



Sage Ridge School

AT A GLANCE

Founded: 1996

Community:
Coeducational, non-sectarian,
independent college preparatory
day school serving grades 5-12

Campus:
44 acres at the foot of the Sierra
Nevada Mountains

Number of students: 240
Grades 5-12

Number of Faculty: 29
Percent with advanced
degrees: 76%

Tuition:
At all grade levels \$17,500

Accreditation:
Pacific Northwest Association of
Independent Schools (PNAIS)

Memberships:
National Association of
Independent Schools (NAIS)
Independent School
Management (ISM)
National Association for College
Admission Counseling
(NACAC)
Association for the Advancement
of International Education
(AAIE)

www.sageridge.org

Sage Ridge School

Reno, Nevada

Professional Opportunity
for

Head of School

An opportunity to grow a young school and take the message of independent school education to Reno, Nevada and its surrounding communities awaits the next Head of Sage Ridge School (SRS). Serving 240 students in grades 5 through 12, Sage Ridge is the only co-educational, non-sectarian, independent college preparatory school in Reno, in fact, in all of northern Nevada. It is accredited by the Pacific Northwest Association of Independent Schools (PNAIS) as well as being a member of NAIS, ISM, NACAC and AAIE.

The entire Sage Ridge community takes pride in its pursuit of excellence in academics, the arts, physical endeavor, and ethical behavior. Leading these pursuits is a nationally/internationally recruited faculty that creates an environment which is nourished by strong relationships between faculty and students. Sound finances, healthy governance, and supportive parents add further to this strong, vital school which awaits its next Head of School.

THE SCHOOL

In the spring of 1996, community leaders, parents, and educators came together with a vision to augment the area's educational choices. The School opened in 1998 with approximately 90 students in grades 6 through 8. Graduating its first senior class just 5 years later and completing its expansion to include grades 5-12, Sage Ridge quickly attracted the attention of the Reno community.

The purpose of the Founders was to create a school that would:

- Challenge students through an integrated, core curriculum
- Generate excitement for learning

- Foster self-discipline while nourishing self-confidence
- Emphasize and incorporate sound ethical and moral values
- Encourage a sense of social responsibility
- Serve a diverse student population
- Provide adequate need-based financial assistance for qualified applicants
- Offer a wide range of extra and co-curricular activities
- Require a high standard of conduct
- Prepare students for subsequent academic challenges of the most rigorous nature

Today's community mirrors the dreams of those founders. As stated in their last Accreditation Report

“Sage Ridge School has an energetic, lively atmosphere. Students, teachers, and families are equally committed to the mission of excellence and challenge in the educational program. The students love the school. They are articulate, naturally gregarious, open, and clearly happy with their experience. They recognize they are receiving a top notch education; they are devoted to their teachers and enjoy their classmates. The parents are equally positive. They commend the school for its close student teacher relationships, strong college preparatory program, and academic challenges.”

THE SETTING

Reno is located in a fertile valley just east of the Sierra Nevada Mountains on the edge of the Great Basin. It is home to over 200,000 residents with an estimated 500,000 included in the surrounding area. In a truly beautiful location, Reno sits at an elevation of 4,400 feet. The sun shines over 300 days of the year with average summer temperatures in the 80's and 90's and average winter temperature in the 30's. One is struck by the dramatic alpine peaks, lush pine forests, shaded red rock canyons, and shimmering desert salt lakes. Lovers of the outdoors can find a full array of year-round activities. Lake Tahoe, a 45 minute drive up Mt. Rose Highway, Pyramid Lake, Truckee River for rafting and kayaking, 12 golf courses, and 18 ski resorts attract not only local residents but tourists from northern California and the warmer climates to the south.

Once the world's gambling capitol, Reno is now more cosmopolitan and family friendly. Downtown is in the midst of an urban Renaissance. Through a comprehensive program of redevelopment, there are attractive shopping, eateries, and pedestrian-friendly spaces. You

will find the Museum of Art, the Reno Arboretum, and a Philharmonic Orchestra. The National Endowment of the Arts remarked that the yearly Artown is “One of the most comprehensive art festivals in the country.” Downtown is transformed into a cultural center with gallery shows and live performances throughout the month of July.

