



SAGE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL BOISE NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 26, 2025



We are enrolling! We are extending the opportunity for your family to win some Sage Swag. We have openings in several grade levels, including Kindergarten! We are offering a fun incentive...refer a family who enrolls between now and October 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](#).



We are still having issues with families using the Parkcenter entrance rather than entering campus via Mallard. Please review the [traffic guidelines HERE](#). Thank you to our kind volunteer(s) helping us remind drivers of the proper process, and to those who are following it! **Keep in mind**, if approaching Sage from the south, you can access Mallard via Highland Street from Boise Ave or Broadway. This enables you to take a right turn into our parking lot at Smoky Mountain.



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.



2026-27 Calendar: We all like to plan ahead, and hope to have next year's Academic Calendar solidified at our November Board Meeting. We will post it on our website and send to families by the end of November.

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



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

October 9: PTO Fall Festival @ IBG

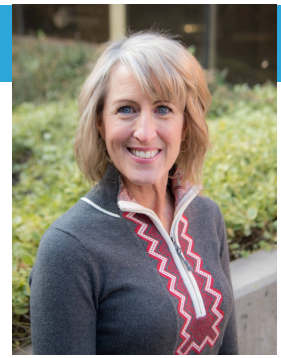
October 15: School Photo Retakes

October 16-17: PYP (K-5th) Conferences

October 17: Quarter 1 Ends

October 23-24: Secondary (6-12th) Conferences

[2025-26 Academic Calendar](#)



Dear families and staff of Sage International Schools,

We've started the year off strong and are now fully engaged in the work of teaching and learning. Last month, I outlined our academic goals: equipping students with strong pre-algebra and algebra skills, helping them grow as writers at every stage, and ensuring our youngest learners develop the foundational reading skills that open the door to all learning. These remain our top priorities. This month, I want to pause and shine a light on something at the heart of all academic success and that reaches far beyond the classroom - **reading**.

Reading is more than simply learning to read words on a page; it is an essential part of a child's overall academic success and development. Students who are strong readers by the end of third grade are more likely to thrive later in life. Yes, academically, but also physically, mentally, and emotionally.

Parents play a vital role in this shared effort. I had the joy of growing up in a family of readers and clearly remember my mother reading to me, hours exploring the library together, and reading alongside my father during quiet evenings as a teenager. When our first son was in kindergarten, his teacher gathered parents together and advised us to relentlessly read with our children every single night. We took this to heart, and I can honestly say it was one of the best pieces of advice I've ever received. It helped develop excellent and joyful readers and gave my husband and me a powerful way to stay connected to our children as they grew. I truly believe it profoundly impacted my children's learning and our bond with them, and I want to share it with you.

For our youngest children, the key is consistency: reading aloud every day, even for just a few minutes. These moments build vocabulary, strengthen decoding skills, and create joyful experiences with books. Learn more [here](#).

For middle schoolers, we know children are starting to form their own opinions at this age. We often choose a book with our children and read it together, chatting about it at dinner or in the car. Those conversations, sometimes about the plot, other times about bigger questions like, "Do you agree with this character's choice?" or "What do you think the author is trying to say?" gave us a window into their growing independence and developing opinions. We found these moments were less about analyzing the book and more about keeping communication open, strengthening their critical thinking, and letting them know we valued what they had to say. Learn more [here](#).

For high school students, the challenge is to go deeper. Encourage them to read both classics and contemporary works, and whenever possible, read alongside them. Sharing a book with our teenagers gave us a common language, rich conversations and a shared experience that kept us in touch with their world. Learn more [here](#).

Continued...

And, don't underestimate the power of reading aloud, even with older kids. Classics like *The Hobbit*, *The Secret Garden*, *Moby Dick*, and *Robinson Crusoe*, as well as more contemporary novels like *The Book Thief* and *Life of Pi* are not only rich in language but also in wisdom. Reading aloud nourishes the soul, builds family bonds, and teaches lessons about courage, kindness, and resilience. Children (yes, even teens!) often delight in being read to.

