strive both academically and interpersonally! Check out some of our IB Stars:



Universal Screening – An Academic Strong Start

We conduct universal screening in the first two weeks of school. Universal screeners are brief, individual assessments in reading and math that all students take. Our reading assessments (and math in grades K-1) are conducted one-on-one and out loud, giving us the most accurate view of students' abilities in real time. This information is invaluable to us as we pinpoint how we can best support students during both all-class and small group instruction.

Additional Assessments

As we look ahead to September, all students will take computer-adaptive assessments in reading and math. As a Sage Network, we administer the MAP (Measure of Academic Progress) assessment once in the fall and once in the spring. MAP in particular focuses on students' growth over the course of the year, which is a crucial measure of our effectiveness as a school.

Students also take the ISIP (IStation Indicators of Progress) in math and reading, which helps us monitor progress on a more routine and regular basis (typically monthly).

When fall assessments are complete, we will share results with families and provide further contextual information to help you interpret the results.

Of course, our most valuable information comes from real-time and human-to-human interaction with our students, and a significant part of the art of teaching is gathering and using information about students to guide learning. We are fortunate to have incredible teachers here at Sage, who are adept at using both formal and informal data – everything we know about kids – to make impactful decisions.

Classroom Spotlight – 2nd grade’s lens on the theme “Where We Are in Place and Time”

2nd graders are diving into their first unit of inquiry, focusing on the central idea that Water Shapes the Earth. As part of this inquiry students build classroom friezes, which visually display key elements of their learning, and they conduct local fieldwork as they learn about our water system. Throughout, they’ll connect their literacy, math, social studies, and science learning to this central idea, creating an IB transdisciplinary experience that helps all of us connect ideas across contents.



MIDDLE SCHOOL (6-8) WITH ZACH PARKER

We are off to a Strong Start this year, I'd say honestly, the best we've ever had. I attribute this to the entirety of our team as well as the community. With respect to our Middle School staff, we are developing some longevity as a group and therefore, continually strengthening our culture. For instance, our 19 educators and I collectively have 299 years of experience, of which 112 of those are at Sage. Our all-important and very influential support staff (front desk, nurse, and para professionals) have 27 years of experience working with the youth and 20 years combined at Sage. Such experience and collective efficacy have a tremendous impact on culture and student learning.



I'd like to take this opportunity to highlight our two new teachers to Middle School, our only additions in the past 3 years. Mrs. Coffey is our new 6th-grade math teacher. She is entering her 15th year of teaching middle and early high school math, all of which have been at an IB school. Mrs. Echanis is our new 6th and 7th-grade Design teacher. This is her 20th year teaching, all of which have been at the middle school level. Join me in welcoming them both!

Looking forward, I want to point out two events, both of which occur the week of September 2nd. In our usual practice, we will be administering MAP testing to all middle school students, specifically focusing on reading comprehension and math. These skills are used to measure baseline achievement levels and growth levels from now until the end of the year. The scores and information we glean help us provide additional support to students in need, as well as direct our practices not only in the Math and Lang & Lit departments, but all others too, when it comes to developing strong literacy skills.

Additionally, that week we will be holding our **Middle School Kick Off Party on Thursday, Sept 4th.** The cost of entry is \$5 per student. Please reach out if cost is a barrier for your family. There will be games (think Gaga Ball, Volleyball, and Basketball) along with music (DJ Freers!!) food, and drink. It's a great opportunity for parents to drop off students and let them spend time running around with new and old friends building community.

Looking forward to a new and exciting year.

HIGH SCHOOL

We are off to a great start in the high school this year! We are so excited to see you at our upcoming Back to School Night! We have several helpful sessions planned that I hope prove valuable to you.



We want to start the year by continuing our tradition of celebrating our IB Students and Staff. For the month of August we are highlighting the IB Attribute, **Principled!** The IB describes a Principled person as someone who *acts with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and the consequences that may follow.*



Senior DP student Kennedy Lunde is an IB student through and through. She is trustworthy, honest, and constantly exhibits compassion and respect for others. Kennedy is a natural leader who has dedicated herself to her Sage community. Congratulations, Kennedy! Thank you for setting an excellent example for us all.

Mrs. Viviana Aguilera was excited to nominate **10th grader Faith Hendrickson!** Mrs. V shared that "Faith is the kind of student who always does what's right, simply because it's who she is. Her kindness, positivity, and willingness to help spread good vibes wherever she goes, inspiring her peers to be their best. She is the flower that makes any garden look beautiful." Faith, thank you for all you bring to our school!





It is our tradition to also highlight our amazing faculty. When considering the IB attribute of Principled, **Scout Sorcic, our amazing Career-related Programme Instructor and Coordinator** stands out. This is her second year at Sage, and she has single-handedly rebuilt our CP to capture what the IB has intended to be a career readiness program. Her colleague, Ashley Henderson, shared the following: "Scout is so committed to her values and is such an ethical human being. She works tirelessly to share these values with her students and help guide them as they grow into young adults." Scout, it is an honor to walk this road with you. Thank you for all you do.