Locals and visitors enjoy the Livestock Events Center, the National Bowling Center, a vintage car museum, as well as Reno Aces Triple-A baseball games where you can watch future Arizona Diamondback players. Also in the area are several educational institutions. The University of Nevada at Reno and Truckee Meadows Community College are some of the choices. Also, with its international airport, it is not surprising that a number of prominent companies have chosen the area for their regional headquarters.

THE CAMPUS



Located six miles south from central Reno on a high ridge with expansive views of the Truckee Meadows,

S a g e

Ridge's 44-acre campus was acquired through the generous donation of the Nell J. Redfield Foundation. Seven acres are utilized currently and consist of two classroom buildings, an outdoor amphitheater, and fields for soccer and recreation. The Webster Middle School/Administrative Building was completed in 2001 and houses the library and a large multipurpose area. Two years later Crossbow Hall was opened for the Upper School and very recently was enlarged as a part of an expansion renovation. The estimated footprint of these two buildings is over 34,000 square feet.

An ambitious Master Plan, approved in May 2010, lays out a construction plan for five phases of an additional 96,000 square feet which would provide space for an enrollment of 600 students. Included in the plan is a gymnasium; performing arts building; 7th/8th grade wing added to Webster; Administrative Building; and athletic fields. The execution of this Master Plan would make a dramatic visual statement to an already glorious setting.

THE SAGE RIDGE MISSION

Sage Ridge School is committed to a traditional college preparatory curriculum for a diverse student body. The pursuit of excellence in academics, the arts, physical endeavor, and ethical behavior is emphasized in an environment nourished by the dynamic relationship between students and teachers. The school fosters self-expression, service, and a sense of community while encouraging students to think critically, communicate clearly, and pursue a lifelong passion for learning.

THE PILLARS OF THE SCHOOL

Developed by the faculty and approved by the Head of School, FIVE VALUE PILLARS provide the support and structure for the Sage Ridge experience. All actions, both individually and collectively, are defined and framed within the context of these values. While not referred to in heavy-handed ways by faculty or students, nevertheless, they clearly guide students' behavior and contribute to their significant accomplishments.

COMMUNITY:

Stresses the importance of interaction and cohesiveness among students, faculty, and parents.

RESPECT:

Is for self, one's peers, teachers, and family and is a main theme in the everyday life of the School.

SCHOLARSHIP:

Refers to the unrelenting quest for the truth, which is at the core of all learning at SRS.

INTEGRITY:

Is the glue that binds together the Sage Ridge "Academic Village"

COURAGE:

Refers to the importance of stretching one's self and being tenacious in the pursuit of one's goals.

The deep commitment for the School's mission and five pillars is witnessed in the work of both the Middle School and Upper School Honor Councils as they uphold the Honor Code and Code of Conduct. There is also active, relevant Student Government, a Student Issues Forum, Town Meetings, and Class Meetings. Advisories of six to eight students promote relationships of respect and loyalty. Weaving much of this into the strong sense of community that exists at Sage Ridge is the Student Prefecture. Faculty members select two Upper School students whose task is to foster and recognize responsibility, encourage leadership and service, and promote

academic and intellectual curiosity. Prefects serve as a link between Honor Council, Student Government, and Student Advisory Council.

THE STUDENTS

When you arrive on campus, you are first struck by an attractive, well-groomed student body in uniforms of navy blazers, khaki skirts and slacks complimented by flashes of white, burgundy, evergreen, and navy. Of much greater importance, however, are students who live up to their reputation of being happy, productive, and engaged. One teacher described them as, "Mature, motivated, caring, and ambitious." They are collegial rather than competitive and appreciative of the strong academic foundation they are receiving at Sage Ridge.



Academic achievement is celebrated within the School and recognized by the Reno community as a hallmark of Sage Ridge. In Reno, SRS is often referred to as "that laptop school for smart kids."

