SAGE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL BOISE NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 13, 2026

We have received complaints about Sage families not following our established traffic routines. **PLEASE do not enter or block traffic to the parking lot off Mallard** before you reach the Smoky Mountain entrance. It is illegal to block the entrance and you can be ticketed or towed if you use that lot. Please reference our **Traffic Map** for a refresher. ***Please*** be respectful of our neighbors like Suntree, who also have student traffic of their own accessing that lot.

The Fall Book Fair is coming! Monday, November 16 - Thursday, November 19, from 7:45 am to 4:30 pm, including during school hours! Please enter via the Middle School Entrance along Parkcenter Blvd. through the foyer. Shop for holiday gifts and give back to the Sage Library. ALL proceeds go toward purchasing more books for our library and our amazing patrons!

Cold and flu season is upon us and we are running low on some of our community supplies such as tissues. Our food pantry is also low on Cup Noodles. If you would like to donate items please visit our **Amazon Wishlist**!

While the holidays can be a joyful time, we know they can also bring added stress for some families. Please check out these **holiday resources** if your family could use a little extra support or would like to help others in our community.

Winter is coming, and in the event of a school closure, we will notify parents by 6:30 AM through email, social media, KTVB, and by text message IF you've opted in. **To opt in to text alerts, please text Y via cell phone to 61569**. If you're unsure if you've done this, please do it again!

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE AND FIND US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

November 20-29: Thanksgiving Break - No school
December 18 - Jan 3: Holiday Break - No school
January 7: End of First Semester
January 18: MLK Jr. Day - No School

2026-27 Academic Calendar

FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, EMILY DOWNEY



Dear Sage families and staff,

As we move into November, I find myself especially grateful for this community we share. In the midst of busy days and the challenges life brings, I am reminded how fortunate we are to walk this journey together, encouraging one another and helping our students grow into all they can become.

To the veterans in our Sage community and the families who serve alongside you, as an Air Force wife and an Army daughter, I hold you close to my heart and am deeply grateful for all you give. Your commitment to something greater than yourselves is a powerful example for our students and for all of us.

To our families, thank you, truly, for your trust, your partnership, and the love you pour into your children. We feel honored that you share them with us. Thank you for the daily moments you spend reading with your children, at every age. Sharing stories, listening, and exploring ideas together gives them something they will carry throughout their lives.

To our teachers and staff, I cannot express enough how grateful I am for you. You give so much of yourselves: your time, your energy, and your hearts. You see possibility in our students, sometimes before they can see it themselves, and patiently help them discover it. You are opening a world of possibility and giving them an incredible foundation for their lives. I feel inspired by you and honored to work alongside you.

And to our students: you are the reason we come to school each day. We see you practicing, working through challenges, and discovering books you love. We see your courage when something is hard and your pride when it finally clicks. You remind us how much joy there is in learning.

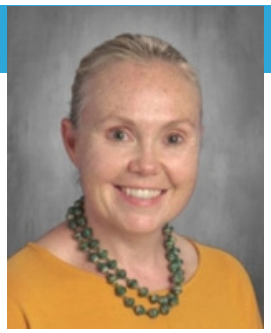
This fall's reading results give us a wonderful reason to celebrate what our families, teachers, and students are accomplishing together. Both Sage Boise and Sage Middleton outperformed their surrounding local school districts on the Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI), and Sage Boise placed among the top 10 schools in Idaho! Thank you for the dedication and heart behind these results.

And to our students, one last thing: when we think about the future, you are what makes us hopeful. Your curiosity, your kindness, and your willingness to learn and care for one another remind us of what is possible. You help us grow right alongside you, and you inspire us more than you know.

With warmth and gratitude,

Emily Downey

PRIMARY YEARS PROGRAMME WITH KATE HUNTER



What is the PYP, anyway?
In our last all-school newsletter we looked at some key components of the PYP, like learner agency, transdisciplinarity, and inquiry.