I also want to take a moment to highlight our **National Merit Scholarship Qualifiers**. Last year, juniors who signed up to take the PSAT/NMSQT tested for an opportunity to qualify for the National Merit Scholarship. Most years we see very few students who score high enough to qualify. For reference, the Class of 2020 was the top class with 3 qualifiers. I am very excited to announce that this class had the largest group of qualifiers in Sage history! We're celebrating 11 of our seniors who joined over 280,000 students from across the country who earned academic honors from the College Board National Recognition Program! By receiving the School Recognition Award, these students are in the **top 15% of high school students nationwide** who received recognition based on their achievement on PSAT-related assessments. Please join me in celebrating the following excellent students: **Milo Fouch, Jack Geraghty, Austin Freyer, Luna Simon, Cooper Molinengo, Michael Glahn, Garen Gudgell, Nevyn Brandel, Elyse Pippitt, Ellery Brewster, and Alexander Golding.**

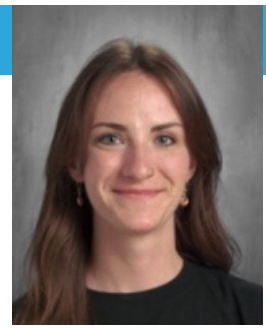
We have three upcoming events that will take place during the school day that I wanted you to be aware of.

First, we will soon hold our student council elections for the year! Student Council elections take place at the start of each school year. Students in 9th-12th grade levels have a chance to vote for their grade level representative, as well as who will represent the high school as their President and Vice President. Student Council applicants deliver a speech that focuses on the IB attributes and how they will best represent their grade level and the school during the course of the year. We will announce our Student Council electorate in next month's newsletter.

Second, our annual Sagefort event will take place this year on **Tuesday, September 2nd**. Teachers are hard at work planning for their "hacks" (short workshops), and "forts" (extended passion projects). All high school students and teachers participate, and this is an amazing event to build community and take a break from the rigor of the IB.

Finally, our annual **senior camp trip is scheduled for Thursday, September 4th**. All seniors, their teachers, and our experienced outdoor coordinator will head up to Silver Creek Campground for an overnight adventure. Details and packing lists have been communicated to 12th-grade families. Please reach out to Brandy Burkett with any questions.

EXPEDITIONS WITH MEGAN FUROIS



We are so excited to be back in session and getting kids outdoors to learn and grow together. For those of you who are new to Sage or are unaware of our program, Sage Expeditions is our outdoor education program that offers a wide array of activities and learning activities throughout the school year. We focus on teaching and practicing Leave No Trace principles, building community, place-based learning, and building outdoor skills! Most of our programming is catered toward our older students, but we have a few opportunities available for students starting as young as grade 3! You can find more information about our program on our website ([link here](#)).

Over the summer, we took an incredible group of risk takers on the Salmon River for 5 days of outdoor living and white water instruction. It was an incredible experience spent on the edge of the Frank Church Wilderness and the perfect setting for beginners to white water to gain experience on the river. We send a huge thank you to Salmon River Adventure Company for guiding our staff and students down the river safely and teaching us the basics. We're stoked to return in future seasons!



We have our fall schedule all lined up! Check out the list of opportunities below and **watch your inboxes** for when those lotteries open up!

August

- 22nd-23rd: [8/9th grade Treasure Valley Tour](#): paddleboarding/kayaking, camping, and fossil hunting. Lottery closed.

September

- 4-5th: Senior Campout at Silver Creek Campground
- 12th: [Trailwork opportunity with Idaho Trails Association](#): Open to high school only.
LOTTERY OPEN UNTIL 8/28
- 15th-17th: 8th grade annual campout

October

- Fridays 10/3, 10/10, 10/17, 10/24: Outdoor rock climbing clinic with Idaho Mountain Guides. Open to students in 8th through 12th grade, lottery not yet open.
- 27th-30th: Leave No Trace classroom days for Outdoor Education track Career Programme students

November

- 15th Leave No Trace field day for Outdoor Education track Career Programme students

Thank you to all who joined us at ZeroSix on the first day of school, and to our PTO for providing free coffee and pastries! If you are interested in volunteering in any capacity, email or join us for our **next meeting on Tuesday, September 16th at 6:00** in the Sage cafeteria to learn more.

The Sage PTO provides a number of fun-filled family events for our Sage community that would not be possible without its volunteers. **This year's President is Megan Brausen**, pictured here with her family! A HUGE thank you to Megan and the following parents who have stepped in to serve and lead on the PTO Board this year:

Vice President: Sunrise Cox

Secretary: Anji Armagost

Treasurer: Volunteer needed!

PYP Liaison: Melissa Jannusch



Mark your Calendar:

October 9th: Fall Festival at the Idaho Botanical Gardens - New Event! Join other Sage families at the Idaho Botanical Gardens. Take a stroll through the gardens and make lasting memories at this FREE event. Students must be accompanied by an adult.

Parent Teacher Conferences - The PTO provides meals for teachers on Thursday evening and Friday morning during conference times. Sign-ups to come, volunteers will be needed to set up and clean up on the following dates:

October 16-17: Grades K-5

October 23-24: Grades 6-12

November 13th: International Potluck and Fair - Join us in celebrating the rich cultural diversity of the Sage community! Families share their heritage through food, interactive booths, and performances. Everyone is welcome, bring a dish to share and enjoy at this FREE event. We are currently seeking a volunteer to chair this special event—if you're interested in helping make it a success, please reach out!

You can find all PTO information on [our website](#).

Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) and email us at information@sagepto.org