I encourage you to make reading a regular and enjoyable part of your family routine. I promise it will pay off in spades, developing passionate, joyful readers and creating a pathway to bond with your children throughout their life. My 88-year-old mother is experiencing dementia and cannot read anymore. However, she remains vibrant and curious, so enjoys listening to audiobooks. She still regularly inquires: "Emily, tell me about what you are reading right now." Right now I am reading *I was Anastasia*. What is your family reading?

With warmth and gratitude,

Emily Downey

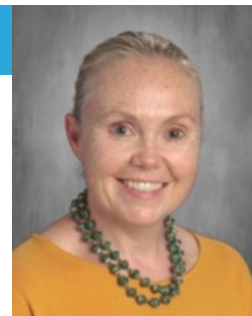


FRENCH AT SAGE

Foreign Language is an important part of an IB Education. Here at Sage we have a wonderful team of educators teaching students the French language and about the French cultures across all grade levels! This team has created a monthly newsletter, which we encourage you to check out below. Thank you, Monsieur Fraley, for getting this great resource started!

[August 2025 Edition](#)
[September 2025 Edition](#)





We have really been enjoying the cooler weather the last few weeks and are looking forward to all the fun fall things in October!

Assessment Update

We are wrapping up our fall assessments, which help us gather a multi-faceted view of students' current abilities and their next steps in learning. After the fall break, we will send home individualized packets for your review.

Classroom Spotlight – 5th Grade

5th graders are currently engaged in their ***Where We Are in Place and Time*** IB unit, which is guided by the central idea that “Perspectives have influenced citizens throughout history to take action”. This unit provides an opportunity for students to explore the formation of the early US government, and they grapple with both primary source documents (such as the Declaration of Independence) and historical fiction (reading the novel [Chains](#)). We love that the IB Programme pushes us to grapple with big ideas and events from multiple (and often divergent) perspectives!

All-PYP Spotlight – Vertical, Non-Permanent Spaces

Though it's a mouthful to say, vertical, non-permanent spaces are a hallmark of our inquiry and thinking work in the PYP, particularly in Math.

Our PYP staff dove into Peter Liljedahl's work around [Building Thinking Classrooms](#) several years ago as part of our professional development and, as a result, you'll find flexible vertical workspaces – like whiteboards – across every room in the building. Liljedahl found that, among other practices, using vertical, non-permanent spaces that are set up for collaborative problem-solving keeps students thinking more and longer (just what we want!). Pictured here are some 5th graders solving problems using VNPSs to work through complex math tasks.



Opportunity for 4th graders and their families

We are excited to share with you the [Every Kid Outdoors](#) program. Through a collaboration of multiple federal agencies (ex, US Forest Service and The National Park Service), 4th graders can download and print a pass that provides them and their families with free access to ALL national parks, waterways, and lands. Passes are valid for a full calendar year and provide significant savings if national parks or monuments are on your travel itinerary. The program also notes that virtually all Americans are within two hours or less of a nationally-managed landmark, so these passes are great for adventures close to home as well.

PYP STEM Night

Please mark your calendars for Thursday, November 13th from 5:30 to 7 pm. Sage High School students will be coordinating an educational evening for students and families!



Recently our middle school students completed their annual MAP assessments, which measure their Math and Reading Comprehension skills. MAP assessments are a nationally normed test that thousands of students across the country take. This year we eliminated the Language portion of the assessment and are opting to not take the winter assessment, thereby reducing our overall number of week-long tests from 4 to 3 (MAP in the fall and spring, and the state-required ISATs, also in the spring). Students should have received copies of their MAP Scores from teachers. If not, please ask your kiddo about this.

We know there is a lot of pressure on middle school students, and we at Sage are always lookingn out for not only their academic, but their social and emotional wellbeing. This is where **Sources of Strengths (SoS)** comes in. SoS is a research-based suicide prevention organization comprised of students across the middle school and led by Mrs. Gatfield, our 8th-grade Language & Literature teacher. SoS regularly presents 'campaigns' for our students that help them identify a variety of healthy aspects students can lean into when challenges confront them. A few such healthy aspects are: positive friends, physical activities, generosity, and mentorships. The idea is that the more tools one has to use, the more likely one is able to make it through hardships.

