



The
SAGE SCHOOL
EXPERIENCE YOUR EDUCATION

Letter from Founder and Head of School, Harry Weekes

The Sage School started as a conversation between colleagues.

When I started teaching in 1992, I literally followed in the footsteps of my high school Biology teacher. Early in my career, I taught in a fairly traditional way. Pretty quickly, though, I realized that how I was teaching was contributing to one of my major concerns with teaching- that my students were getting more and more disconnected from the natural world. As importantly, their innate curiosity seemed dampened by what we covered rather than amplified by it.

At the same time, my future partner and co-founder of The Sage School, Chris McAvoy, was discovering that adolescents were engaged in the biggest creation of their lives- the construction of their very identity.

Chris and I were coming to a similar realization from different paths: schools were not designed to serve students constructing who they are and connecting to the world in which they live.

What started as a set of questions as to how better to honor and excite the students, turned into a scrutiny of education and learning, in general, and a conversation about how we best serve adolescents, in particular. And it was a conversation- or a long series of so called “car-pool conversations”- that truly birthed the ideas in this packet and this school.

From our drives up and down the highway emerged an idea. Then a dream. Then a goal. Then a mission to add another narrative to education. What you will find in the following pages is an overview of The Sage School- what amounts to our best answers to the questions we have been asking about students, about education, about each of our relationships to the natural world. The discussions of how we best serve our students, and how we create a place where adolescents truly thrive now form the basis of our students’ daily experience. Those conversations now occur with 16 staff members and nearly 100 families. Those conversations now take place in a brand new set of buildings, a campus intentionally designed around the ideas in this packet. Needless to say, this is ongoing and humbling work.

We look forward to continuing this conversation with you and your family. Please join us - engage us in questions and see if this vision can serve your family and your adolescent.

- Harry Weekes

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INTRODUCTION TO SAGE SCHOOL

The Sage School began as an idea; the outgrowth of two careers in teaching, and the product of experience, observation, reflection, and conversation surrounding adolescents. Harry Weekes and Chris McAvoy spent the better part of a decade examining and working to guide students to know themselves, engage their local community, and enrich their global understanding. As a result, Chris and Harry sought to construct a new system: A school designed around teenagers to honor adolescence as a central and critical window in human development.

Founded in the late spring of 2009, The Sage School opened with 16 students in grades 8 through 12 in September of that year. Since then, the school has grown to serve close to 100 students across grades 6 through 12.

Most schools were not designed to feed teenagers' neurological hunger for meaningful social, intellectual, creative, emotional, and physical experiences. In fact, most schools remove students from the very experiences that could best support this hunger: direct contact with experts, within community, and in nature.

The Sage School reflects an ancient evolutionary truth: Our brains are built by the experiences we have, and the quality and type of those experiences matters. We learn from people, from stories, and from doing. We are creators, designers, and meaning-makers.

Adolescence provides a unique opportunity in human development. It is a sensitive period of massive brain growth, a time when we develop our identities, when our autonomy matures, and when we practice the reflective problem solving and advanced social skills required to function fully in the adult community.

Adolescence is at once a distinct stage and also the beginning of our adult lives. Teenagers seek meaningful work that connects them with their community, that develops their sense of place, and, ultimately, that helps them understand who they are.

This is why we created The Sage School.









SCHOOL ACCREDITATION

The Sage School is a fully accredited member of the Northwest Association of Independent Schools. NWAIS is dedicated to guiding our ongoing improvement and advancing independent school education.

NWAIS ACCREDITATION PROVIDES MANY BENEFITS:

- Accreditation provides school leadership with an independent, non-governmental validation that the school they oversee is effectively delivering a quality educational experience to its students
- Accreditation strengthens and sustains schools, making schools worthy of public confidence while minimizing the scope of external control
- Accreditation assesses whether or not schools have adequate resources, staffing, leadership, and structures in place to allow for continual improvement
- Accreditation validates and improves schools through connection with colleagues, and through the peer review process
- Accreditation encourages collegiality and dialogue that allows schools to learn from each other's expertise and to share best practices
- Accreditation eases the transition for students moving from one accredited school to another







THE MISSION OF THE SAGE SCHOOL

We honor adolescence as a critical developmental window for learning essential academic, cognitive, social, and emotional skills.

The Sage School creates a thriving environment for students through a challenging, authentic curriculum, centered on human ecology and engaging experiences designed specifically to promote self-awareness, community responsibility, and a sense of place.