In this edition, I want to highlight another important feature of the PYP, which are the **Specified Concepts.**

The specified concepts described to the right drive the 'big picture' conceptual understanding that links content areas and inquiries together.

As a PYP staff, one thing we are working on is making those conceptual links more visible to students as a way to make meaning.

PYP SPECIFIED CONCEPTS

Form
What is it like?
The understanding that everything has a form with recognizable features that can be observed, identified, described and categorized.

Function
How does it work?
The understanding that everything has a purpose, a role or a way of behaving that can be investigated.

Causation
Why is it as it is?
The understanding that things do not just happen; there are causal relationships at work, and that actions have consequences.

Change
How is it transforming?
The understanding that change is the process of movement from one state to another. It is universal and inevitable.

Connection
How is it linked to other things?
The understanding that we live in a world of interacting systems in which the actions of any individual element affect others.

Perspective
What are the points of view?
The understanding that knowledge is moderated by different points of view which lead to different interpretations, understandings and findings; perspectives may be individual, group, cultural or subject-specific.

Responsibility
What are our obligations?
The understanding that people make choices based on their understandings, beliefs and values, and the actions they take as a result do make a difference.

Classroom Spotlights: Units of Inquiry, Connected by Concepts
1st Grade, How We Organize Ourselves
Central Idea: Groups Organize into Communities
Specified Concept: Responsibility

In this unit, students and teachers use the concept link of responsibility to connect content and ideas. Among other things, they explore the ideas of wants versus needs and the ways that communities are organized and change over time. Pictured here are our amazing 1st graders on a field trip to the Ada County Highway District, learning about citizens' responsibilities and how our community is organized.



PYP continued...

3rd Grade, Sharing the Planet
Central Idea: Survival requires living things to adapt to change in their environments
Specified Concept: Function



Here, students and teachers use the concept of function to examine how plant and animal traits are influenced by their environments. In this process, they learn to analyze and interpret data and use evidence to support claims. Pictured here are our 3rd graders conducting some field work related to the concept of function at the Foothills Learning Center.

Thanks for reading along as we delve into our inquiry of "What is the PYP, anyway?"! As always, thank you for your partnership and for making this community what it is. Stay tuned to emails and Toddle posts for further updates.

MIDDLE SCHOOL WITH ZACH PARKER



November is a time for **gratitude**, and that is especially true here at Sage. As I look back over the first quarter, I can easily identify several aspects of our middle school that I am personally and professionally grateful for.

For example, during the week prior to our Fall Break, a handful of teachers, staff members, and I took over 80 eighth graders on our 5th annual camping trip. This year we traveled to McCall and stayed at Camp Alice Petenger, a long-standing Girl Scout Camp. Our students made tie-dye shirts (thank you, Mrs. Trevino), tackled obstacle courses, wrote poetry, practiced archery, wrote letters of appreciation to one another, enjoyed time outdoors, and even had a safe encounter with a black bear and her cubs. On two mornings at camp, Mr. Freers and I met students at the lake to watch the sunrise in silence as fish broke the smooth surface of the water. Talk about opportunities to be grateful for!

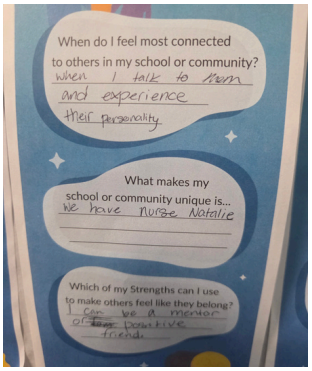




In October, our **Sources of Strength (SoS)** student organization, led by Mrs. Gatfield, ran their "I belong" campaign. Our SoS team presented student-driven lessons across the entire middle school. Nearly 300 students completed a three-question response identifying ways they feel they belong at Sage. Their responses were posted across the front of the middle school and throughout our hallways. I'm always impressed with the reflection and genuine responses our young adults share.

Middle School continued...