Just like SoS, the more tools we as Sage staff use, the better equipped we are to help our students and community succeed. We are collaborating with Boise State University, who is working with schools across the Treasure Valley to conduct an anonymous mental health survey that seeks to understand the pressures students face. The overall results of the survey findings will be shared with the school and families to help us better respond to the hardships our students are facing.



Parents must 'opt-in' and give consent in order for their student(s) to participate. Sage must have at least 60% of students signed up in order to administer it. I highly recommend and kindly ask you to sign your student up so we can continue to pull back the layers and clearly see the needs of our students. Thank you in advance for signing up.

[Consent Form LINK](#)

Camp Sawtooth with our 8th Grade class was such a great experience, building community in preparation for a great year. Thank you for sharing your students with us on this annual trip!





There have been so many wonderful events to highlight over the last month in the high school! I want to start with celebrating our IB students and teacher of the month. Our IB attribute for September is **Inquirer**. As Inquirers, we *nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.*



Multiple teachers nominated **9th grader Maxwell Waxberg** as an Inquirer. Mr. Lunt shared, "Max is an engaged student and historian in U.S. History class and always enjoys learning and expanding his understanding of the subject matter. Max demonstrates a genuine curiosity and quest for knowledge." Mrs. Alley added to Max's recognition that, "Max is a beacon of light and has shown he is a lifelong learner. As an inquirer, Max asks questions to grow in his knowledge and to expand his thinking and understanding of a topic." Way to go, Max! We are loving having you in High School!

Our CP/DP team chose to recognize **CP junior, Ella Timbers** as an Inquirer. Ella is always asking deeper questions. She is never afraid to speak out in class and ask any question that comes to her consciousness. Ella is so enthusiastic about learning and she has a true passion for deep understanding. She is a bright light in the hallways and classrooms at Sage and we are so excited to see where the next two years as a CP student takes her!



This is our second year highlighting our IB students in this way, and we like to feature an IB educator as well. We took Mr. Mercer's suggestion that they be student nominated!



Colin Falconer, our Design, Computer Science, and Digital Literacy teacher was chosen as our staff Inquirer! Sophomore Kepler Davis shared the following with his nomination: "Mr. Falconer always responds to questions thoughtfully with his own clarifying questions to make sure he can give the best help he can. He also asks questions that really challenge you and make you think."

Freshman Josef Baumover-Strasser said, "Mr. Falconer thinks through problems and challenges and overcomes them like a designer and a thinker. He is passionate and smart. Mr. Falconer is a critical thinker and applies that to his amazing classes." And finally, Anna Henson shared that, "He always takes the time to ask questions about people's opinions on a subject and it makes the class more interesting and engaging." Huge shoutout to Mr. Falconer, and THANK YOU to all of the students who nominated one of our amazing teachers.

SAGEFORT

In this annual tradition, students enjoyed choosing among the many *Forts* that teachers offered based on various interests. In Danyelle Davis' **French Fort**, students experienced various French foods that they prepared. Melissa Webster and Faith Hansen led **Thrift Fort**, where students spent the morning thrifting at St. Vincent De Paul. In the afternoon, they gave back to St. Vincent through volunteering a combined 80 hours of service to a nonprofit that does such important work for our community.



Word Fort, led by Creative Writing teacher, Kate Morgan, spent their time collaging writers' journals, gathering inspiration near the river, and finishing off with a fun Story Slam. Mr. Mercer and Mr. Lunt led **Hike Fort**, where they hiked Camel's Back Park as well as the Military Reserve. Students hiked with friends and explored the beautiful nature of the Boise foothills.



SENIOR CAMP TRIP

Our senior camp trip was at Silver Creek Plunge this year! The Class of 2026 spent time in community with our CP/DP team. We set up camp, participated in family groups to complete challenges and relay games, and spent a beautiful evening enjoying the pool. This is always one of our favorite events of the year!



High School continued...

NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP SEMI-FINALISTS

Please join me in celebrating Seniors **Milo Fouch and Alexander Golding** as National Merit Scholarship Semi-Finalists. This is an amazing achievement, as there are approximately 16,000 Semifinalists in the 2025 National Merit Scholarship Program. Milo and Alex have an opportunity to continue on for some 6,870 National Merit Scholarships worth nearly \$26 million offered next spring. Semifinalists must advance to the Finalist level of the competition by fulfilling several additional requirements. Both of them are working through these steps now, and we are excited to support them!