VISION

To help create sustainable and thriving human and ecological communities.



At The Sage School, we designed a school around adolescent's natural inquisitiveness.

Traditional school systems weren't designed to serve modern adolescents. They were designed at a different time and for a different student than exists today. As a result, they sometimes extinguish exploration and wonder, leaving students feeling disconnected, stressed, and depressed.

SAGE HAS REBUILT EDUCATION FROM THE GROUND UP TO:

- + Honor each stage of adolescence
- + Encourage exploration and freedom
- + Develop knowledge of self
- + Celebrate the journey

Here, 6-12th grade education results in people richly comfortable with themselves, grounded in the natural world and meaningfully involved in their communities. We are here to help adolescents reveal their best selves and discover their place in the global community.

WHAT BRINGS THE SAGE EXPERIENCE TO LIFE?

ADOLESCENCE

Our school is designed around humanity, not tests. Adolescence is a critical time of transition between childhood and adulthood. At Sage School we encourage students to explore the many expressions of this time in their lives and uncover the themes that spark their curiosity.

ACADEMIC SKILLS

Sage helps our students develop essential skills, including math, writing, Spanish, research, and public speaking, so they are prepared for collegiate success and the world beyond.

COGNITIVE SKILLS

The Sage School inspires students with curiosity and wonder, sparking their desire to learn. Trimester long projects encourage exploration and the deepening of knowledge.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL SKILLS

Relationship building is a critical part of the adolescent journey. The skills gained through wellness, community meetings, mindfulness and self-assessment, result in confident young adults.

AUTHENTIC CURRICULUM

All people are meant to learn. The key is unlocking interest and curiosity. The Sage School immerses students in content, experiences, and assessments that empower them to understand why what they are learning matters.

HUMAN ECOLOGY

Our curriculum examines big topics as relationships, rather than as individual subjects, to help our students see the world as a web of complex relationships, rather than as discrete, unconnected disciplines. Trimester-long project encourage students to apply their social, emotional and academic skills to their unique areas of interest.

SELF-AWARENESS

By experiencing the strength of their own voices within a social and academic context, students develop a sense of self, a sense of place, and a sense of meaning that is integral to their education. This awareness of self, place, and community manifests in the students' eagerness to identify their passions and take responsibility for their individual and community lives.

COMMUNITY RESPONSIBILITY

We help cultivate open and caring people who are committed to being a constructive part of the social and ecological groups that surround us.

SENSE OF PLACE

Students spend five hours per week developing their sense of space in our Field Studies program resulting in a rich understanding of the area that surrounds us.



BANDS OVERVIEW

INTENTIONALLY DIFFERENT BY DESIGN

Like you, we were troubled by the human disconnect from self, community, and nature in the traditional school systems, which is why we rebuilt it.

Our founders have a combined 60+ years of educational experience that informs our unique approach to learning.

We've all been told there's only ONE way to be educated. We believe there is another option, we want to show you.

Discover what a holistic and developmentally designed education looks like.

EDUCATION THAT HONORS YOUR TEEN YEARS

People are made to learn, which is why we cultivate an environment where it truly happens.

+ GAIN AUTONOMY IN LEARNING

Leave behind the one-sized fits all approach to learning.

+ BE WELL PREPARED FOR THE FUTURE

Graduate with your tank full of curious energy.

+ ACTUALLY LOVE LEARNING

Retain your childlike wonder and curiosity.





THE SAGE JOURNEY THROUGH THE BANDS REPRESENTS A JOURNEY OF THEIR OWN ADOLESCENCE.

6-7 BAND | OVERVIEW

The journey into adolescence starts in a playful, engaging space where our 'Explorers' truly begin the discovery and exploration of self and community.

8-9 BAND | OVERVIEW

Our 'Social Animals' take a deep dive into relationships- both social and environmental as we meld the curriculum content with the questioning nature of adolescence itself.

10-11 BAND | OVERVIEW

As students mature into themselves and their interests, responsibilities and complexities grow, and they become 'Local Apprentices' while expanding their worlds of skills, practices, and worldviews.

12th BAND | OVERVIEW

Seniors stand on the cusp of adulthood, on the cusp of their next adventures into college and beyond, and we honor this powerful age by ensuring they focus their time on becoming prepared 'Global Citizens.'