The 15 members of the Class of 2010 applied to eighty-four distinct colleges in twenty-six states, the District of Columbia, and Canada. They were awarded approximately \$2.3 million in scholarship and grant money. Their Class Profile indicates an average GPA of 3.63 (4.0 scale); average SAT(1600) of 1268 with total average SAT(2400) of 1910, and ACTs ranging from 22-33 with an average of 25.

Of the Class of 2009, two of its eleven members received National Merit Scholarships. Its eleven members sat for 53 AP examinations in 13 subjects and received a mean score of 3.57. The 20 members of the Class of 2008 included five National Merit Finalists and three Scholarship winners.

Standardized testing is administered each year. Students in grades 5-10 take the ERB. For students in grade 11, the PSAT is given while grade 12 takes both the ACT and the SAT.

THE MIDDLE YEARS: Focusing on the future

The Middle School program is designed to nurture the intellectual, ethical, social, emotional, and physical development of the students as they move from



childhood to adolescence. Central to its mission is helping them become increasingly responsible for their own education. Emphasis is placed on learning skills, organization, and independence. Academics are departmentalized with seven periods daily, and the average class size is fifteen. Beginning in sixth grade, students participate in the laptop program. In addition to the traditional curriculum in Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, and science, they also take Latin, Physical Education, and daily Fine Arts. Forty percent of Middle Schoolers participate on one of the eight athletic teams. There is a lively intramural program, and many students take advantage of Club offerings.

THE UPPER SCHOOL: Preparing for University and Life

Students are challenged intellectually, and they are always encouraged to evaluate their limits in light of present and anticipated learning. Central to their endeavors is the belief that a rigorous liberal arts education is the best preparation for life and for admission to selective colleges/universities.

Currently, the 90 Upper School students have 12 Advanced Placement offerings in addition to honors classes in the core subjects. Average Upper School class size is 11 although independent study is offered to individual students who have completed the sequence of courses in a particular subject area or have an unusually strong interest and aptitude in a particular field outside the published curriculum. Senior students have a required Senior Essay as the culminating independent research experience of the SRS academic journey. There is also a Senior Internship program that provides meaningful experience for assisting students in their transition to college. All Upper School students participate in two-week mini courses held between semesters. Offerings include titles such as Web Design, History of Rock Music, Public Speaking, or The Brain and How

We Learn. Summer months include an extensive required and recommended reading list.

Like their Middle School counterparts, students in grades 9-12 participate in an athletic program that includes track and field, cross country, basketball, volleyball, golf, wrestling, skiing, and swimming. Approximately 55% of Upper School students are on athletic teams. Participation, unity, and leadership are goals of the program. Because 70% of the coaches are SRS teachers, there is a strong integration of athletics into the mission and values of the School. In addition to the afterschool athletic teams, there are a number of clubs. Student publications – Literary Magazine, Yearbook, Newspaper - are very professional and student driven.

PROGRAMS

Although the school is small, its students benefit from all of the programs that traditionally exist in a strong independent school.

Community Service is a well established, strong part of the School's fabric. Upper School students have a 45-hour service requirement for graduation. Those in Mid-



dle School have areas of concentration in two-year blocks. Currently, 5th and 6th concentrate on environmental stewardship with 7th and 8th focusing on service to others.

For many years the school has offered a Travel Abroad program that has taken students and faculty to Europe, South America, Africa, and the Far East. There is an expectation that returning travelers will add to the community members' knowledge and appreciation of cultures other than their own.