Additionally, our **Student Council** worked with SoS to put on an entirely student-led assembly. Having watched this assembly format develop over the past three years, I am incredibly proud and grateful to see these students take ownership and lead their peers.

Next week is our 8th (maybe 9th) annual **Day of Gratitude** on Thursday, November 19th. On this day our students go out into the community to give back. Activities include raking leaves for our local residents, writing encouraging letters and leaving them at local businesses and on cars, walking to Boise State to write encouraging chalk messages to future educators and social workers, visiting a retirement home down the road, and simply helping our custodial staff clean the school.

We also have a tradition where families donate food (turkey sandwiches, etc.) and help serve lunch to all our secondary students and staff, allowing everyone to sit together and enjoy the 'opportunity to break bread'. If you would like to help with this event, please see **THIS signup sheet**.

I'm grateful for our long-standing clubs, including Baking Club and D&D, which now require three rooms to accommodate the number of students who want to participate. I'm grateful for our Cross Country team, which had nearly 40 students this year. Seeing the pride students take in setting new personal records (PRs) is always a highlight.

I'm grateful to the International Baccalaureate (IB) program that promotes interdisciplinary learning by connecting subjects in meaningful ways. One example of this takes place in 8th grade, where students in Mrs. Trevino's art class learn about the cultural and historical background of alebrijes, which are brightly colored Mexican folk art depicting imaginative creatures with features of several animals (think of the movie Coco). After studying this art form, students create their own mythological animals using paper mache. The interdisciplinary connection continues in their Language and Literature class with Mrs. Gatfield, where students develop their narrative writing skills by creating an origin story for their alebrije. This project comes full circle when our 8th graders take time to read their stories to some of our PYP students.



I'm grateful for the teachers who put in the time to meaningfully collaborate with one another to help students grow academically. Just as importantly, at this unique and challenging age, our teachers show up to meet our students where they are. Our teachers offer "real and tough love" when appropriate, and I'm grateful that this team recognizes we can support our students and families in a number of different ways. Putting students first in this manner is what makes Sage a special place.

So much to be grateful for in Middle School.

HIGH SCHOOL WITH BRANDY BURKETT



Greetings from Sage High School! It has been a whirlwind of events this fall and we are all excited to wind down as we approach our holiday season. I have been keeping high school families in the loop through my weekly emails but this feature gives me the opportunity to highlight some of the amazing events we have hosted since September!

Juniors Field Trip to BSU: On October 6th, juniors from both the Career and Diploma Programmes spent the day at Boise State University to both explore life on campus and gain resources for their respective programs. In the morning, students attended Next Steps, a Boise State Admissions event where they heard from admissions advisors, attended a panel of current Boise State students, and then toured the campus. In the afternoon, Career-Related students took program-specific tours about Project Management, Medical Sciences, and Outdoor Education. Diploma Programme students worked with an academic librarian to locate scholarly sources, use databases, and develop search strategies to support their Extended Essays. It was a great autumn day in which Sage Juniors got a first look at the university experience and an opportunity to imagine their own academic futures.



French Field Trip to BSU: Our 12th-grade French Standard Level (SL) students and our advanced-level French 10th-grade students were invited to join the French Festival at Boise State on October 15. Students had a chance to use the language, engage in fun francophone activities, and learn from an amazing French keynote speaker.

Fall Festival: October 29th brought the return of our annual student-led PYP Fall Festival, one of our favorite K-12 events. This event was born out of the DP students' desire to serve our younger students in a fun-filled and engaging way. It is such a wonderful afternoon, entirely organized and run by our 11th and 12th-grade CP/DP students. PYP students enjoyed pumpkin bowling, coloring, trunk-or-treating, face painting, and more!