6-7 BAND

THE OTTERS

The Explorers or Otters are ready to jump in and discover new lessons about the world. They want to get their hands dirty with tangible experience, while still inhabiting an inner world of childhood magic. The 6th and 7th grades represent the transition from childhood to adolescence. This is a dynamic and flexible age in which students' critical thinking skills are maturing as they move from a mindset dominated by concrete thinking to a new, abstract mode of understanding. As a result of these changes, we give them opportunities to explore story and mythology, create artistic products, build and understand how things work, and to begin mastering the tools needed to thrive beyond The Sage School. These experiences tap into the Explorer's natural energy and desire, while keeping learning fun, engaging, and meaningful.

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

Because of our two-grade band structure, we have the good fortune to teach our students for two consecutive years. Each year of this two-year cycle we focus on a distinct Human Ecology curriculum. The 6/7 curriculum charts demonstrate a detailed outline for the course of study by trimester. As students move through the 6/7 band they are presented with developmentally appropriate tasks that reflect their natural curiosity and their growing skills and abilities. Throughout this process, the students will engage projects designed to be authentic, relevant, social, and active. These projects intentionally elicit student motivation. Sixth and seventh grade students want to see the connections to the real world, be engaged meaningfully, and challenged appropriately.

One year focuses on understanding ancient cultures and their contributions to our modern lives. What impacts did the ancient Greeks, Romans, Indians and Chinese have on the world?

The other year focuses on the importance of self, family structures and US history. We delve into the study of self and how our own stories relate to the broader picture of the history, geography, and philosophy of American families and culture over time. We ask our students to think deliberately about what it means to study their own history and how this fits into the history of our nation.

DAILY SCHEDULE

The 6/7 schedule creates a daily experience where students thrive in an environment that provides a challenging, authentic curriculum centered on human ecology, math, writing and Spanish. Throughout the week, the Otters' schooling includes many experiences designed specifically to promote self-awareness, community responsibility, and a sense of place. Adolescence is the scaffolding on which we build our schedule and it clearly reflects our mission.

[View Sample Schedule Here](#)



COURSE FOCUS

Year One focuses on understanding ancient cultures and their contributions to our modern lives.

Year Two focuses on the importance of self, family structures and US history.

EXPERIENCE

- + Field studies start our year with community building experiences such as rock climbing and a ropes course.
- + Write and produce a play based on your class's family histories.
- + Explore US History by traveling the Oregon Trail through Idaho.
- + Explore the world of the Ancients by building ancient structures and inventions.
- + Connect with learning is engaging, challenging, meaningful, and fun.



Overview

The journey into adolescence starts in a playful, engaging space where our 'Explorers' truly begin the discovery and exploration of self and community.

Testimonial

“ Sage goals are the same as mine- to grow healthy, well-rounded children that have an awareness for the world they live in.”

-Nikki parent of 2 Sage students



8-9 BAND

THE WOLVES

Students in the 8th & 9th grade band are the “Social Animals” or wolves, iconic animals of the inter-mountain West, and like wolves, tend to run in packs and play hard. The 8/9 band is the fulcrum of our program as years three and four out of seven, and students are in the heart of adolescence.

8/9 students are intensely interested in their peer group and are marked by a desire to assert their independence and individuality. They are no longer children but not yet adults, a space of confusion as well as opportunity, as students begin in earnest to explore and shape who they want to be when they enter society as adults.

Developmentally, the chief preoccupation of 8th and 9th graders is relationships; they are defining and re-defining their identity in relation to other adolescents, to their families, teachers, and coaches, to their home and regional environment, and to themselves. We see them asking the questions: Who am I? and What will my role and impact be both in society and in the landscape? To meet our students at this stage, we have designed a two-year curriculum that is all about relationships—one year focuses on human relationships to the natural world, and one year focuses on human relationships to one another and how those are defined, organized, and regulated.

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

Because we have a two-grade band (8th and 9th grade) and have the good fortune to teach our students

for two consecutive years, we focus on a distinct Human Ecology curriculum in each year of this two-year cycle.

One year focuses on Social Relationships and Systems - how human beings interact with one another in society, and how that society operates and is governed, with an emphasis on American history.

The other year focuses on Natural Relationships and the Ecosystems of the West - how ecological systems function and the impact humans have on them.