All students participate in a well-developed, week-long Outdoor Education program with each grade level having an age-appropriate activity. Local resources for a program such as this are limitless, and the School takes full advantage of those resources. Students and teachers

Clearly Sage Ridge School is a well established, extraordinarily successful independent school. In an area which is strongly public school oriented, its has chosen to model the quality instruction and academic programs which have characterized independent school education from its conception. As evidenced from the following comments from members of the community, that model is strongly appreciated:

"We would not be in Reno if Sage Ridge were not here."
Parent

"My history teacher opened up my eyes to the world"
US student

"It's a well-rounded school with great academics, clubs, teachers, and sports. You're friends with everybody," MS student

"Students come first in everything we do. We teach respect for teachers, parents, each other, and our environment. It is an atmosphere of family held together by the glue of our honor code." Former Headmaster

"It's an outstanding education delivered by an outstanding faculty. There's nowhere else here to get this good of an education." Parent

"Sage Ridge's small size works in favor of the students and the families. The teachers can get to know your child, take the individual into account, and tailor their experience. There's a sense of community. It is really a family"
Parent

"I'll always look back and be grateful for what SRS has given me, especially for all the courage and confidence."
Student

"I was shy when I came to Sage Ridge, but it has allowed me to be different, taught me empathy and to see the world through someone else's eyes." Graduate
"The homework has intention and educational value and complements what he's learning. As a parent, I have assurance that our son is learning and gaining skills. That allows me to focus on being a dad and having fun."
Parent

"Students leave Sage Ridge School as educated individuals who can articulate nuanced positions that are informed by the best minds in science, literature, history, and math." Faculty

"A dedicated, diverse, accomplished group of US teachers delivers the US program" School's Accreditation Report

"Sage Ridge US students display tolerance, embrace diversity, and have established an atmosphere of community and respect for each others' ideas and possession."
School's Accreditation Report

"Student ideas are listened to. Our opinions are valued. And our teachers are always there for us. They never say no." Student

"Families, teachers, staff, and board members are passionate about this school; the school has accomplished a lot in the last few years." School's Accreditation Report

recognize Outdoor Education as a key component in building community. This program, as well as Mini-Semester, receives high praise from students.

The Performing Arts programs, despite strong competition from clubs, athletics, student government, and demanding academics, have amazed audiences. The Tempest, Our Town, Oliver, and The Wizard of Oz are some of the most recent productions. Because public speaking is a top priority, every student is required to be a part of one presentation each year.

While Sage Ridge has had some small summer programs, Summer on the Ridge, 2010, has established a high level of offerings and enthusiasm. In addition to providing programs for Sage Ridge students, Summer on the Ridge has brought the school to a higher level of awareness in Reno. Of the 150 participants this first year, 67% are not SRS enrolled students.

PARENTS

All parents are members of the Parents' Association. A very strong organization, thanks to its many dependable volunteers, parents sponsor activities which supplement those lead by faculty and staff. Because Sage Ridge believes in the strength of a school being enhanced by parent participation, each of the 230 families agree as a part of enrollment to donate twenty hours of service to the School.

Parent Advisory Councils in both Middle and Upper Schools offer the opportunity for parents to meet their respective Division Head monthly to be brought up to date on offerings, review any areas of concern, use establish avenues for suggestions and input. Parents from each grade level are designated as representatives, and all parents are encouraged to forward questions/comments for agenda items through their grade level representatives. Coffees are also scheduled in the fall and spring to provide each grade level the opportu-

nity to meet with the Head of School in an informal environment. There is a yearly Gala which this past year raised approximately \$57,000. While parents assist in this fund/friendraiser, there is significant organization and leadership guidance from the school's administrative team.

ADMINISTRATION

There are eight senior administrators: Head of School, Head of Middle School, Head of Upper School, Business Manager, College Counselor, Admission Director, Technology Director, and Athletic Director. Six staff in assistant positions and a custodial staff of three round out this support for students, faculty, and parents.

FACULTY

Students appreciate faculty at levels not often seen. At SRS, students love their school because they love their teachers, saying, "Our teachers devote themselves to our success, literally giving up hours of free-time for extra help sessions." Who are these teachers? They are a group of 25 whose average experience is seven years; 76% hold advanced degrees, 16% have a Ph.D. While their teaching skills are admired, it is their deep caring about students that endears them the most. According to both students and parents, it is that trait which "makes this demanding academic institution so very special."