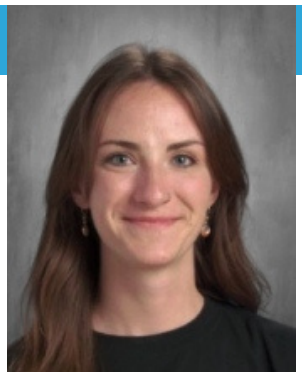




CP/DP Farmstead Night: We continued our tradition of an optional Farmstead night for 11th -12th grade students. Dr. Hansen and Mrs. Burkett were joined by several students across programs. This event is meant to be in community outside of the school day, and it is always so fun to see our amazing students in the wild.

Halloween Dance: Finally, our Halloween dance was hosted here on campus in the high school building. All 9-12th grade students were invited to join us in costume for an evening of dancing and general school-friendly shenanigans. The HS Dance Committee does a wonderful job of planning, selling tickets, and decorating for this event every year.

EXPEDITIONS WITH MEGAN FUROIS



It has been a full and exciting fall for the outdoor program! So far this year at the Boise campus, we have gotten over 100 students on outdoor learning adventures ranging from water sports to rock climbing to camping!



As we wrap up our fall activities, Sage Expeditions is excited to open up winter programming for lottery submissions! We've got lots planned this winter, including yurt camping, snowshoeing, and ski/snowboarding! You can find all our outdoor opportunities in our Catalog linked below!

There are SPOTS STILL REMAINING on our Salmon River White Water Kayaking course! Please email megan.furois@sageintl.org or enter your student into our lottery to give your student the chance to learn the basics of white water kayaking with us!

Check out the **Sage Expeditions 2026-2027 Catalog** for all upcoming opportunities!

ENRICHMENT

Sage Snow Team – Parent & Family Information Meeting

Are your students in 6-12th grade already members or interested in learning more about the Sage Snow Team? Join us on **Tuesday, December 1, at 6:00 PM** in the Big Cafeteria at Sage for a Parent/Family Informational Meeting and Registration!





We'll share information about the upcoming season, practice and race schedules, team expectations, equipment, and what families can expect. There will also be an opportunity to ask questions and register participating students.

Unable to attend? Please email:
Grades 6–8: Mimi Trevino - mimi.trevino@sageintl.org
Grades 9–12: Ashley Henderson - ashley.henderson@sageintl.org

We look forward to seeing you there, think Snow! ❄️🏂🎿❄️

MIND THE GAP

Here at Sage International, students benefit from strong academics, hands-on experiences, and caring teachers who challenge them to think critically, explore new ideas, and reach their full potential.

But providing these opportunities requires funding beyond what Sage receives as a public charter school. ***Unlike traditional school districts, Sage receives $0 in local tax dollars to support facilities, programs, staffing, and other needs.*** This creates a gap between public funding and the cost of providing the exceptional education our students deserve.

That's why we ask our community to support us in our annual **Mind the Gap** campaign!

Our goal this year is $125,000, approximately $125 per student, and thanks to our generous Sage community, we've already raised over $11,600. A heartfelt thank you to everyone who has contributed!

If your family is able, please consider donating to Sage in any amount; every gift makes a difference! Your gift may go even further:

- Idaho Education Tax Credit: Donations may qualify for a 50% state tax credit, up to $1,000 for married couples filing jointly or $500 for individuals. No itemizing required!
- Employer Matching: Many employers match charitable donations, potentially doubling your impact.

Donate to Mind the Gap. Thank you for supporting the students, teachers, and the opportunities that make Sage so special!

PTO

We had such a wonderful time celebrating our diverse cultural community at the International Fair! Thank you to all who joined us and provided delicious food. A special thank you to PTO member Sara for being the event chair!







Check out our **NEW WEBSITE**! The PTO has been working hard to create this community hub for parents to connect via a student directory, find upcoming events, sign up to volunteer with the PTO, and much more!

Our December First Friday Playdate is at Boise Rock School. This 90-minute workshop is followed by performances at 3:00 pm and families are encouraged to watch! This playdate is limited to the first 36 sign-ups, which will be posted on our website (linked above) soon!

You can sign up for the PTO Mailing List, or get in touch via mail at information@sagepto.org. Thank you for your support!

SAGE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL BOISE PTO