



# SAGE RIDGE

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## S C H O O L

### **Outdoor Education Family Handbook**

2025 – 2026

SCHOLARSHIP • RESPECT • INTEGRITY • COURAGE • COMMUNITY

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Sage Ridge School is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

## **Purpose of Outdoor Education at Sage Ridge**

Outdoor education is a transformative tool for holistic development, integrating experiential learning with natural environments to foster personal growth, community connection, and environmental stewardship.

Firstly, outdoor education immerses individuals in hands-on experiences, challenging them to navigate unfamiliar terrain, collaborate with peers, and problem-solve in real time. Students develop crucial life skills like adaptability, communication, and critical thinking through activities such as wilderness expeditions, team-building exercises, and environmental studies

Moreover, outdoor education fosters a deepened commitment to our pillars of scholarship, respect, integrity, courage, and community. Shared outdoor experiences create bonds rooted in mutual respect, trust, and appreciation for diversity, enriching interpersonal relationships within and beyond the classroom.

In essence, outdoor education serves as a dynamic platform for personal, social, and environmental learning, empowering individuals to become informed, compassionate, and engaged citizens.

Outdoor education is a graduation requirement for our Upper School students. If students cannot attend due to illness, a project will be assigned to the student to make up for the missed educational time.

## **What to Expect on Outdoor Education**

Students in grades 5 - 12 share either dormitory rooms or tents with classmates and chaperones will be in nearby tents or rooms.

During the day, students will learn, hike, and partake in adventures with assigned trail groups. For example, students may spend time on the coast of California learning about sea mammals and then may hike to a nearby lighthouse to enjoy a picnic lunch.

Breakfast and dinner are eaten together in the mess hall or campsite. All meals are provided by the Outdoor Education outfitter company. The Outdoor Education company is responsible for the programming in collaboration with Sage Ridge curriculum, faculty and staff. The Outdoor Education outfitter is present with students and chaperones from 9 a.m. - 9 p.m. daily. Faculty chaperones are with students 24 hours a day and are the primary caretakers of the students.

Packing lists and what to bring will be provided via email and are available for new Sage Ridge families on [www.sageridge.org/welcome](http://www.sageridge.org/welcome) under "Outdoor Education Week" and for returning Sage Ridge families on [www.sageridge.org/parents](http://www.sageridge.org/parents) under "Outdoor Education Week".

## **Cell Phone Policy**

Cell phones are discouraged on Outdoor Education trips. Our cell phone policy for Outdoor Education trips is designed to enhance the educational and personal growth benefits that come from immersive, community-building outdoor experiences. By minimizing digital distractions, students can fully engage with nature, develop stronger interpersonal connections with their peers, build self-reliance and problem-solving skills, and practice being present in the moment. These trips offer a unique opportunity for students to disconnect from the constant connectivity of daily life and reconnect with themselves, their classmates, and the natural world around them. The policy also helps ensure that students participate actively in group activities, outdoor learning experiences, and team-building exercises without the interference of social media, gaming, or other digital diversions.

If parents of students in grades 3-10 would like their child to have a cell phone on the trip, the student must release their phone (powered off) to their trip leader. The trip leader will hold phones for the duration of the trip and return the phone to the student upon return to campus. The trip leaders will not be responsible or liable for the students' cell phone. In cases of emergency, the student will be able to request their cell phone from the trip leader.

In the case of an emergency and a parent needs to communicate with their child during the trip, they can contact the school and school personnel on campus will communicate with trip leaders to get parents in touch with their child.

Please note: cell phone service varies per location. Trip contractors have satellite phones in the case of major emergencies and will be able to communicate with the school when needed.

## **Student Behavior Expectations**

School chaperones and professionally trained Outdoor Education (OE) staff are present on the trips to support and keep students safe 24 hours a day. During OE Sage Ridge staff and OE Outfitter staff support all participants' physical and emotional safety and provide culturally responsive and inclusive programs. The agreements below will ensure a safe and enjoyable time during the OE trip and programming.

### **All participants must agree to:**

- Respect other participants, their privacy, and their property.
- Respect the campsite/campus and be a steward of nature.

- Not discriminate against people because of their race, culture, religion, sexual orientation, gender, language, talents, or special needs.
- Not to cause physical or emotional harm to myself or any other person.
- Not to bring or use recreational drugs, cigarettes, weapons, and/or alcohol.
- Be on time, prepared (have suitable clothing and equipment), and actively participate in OE programming.
- Stay with the school group and be under the supervision of a chaperone at all times.
- Only enter and use their dorm/tent, and refrain from entering other participant dorms/tents.
- Be quiet and respectful in the evening and morning so that everyone can get enough sleep to participate and stay healthy.
- Keep food out of their dorm/tent.
- Look out for the safety of themselves and others and follow all safety directions.

### **Student Behavior Support System:**

There will be a discussion of student behavior and remedial actions if the OE staff member, a school teacher or a chaperone determines that a student is not following the above agreements. Sage Ridge School strives to utilize restorative practices which could include any of the following actions:

- Verbal warning and a reminder about agreements.
- Behavior discussion with OE staff and school/group leader.
- Phone call with parents and Sage Ridge School staff to discuss possible disciplinary actions.
- Parents are called and asked to come pick up their student. The costs involved with sending the student home will occur at the parents' expense.



## **Student/Family Agreements**

*I have read and understand the agreements set forth in the Sage Ridge Outdoor Education Handbook. I agree to abide by the student behavior agreements and to keep my cell phone at home during the trip.*

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

*I have read and understand the agreements set forth in the Sage Ridge Outdoor Education Handbook. I agree to hold my child accountable for their behavior during Outdoor Education and I understand if any negative behavior occurs on the trip I could be notified and required to pick up my student from the Outdoor Education trip immediately.*

*I acknowledge that I have read and agree to the trip packing list and I will make sure my student is packed and prepared for the Outdoor Education trip. I agree to the cell phone policy during the trip and to communicate with the school if a need arises.*

Parent Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Due Date: Friday, August 29, 2025**