



## **SAGE Academy Staff**

Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools is pleased to announce the teaching staff for SAGE Academy–School for the Advancement of Gifted Education. SAGE Academy has five full-time teachers for the 2018-19 school year and is located at WestWood Elementary. Classroom groupings are determined by our enrollment with students instructed primarily in grade level groups with some departmentalization of subjects. This allows our staff to teach in an area of expertise while providing consistent curriculum, experiences, rigor and expectations.

Karen Zwolenski is principal of WestWood Elementary and coordinator of the SAGE academy. She has a specialist degree from the University of St. Thomas in Education Leadership. She has a Master’s degree in Education Administration and is a licensed secondary English education and elementary teacher.

Meghan Best teaches third grade in SAGE Academy. Meghan graduated from the University of North Dakota. She completed one semester of student teaching in Minnesota and one in Italy. Meghan taught elementary grades at an international school in Italy for eight years. Prior to teaching at Westwood Elementary, Meghan subbed in the Prior Lake-Savage Area School district for one year and often at SAGE Academy. She graduated in December of 2017 from Saint Catherine University with a Master of Arts in Education with a concentration in S.T.E.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, & Mathematics). Meghan is thrilled to be a part of SAGE Academy, Westwood Elementary and the district.

Nikki Draine teaches third grade in SAGE Academy. Nikki is an alumna of Prior Lake High School and the University of St. Thomas, where she earned her degree in Elementary Education and minored in Business Administration. She upholds teaching licensures in Elementary Education as well as Science and Mathematics content areas for middle school. Mrs. Draine has a passion for S.T.E.M (Science, Technology, Engineering, & Mathematics) and for facilitating learning experiences that are meaningful and engaging. Mrs. Draine recently completed her Masters of Education degree in teaching and learning from St. Mary’s University. She is pleased to be working as part of the SAGE team.

Stephanie Evans teaches 5<sup>th</sup> grade in SAGE Academy. Stephanie graduated from the University of Minnesota with a degree in Communications and Design. After working in the field for two years, Evans discovered that teaching was her true passion. She enrolled and graduated from Minnesota State University, with a degree in Elementary Education. Evans taught in Saint Peter for 3 years in grades 5 and 6 and is excited to be teaching at WestWood in SAGE Academy.

Alyssa Farrell teaches fourth grade in SAGE Academy. Ms. Farrell graduated from the University of Minnesota with a Masters in Elementary Education and a minor in Outdoor Education. Prior to teaching at WestWood Elementary School, Ms. Farrell co-taught in a second grade classroom in St. Paul. She is excited for another great year in the Prior Lake-Savage School District.

Michele Tindal teaches fifth grade in SAGE Academy. Michele has been teaching the gifted in grades K-12 in the district for 17 years in the Synergy and SAGE programs. She attended Wayne State University, Northern MI University, the University of MI, the University of TX – Arlington, Cal State Northridge, and California Lutheran University. In addition, she has extensive graduate coursework in Gifted Education from the University of MN – Mankato. She previously taught kindergarten and a 3<sup>rd</sup> /4<sup>th</sup> grade combination in California. Ms. Tindal has been heavily involved with work behind the scenes in all matters pertinent to gifted children in the Prior Lake-Savage area for many years.

In addition to our SAGE Academy staff, Prior Lake-Savage Synergy teachers Jane Balow and Rebecca Smith will also provide consultation services to students and staff in SAGE Academy and within the Synergy program in our schools.