DAILY SCHEDULE

The 8/9 schedule creates a daily experience where students thrive in an environment that provides a challenging, authentic curriculum centered on math, literacy & writing, and Spanish skills in two groups (or sections) in the morning, as well as taking some time to meet as an 8/9 community. Then they move into lunch and midday Wellness, when we play and move our bodies to prepare for Human Ecology in the afternoon. On Wednesday afternoons we leave campus for our various Community Action programs, while Friday afternoon finds us in Creativity Workshop—taking a course offered by a faculty member or pursuing an independent study.

[View Sample Schedule Here](#)



COURSE FOCUS

Year One focuses on Social Relationships and Systems - how human beings interact with one another in society.

Year Two focuses on Natural Relationships and the Ecosystems of the West - how ecological systems function and the impact humans have on them.

EXPERIENCE

- + Study biology by getting in the rivers to understand the importance of Salmon in our local ecosystem, netting and holding owls, and working with experts and scientists in the field.
- + Study social justice issues by traveling to San Francisco and looking at social movements in history and in art.
- + Debate whether we should take down the dams on the Salmon River- but only after touring the dams and floating the river.
- + Create a project, paper, or documentary for your own National History Day study.
- + Create comic books, murals, models, board games, and other means of demonstrating your understanding.



Overview

Our 'Social Animals' take a deep dive into relationships- both social and environmental- as we meld the curriculum content with the questioning nature of adolescence itself.

Testimonial

“ I really enjoy the opportunity we are given to truly be ourselves, while also branching out from “self” and becoming a bigger, stronger person.”

- 8/9 Sage Student



10-11 BAND

THE RAVENS

At The Sage School, we call the 10-11 the Ravens or the Local Apprentices. At this later stage of adolescence, the Ravens or Local Apprentices are growing into their abilities. These students suddenly take on much more responsibility in their lives – they become legal drivers, they hold jobs, they might play a sport and have to perform in front of a large crowd every weekend. 10-11 students become active members of adult society in many different ways during this age of adolescence. In their day-to-day, the Ravens may vacillate between being incredibly mature and poised to being irrational and childish. They sometimes struggle to reconcile a growing self-awareness, competence, and desire for independence with nostalgia for childhood.

During this time, students are continuing to learn how to balance the increasing pressures, demands, and expectations of the impending adult world. To honor their advancing skills, the academic work they complete is authentically beneficial to the community (e.g. educational podcasts aired on the radio, informative debates open to the public, a farm-to-table event that raises funds for a local non-profit). We push these students to employ systems-thinking principles to help them understand how their daily choices impact their natural, social, and built environment.

The Ravens spend one year studying the American System and another studying our Modern Systems through learning about food and agriculture. These themes help students realize that they are already making independent decisions, and that those decisions shape the world in which they live. The curriculum helps cultivate critical analysis skills during this stage of adolescence. It requires students to ask questions. The combination of childish innocence and adult intellect makes this stage of adolescence truly unique.

Because we have a two-grade band (sophomores and juniors) and have the good fortune to teach our students for two consecutive years, we focus on a distinct Human Ecology curriculum in each year of this two-year cycle.

One year focuses on our food and agricultural systems. The Ravens grapple with meaty questions throughout this year that challenge them to think about the personal, social, economic, and environmental impacts of food.

The other year focuses on our American System. We delve into the history, geography, and political philosophy of the United States of America. We ask our students to think deliberately about what it means to be American and the rights and responsibilities of belonging to this nation.

DAILY SCHEDULE

The 10-11 students work on building their math, literacy & writing, and Spanish skills in small groups in the morning, then dive into a social, active break for lunch at wellness at midday before entering Human Ecology class in the afternoon. On Thursdays, we leave campus at 11:25 for an off campus lunch, recess buddies at Hailey Elementary School, and our various Community Action programs. In the 10-11 band, we make the most of our local experts, so many classes frequently go off campus (to a local bakery to practice Spanish with native speakers or to a chef's kitchen to discuss preparation for our community feast, for example). Please plan ahead any pick-ups or appointments with your student and the school.

[View Sample Schedule Here](#)

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW



COURSE FOCUS

Year One focuses on our food and agricultural systems. This focus challenges them to think about the personal, social, economic, and environmental impacts of food.

Year Two focuses on our American System. We delve into the history, geography, and political philosophy of the United States of America.