The school has set a high standard for faculty recruitment. Faculty members come from all over the world, some with experiences in research and business in addition to education. All teachers have an advisory group; teach five classes; are limited to 3 preparations, and have a pupil load of approximately 80 students. Faculty compensation is generous, easily competitive with local teacher salary. Additionally, faculty members receive a 5% retirement contribution, an additional 1% TIAA-CREF match, and health insurance for \$1.00 per month. Each faculty member is also provided a laptop computer.

GOVERNANCE

Fifteen members make up SRS's self-perpetuating Board of Trustees with the Head of School serving as an *ex-officio* member. There are 10 men and women who have been honored with Trustee Emeritus status for their long time service and contributions to the School.

The Board can best be described as a strategic board with a strong sense of fiscal responsibility. Five committees play an important role: Executive, Head

Support and Evaluation, Building and Grounds, Development, and Financial and Audit. Strategic planning, master planning, and a development audit have all been initiated in the last three years.

FINANCES

One area of great pride is the School's financial stability. Although no endowment currently exists, there is a history of balanced budgets and a debt-free institution. SRS benefits from 3 years of accumulated reserves which represent approximately 20% of operations. The current budget is \$3.6 million. In recent years, student financial aid has averaged about 9% of the budget for an estimated total of \$360,000—\$400,000. Financial aid continues to be a top priority for the Sage Ridge community. Ninety-eight percent of total expenses are covered by tuition which is \$17,500 at all grade levels. Families also pay an \$800 activity fee, purchase a laptop for their child beginning in grade six, and pay a book fee that ranges from \$340-\$900. In addition to tuition revenue, additional income is generated by the Annual Fund (\$146,000) and the Gala.

OPPORTUNITIES

In evaluating its leadership needs for the coming years, SRS has identified the following areas which will require special attention from the next Head of School:

- Recommitment to technology: revising curricular goals, investing in essential administrative tools, and increasing training for students and staff
- Development of an admission strategy that aggressively addresses enrollment and attrition
- Evaluation of marketing and communication objectives with clear goals and implementing plans
- Building on SRS's strengths while prioritizing objectives for school improvement
- Creating excitement for the implementation of the Master Plan
- Establishment of an effective evaluation procedure for all personnel
- Addressing ways to create a stronger feeling of Sage Ridge being one school and not two divisions
- Greater advancement efforts
- A new gymnasium for the campus

THE NEW HEAD OF SCHOOL

Sage Ridge seeks a Head of School whose professional skills and personal traits will lead it to a new level of excellence as it continues to fulfill its energetic goals and aspiration. The following **professional skills** are essential in the next school leader:

- Experience in an independent school position of leadership
- Strong academic credentials
- Knowledge of organizational systems, financial sustainability, and advancement strategies
- A deep appreciation of and expertise in building relationships
- Superior written and verbal communication skills
- Strategic thinking and planning skills appropriate for a high academic, laptop school
- Eager anticipation for the responsibility of raising funds and elevating the School's recognition in Reno

The following personal qualities will be essential for the next Head of School:

- A well-rounded individual with a sense of humor and a clear vision
- One who places students first while also nurturing and supporting faculty
- An organizational leader and effective administrator who is with all constituents approachable, friendly, and caring
- A person whose sense of presence will inspire the community to raise the bar and stretch itself to greater accomplishments
- A passionate educator who will successfully articulate and embrace the mission and five pillars of Sage Ridge School

APPLICATION FOR THE POSITION

Interested candidates are encouraged to contact The Education Group for further information about the Head of School position at Sage Ridge School.

Salary is competitive with similar independent schools and commensurate with experience. The benefits package is generous. While a specific deadline for application has not been assigned, credentials will be evaluated and interviews scheduled as materials are received.

To receive full consideration, interested candidates should submit materials by September 15, 2010. Application materials should include a cover letter expressing interest in the position, a résumé, a brief description of leadership style and educational philosophy, and a list of references with both telephone and email contacts. An extensive reference and background check will be conducted.

Candidate inquires and credentials should be submitted electronically to:

Gloria H. Snyder

or

Mary E. Kesler

The Education Group

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services@educationgroup.com

Candidates of all races, religions, ethnic origins and gender are encouraged to apply.