SPRING BREAK SERVICE/ADVENTURE TRIP OPPORTUNITY: *Guatemala + Belize Impact Adventure 2026 with Vivid Roots*

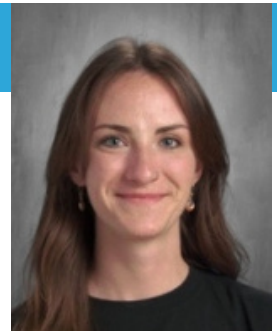
This is our third year partnering with this local non-profit organization. One of the co-founders recently presented the opportunity to students and I'd like to share it with you:

Travel through Belize and Guatemala on a transformative adventure that blends cultural discovery, community service, and outdoor exploration. From the remote southern coast of Belize to the lush riverways of Rio Dulce and the ancient Maya ruins of Tikal, you'll experience the region's natural beauty and cultural richness. This journey isn't just about seeing new places—it's about contributing meaningfully to them. Through a partnership with a local NGO, you'll work directly with local students and educators to help improve rural school infrastructure and participate in native tree-planting efforts to support ecological restoration.

Please visit [their website](#) for more details!

EXPEDITIONS WITH MEGAN FUROIS

We are off to a great start this year at Boise with over 150 students already enjoying overnight trips with our Expeditions Program. This past month was busy with our Senior campout at Silver Creek Campground, trailwork with Idaho Trails Association and the Idaho Land Trust, and our 8th-Grade Campout at Camp Sawtooth.



Even better news is that there's still more to come! Please see our schedule below for upcoming events and reach out to Megan Furois with any questions or requests to join. You can find more information on our [website](#).

October

- Fridays on 10/3, 10/10, 10/17, 10/24: Outdoor rock climbing clinic with Idaho Mountain Guides for Grades 7-10th. (Waitlist available)
- 10/27-10/30: Leave No Trace classroom days for Outdoor Education track 11th-12th grade students

November

- 11/15: Leave No Trace field day for Outdoor Education track 11th-12th grade students
- Bogus Basin Lifesports registration will open!

ENRICHMENT

Sage Senior and Mountain Bike varsity rider Nevyn Brandel was asked to contribute to the Idaho Interscholastic Cycling League's newsletter. We're so proud of her inspiring story, you can check it out [HERE](#)! Way to go Nevyn!

Our Mountain Biking Team is doing amazing, and many Sage riders have visited the podium with a 1st-5th place finish! You can cheer them on at the State Championships at Bogus Basin on October 4th.

- Skyhawks Basketball for Grades K-8 here on campus in October! [MORE INFO](#)
- Middle School Cross Country is underway! [MORE INFO](#)
- The Ultimate Frisbee Team is starting fall practices to get ready for Spring games. [MORE INFO](#)

PTO

Our **next meeting is October 14th at 5:30** in the Sage cafeteria. ALL are welcome, and we have many upcoming events we need help with!

We have a FULL and dedicated group leading our PTO this year, and are so grateful to the following people:

President - Megan Brausen
Vice President - Sunrise Ayers
Secretary - Anji Armogost
Treasurer - Sarah Stahlecker
PYP Liaison - Melissa Jannusch

Middle School Liaison - Liz Barnett
High School Liaison - Rebecca Torres
Communications Liaisons - Rori Lubeck and
Jessica Segali
Fundraising Coordinator - Kyla Krieger

October 9th: Fall Festival at the Idaho Botanical Gardens - Join Sage families at the Idaho Botanical Gardens. Take a stroll through the gardens at this FREE event. Students must be accompanied by an adult.

November 13th: International Potluck and Fair - Come enjoy the rich cultural diversity of our Sage community through food, interactive booths, and performances. All are welcome, bring a dish to share and enjoy at this FREE event. We are currently seeking volunteers for this special event, if you're interested in helping make it a success, please reach out!

As a fundraiser, we will have a staff member kiss an animal that our Sage community chooses. Voting for WHICH animal will be open October 1- 12 via [this LINK](#). Once the animal is chosen, we will start the "fill the bucket" challenge. Buckets will be located at each front desk, and your donation will be your vote for which staff member gets to do the kissing!

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