EXPERIENCE

- + Run a mock election for the school. Debate as a Republican, Democrat, Libertarian, or Greens Party member.
- + Study wilderness through an extended backpacking trip through the Sawtooths and exploring the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness.
- + Become Wilderness First Aid certified.
- + Create and run a 'Farm to Table' feast for the valley that serves over 100 people while benefiting the Hunger Coalition.
- + Become a 'systems thinker' while learning about the systems that undergird our society.



Overview

As students mature into themselves and their interests, responsibilities and complexities grow, and they become 'Local Apprentices' while expanding their worlds of skills, practices, and worldviews.

Testimonial

“ We don't just sit and read about people who made a difference- we go out in the community and work to make a difference.”

- Nora, alum.



12th BAND

THE OWLS

The seniors are perched between two worlds. They are currently living the life they have known for 18 years- student, child, athlete, etc. And yet, they are about to leave all of their known world for a new path- one that they have yet to define. They are literally about to begin, perhaps for the first time, leading their own lives- choices of colleges and next steps are imminent. We call the seniors our Owls for the wisdom they are inhabiting and for the wide-eyed flight they are about to undertake. We guide them through the process so that they know that all journeys need good support, so that they know they are not alone, and so they are ready to take the necessary steps for their own growth.

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

Our goal in this final year of Sage is to prepare the students to be Global Citizens. Before we begin our studies in the classroom, the students design and become co-leaders on a wilderness leadership course. As we return to the classroom, we look at global perspectives on how we come to know the world- from a comparative philosophy class to the different permutations of scientific understandings of the world. The students will begin to see the larger trends and ideas that under-gird us. During this trimester, the students also work on constructing their own meaning-making through weekly essays. This prepares their understandings, but also prepares their writing skills for college classes ahead.

During the second trimester, students choose global issues to study. These are presented from different historical and scientific perspectives in order to expand the students' views. This trimester will also give them practice in a typical college course format, with the evaluations being a mid-term and final exam.

The third trimester is spent living out a study of the student's own planning and design. They conduct a 4

week research project that culminates in a 10 page thesis paper, and then design a 4-5 week field study to pursue their topic further. Students defend their theses and then present their trimester-long study to the entire community, rounding out a set of college-ready, as well as world-ready, skills.

All of this culminates with a final Field Study where the students are immersed in Ecuador for two weeks. They do a homestay and then engage in cultural activities designed to deeply get to know a people and a culture. They come back wiser and ready for the new adventures ahead.

DAILY SCHEDULE

One significant change in the senior schedule is that the students are responsible for developing a year-long community service relationship with a non-profit in the valley. That will occur every Monday afternoon for the year. Otherwise, students will move through their academic classes as they have before. However, since it is the first time this class has been on their own (and not tied to another band), we have a few more freedoms we can work into their weekly routine- choices of lunch or wellness have provided some different options than the students have felt in the younger grades. Friday afternoons in the fall will be spent preparing their college applications, and in the winter will be planning their Independent Trimester.

[View Sample Schedule Here](#)



COURSE FOCUS

In the First Trimester students deep dive into what it means to be Global Citizens.

During the second trimester, students choose global issues to study.

The third trimester is spent living out a study of the student's own planning and design.

EXPERIENCE

- + Dive into a comparative philosophy course where you begin to understand competing world views and choose a philosopher to 'become' in our Coffee House debate.
- + Design and lead your class in a Wilderness Leadership Course designed to hone your skills in the backcountry and in your transition to college.
- + Learn the steps to 'leading your own life' as you slowly take over the reigns of choices in your life.
- + Immerse yourself in Spanish in our capstone two-week travel experience.
- + Design and run your own 'Independent Trimester', including a 175 hour field study of your own choosing.
- + Challenge yourself as the curriculum transitions to a more college-like experience.



Overview

Seniors stand on the cusp of adulthood, on the cusp of their next adventures into college and beyond, and we honor this powerful age by ensuring they focus their time on becoming prepared 'Global Citizens.'

Testimonial

“What the Sage School did for me, and my life is almost hard to quantify in words... I gained an unimaginably complex education filled with life skills, critical thinking, and confidence in my learning. This school literally changed the course of my life.”

-Duncan, alum



Adults grow to 4-5 mm long

There are over 400 kinds of Ladybugs in North America

They don't bite! Ladybugs are harmless. They are eating your lawn.





Simulofleece is a synthetic material that is used to create a realistic appearance of fur.

The female deer visit the water sources with Simulofleece.

female deer visit water sources with Simulofleece

Coyote

- Coyotes can run up to 43 miles per hour.
- The lifespan of a coyote is 10-15 years.

Arrows

Arrowweed
BALSAMROOT



OUR CURRICULUM

The Sage School's approach to curriculum development starts with the journey of adolescence itself. Each section of our curriculum plays an integral part in the holistic education of our students.

HUMAN ECOLOGY FOCUS

The interdisciplinary study of human beings and their natural, social, and built environments. This is where we show students how to do it by experience. At The Sage School, this takes the form of connecting History, Science, and Design courses each trimester. The class meets for close to 9 hours per week and is worth 2.25 credits per year. Human ecology is at the center of our mission as a school.

SAGE SCHOOL GRADUATES

A successful graduate of The Sage School will have spent nearly 10,000 hours working on the above content and skills.

THEY WILL HAVE:

- + Worked with local and regional experts
- + Made personal commitments to their own growth
- + Developed lasting and meaningful relationships
- + Learned to commit themselves to quality work
- + Learned to see themselves as active members of the social- and eco-systems they inhabit.

Sage School graduates are ready for the challenges of college, work, and life.

The “Nitty Gritty”

DESIGN

A combination of Technology, Art, and Design that has students creating materials that range from writing and producing a dramatic production to the creation of a city-wide anti-food waste campaign.

WRITING

Students develop writing skills to prepare them for college while studying literature that connects to their Human Ecology theme.

SPANISH

Students are immersed for 50 minutes each day in Organic World Language techniques, where no English is spoken. Students are in multi-ability classrooms and progress through the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages standards and their national assessments.

MATH

Students progress through a traditional math curriculum at a pace that fits their comprehension levels. Students will need to demonstrate comprehension through multiple means at a high level.

FIELD STUDIES

Students spend 5 weeks in the field each year engaging in experiential studies of their Human Ecology themes. The 300-mile radius centered on our school is our ‘extended campus’ where students learn from experts in the field, gain key experiences, and connect their learning to real-world and authentic scenarios.

WORKSHOP

Students engage in a creative expression-based course each week. Alternatively, students can design their own Independent Study (IS) of a topic of their choosing, so long as their proposal meets pre-set standards.

COMMUNITY ACTION

Two hours per week where students are in service to our community. This is typically a small group experience, but as students become seniors, they design their own year-long community service project.

WELLNESS

Students also participate in a daily practice, typically consisting of physical outdoor activities designed to engage body and mind, but which also includes quieter practices such as mindfulness.



CURRICULUM BY BAND

THE 7 TASKS OF ADOLESCENCE

The Sage School's curriculum is designed to use the best knowledge and resources of our times- from our understandings of science and the social sciences- in order to help students explore their own journey from the edge of adolescence (6th grade) to the edge of adulthood (12th grade). The 7 curriculum tasks that follow form the foundation of students' self-awareness, community responsibility, and sense of place. We honor adolescence as a critical developmental window for learning essential academic, cognitive, social, and emotional skills; the 7 tasks are the means to deliver that.

6-7 BAND

UNDERSTANDING THE SELF

Students begin their journey into adolescence by honing one of the very skills adolescence is known for: self-awareness. Students look at their construction of self through the creation of their autobiographies, family histories, and personal connections to American History. They begin to consciously situate themselves in the surrounding world.

UNDERSTANDING THE ANCIENTS

Students continue their journey studying the Ancient World- from the foundations of our culture to historical understandings of STEM to cross-cultural studies of ways of looking at the world. This study further situates each student's understanding of self into an even wider lens.

8-9 BAND

UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL SYSTEMS

As students move into a more social phase of adolescence, their curriculum mirrors their own journey. Students look at their brain development as well as the history and psychology that define us as a species. Using the best science and historical research, they study our social interactions.

UNDERSTANDING ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS

As students understand increasingly complex relationships, students also turn their energies towards our relationship with natural systems. Students move into utilizing systems thinking principles as their brains are developing the capacities to do increasingly complex reasoning.

10-11 BAND

UNDERSTANDING MODERN SYSTEMS

Students understand and evaluate the many relationships and interactions it takes to create our modern society. They continue to explore systems thinking by looking at the modern world- from food production to energy consumption to resource use. Students understand and evaluate the many relationships and interactions it takes to create our modern society.

UNDERSTANDING THE AMERICAN SYSTEM

As students prepare to assume responsibilities of citizenship, they turn their attention to the governmental system they reside in. Students spend this year focusing on the systems surrounding being an American- from our understanding of justice to living in the Intermountain West to the foundations of our government.

12TH BAND

UNDERSTANDING THE GLOBAL SYSTEM

Seniors are getting ready to face the world. We spend students' final year examining current global issues, designing an independent curriculum, and culminating with an immersive study in Ecuador to 'put it all together.'





EXPLORING A WORLD OF POSSIBILITIES

Although the ranks of Sage alumni are still relatively small, we're excited about what they are doing out in the world. After graduation, Sage School alumni enter a world of possibilities, and our curriculum intentionally exposes students to a wealth and diversity of fulfilling and productive ways of life. Most of our alums are currently enrolled in college, some after completing gap year programs or spending time abroad volunteering, or entering the workforce. Sage School students have been accepted to 70 four-year colleges and universities in all geographic regions of the country, as well as Canada.

We encourage students to be interested and pursue their interests with energy, consistency, and good humor. The ability to find an interest, pursue it, and develop skill or competence in it is not just attractive to colleges, but also to employers, friends, and future partners, too.

Our students' college applications are also distinct because we offer a unique program. Just by showing up, students are exposed to a huge range of experiences, opportunities, events, and activities. Our transcript also reflects our values and mission, giving credit for more traditional skills block classes as well as for Field Studies, Wellness, Community Action, and Independent Study.

A major part of our mission is helping adolescents to define and understand their own identities. To the extent that our students gain a deep sense of self-awareness, the processes of choosing, apply-

ing to, being accepted by, and succeeding in college are all enhanced. Students who know themselves, their skills, and their interests are better able to choose a school that fits them well.

Students will have distinct and meaningful experiences, skills, and outlooks that will be attractive to a wide variety of schools.

WAYS THAT THE SAGE CURRICULUM PREPARES OUR STUDENTS FOR THE COLLEGE EXPERIENCE

- + Through Human Ecology, consequential choices are given to students as to the content and form of their projects.
- + Content: Students are assigned a project on a broad theme and encouraged to choose a topic that engages their curiosity and addresses that theme
- + Form: Often projects can be tailored to individual interests through the form they take--video, writing, visual expression.

SPANISH

Spanish at The Sage School, with the Organic World Languages (OWL) methodology that we use, allows students to progress at as fast a pace as their skills and diligence provide. We have had numerous reports from alumni in college-level classes

who describe themselves as the only students with the confidence to actively speak and use their skills.

ENGLISH & LITERACY

Our English and Literacy program (Writing, in common parlance) is designed to help students become effective readers and writers. While student choice in the format of writing assignments or the books chosen to read may be limited, crucial skills are being developed in this time. College applications are primarily verbal documents. A student's ability to articulate their experiences and knowledge in an application essay is a vital component to many applications. Reading, writing, and editing skills are fundamental to success on the standardized tests used by many colleges in their applications.

MATH

A student's effort and skills in Math class can be clearly seen in our transcript, as demonstrated by the number of courses that student completes in their time with us. Many selective colleges and universities expect that students will have at least finished pre-Calculus, and more often expect to see pre-Calculus finished by the end of 11th grade. However, this is not at all to discourage those who work at a slower pace in math. The variety of colleges and universities available to our students is vast, and the emphasis they place on an accelerated math progression also varies widely.

COMMUNITY ACTION

In 9th through 12th grade alone, students will spend 240 hours in school participating in community action with various non-profits in our community. As a general rule, students' control over their community action time increases as they grow older, with 12th-graders assuming the most independence in how they choose to spend their hours. Students also participate each year in the Wow! Students organization's valley wide community service event. Each band picks among

proposals by local non-profits, and here again students can continue their work in areas of interest to them.

CREATIVITY WORKSHOP | INDEPENDENT STUDY:

On Friday afternoons, we offer an option called Independent Study. We very intentionally set the bar high for allowing an independent study to run: students must have a clear plan with goals and objectives and a way to demonstrate these; students must have set up both a faculty advisor and an outside mentor who will be responsible for the student and impart valuable skills and knowledge. The payoff, however, is the ability to design your own curriculum for two hours of school every week, and to pursue a topic that is of great interest to you.

xii. Field Studies: Field Studies are the places in the curriculum where students are regularly exposed to experts providing information in their field. This might be plant biologists at the University of Idaho research station in Parma, landscape engineers discussing the Yankee Fork restoration project, authors giving advice in a Writers' Workshop, or curators explaining their choices in an art museum. Here again is a place for students to demonstrate engagement with something that interests them.

COLLEGE PLAYBOOK

The Sage School College playbook is designed as an overview of the process of selecting and applying to colleges in one's high school years. There is no one, single formula or path for doing this. Our guide is a jumping off point more than an exhaustive blueprint. It is conceived as a checklist, though you may find that not every task applies to you, or that the order in which items are presented here needs to be modified for your circumstances.

[Read the full college playbook.](#)



APPLICATION PROCESS

STEP BY STEP PROCESS

- From application to visitation, the admissions process is designed for us to get to know each applicant, and for each applying family to get to know our approach well. We welcome your interest in Sage
- The Sage School is a unique learning environment. We are looking for families who are interested in becoming mindful partners in the journey of raising adolescents into adults. We love that we live in a small community rich with education choices, and we are proud to offer The Sage Choice among them.
- Applicants should come to The Sage School to meet with teachers before applying. If you are applying from afar, we can replicate that experience in a Zoom meeting.
- After an initial interview and discussion, the applicant may be invited for a classroom visit, during which they spend a full school day engaging with and getting to know teachers, other students, and the Sage rhythm. These classroom visits allow the applicant to experience a day as a Sage student and allow us to get to know the applicant. During the visit, applicants participate in an informal interview with a member of the staff.
- After the admission deadline passes, applications will be accepted on a rolling basis as spaces allow. Midyear admissions are also possible, as space allows. If a class is full, The Sage School will place accepted applicants into a wait-pool. Students will be admitted from the wait-pool as space allows and in the order committee determines best fits for the school.

CHECKLIST FOR APPLICATION PROCESS

- ☐ Reach out to Chris McAvoy,
Director of Admissions
at 788-0120 or
chris@thesageschool.org
- ☐ Set up school visit
- ☐ Fill out application
- ☐ Submit grade reports from current school
- ☐ Submit Student and Parent Essays
- ☐ Submit 3 References

DUE DATES

- ☐ March 1 - application due
- ☐ March 1 - flexible tuition application due
- ☐ April - notification of admission status





FLEXIBLE TUITION

TUITION & FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

For the 2023-2024 school year the tuition range is \$4,000-\$24,500 for all grades (6-12). Tuition is all-inclusive. All students participate in field studies and travel programs at no additional fee. However, The Sage School operates with a Flexible Tuition model which means we strive to set tuition based on the means of each family.

From the beginning, providing access has been a critical value and philosophy of the school. This is one reason why we adopted a Flexible Tuition model. As an independent school, tuition dollars support our work, but private donations allow the tuition to be set on an individual basis, providing access to more students regardless of financial means.

Since its founding in 2009, The Sage School has raised over \$2.5 million to support broad access to the school. We believe accessibility increases diversity, creates a school with a wider range of perspectives, and augments the impact of our mission and vision – strengthening our students, our school, and our community.

The Sage School is necessarily budget conscious and recognizes that we will not be able to meet everyone's needs. We do our best, dedicating nearly 20% of our annual operating budget to support our tuition program.

The Sage School strives to create a community that is diverse, equitable, and inclusive. Each family is expected to contribute to our community in many ways, with tuition being one vehicle of support. We recognize each family has different socioeconomic circumstances.

We also recognize that charging families the full cost of each student would impact access to The Sage School. The support and philanthropic generosity of our community enables us to cover the additional costs of our unique educational programming.

DETERMINING FLEXIBILITY

The Sage School has developed a new system to determine tuition levels. Flexible Tuition can be applied on our website (<https://thesageschool.org/home/inquiring-families/financials/flexible-tuition-application/>)

THE SAGE SCHOOL IS A NON-DISCRIMINATORY 501(C)(3) CORPORATION

The Sage School, Inc. admits students of any race, color, religion, gender, national and/or ethnic origin, disability, sexual orientation, and/or gender expression or identity to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at our school. The Sage School, Inc. does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, age, national and ethnic origin, disability, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, or other basis prohibited by law in the administration of our educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.





TAKE THE NEXT STEP IN YOUR SAGE SCHOOL JOURNEY

CONTACT US TODAY!

CONTACT

Phone | 208.788.0120

Email | info@thesageschool.org

ADDRESS

Mailing | PO Box 30

Physical | 1810 Quigley Farm Road, Hailey, ID 83333





