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[www.sde.idaho.gov](http://www.sde.idaho.gov)

**Media Contacts:**

Jeff Church  
Chief Communications Officer  
(208) 332-6934  
[jchurch@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:jchurch@sde.idaho.gov)

**SHERRI YBARRA**  
SUPERINTENDENT OF  
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Kelly Everitt  
Communications Specialist  
(208) 332-6818  
[keveritt@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:keveritt@sde.idaho.gov)

650 W. STATE STREET  
P.O. BOX 83720  
BOISE, IDAHO 83720-0027

OFFICE: 208-332-6800  
FAX: 208-334-2228  
SPEECH/HEARING  
IMPAIRED: 1-800-377-3529  
[WWW.SDE.IDAHO.GOV](http://WWW.SDE.IDAHO.GOV)

## **IDAHO SCHOOLS JOIN THE IDAHO LIVES PROJECT, KICKOFF SOURCES OF STRENGTH PROGRAM**

(BOISE) – In an effort to increase youth connectedness, peer leadership and engagement, and most importantly awareness of suicide prevention strategies, several Idaho schools were recently selected to be a part of the Sources of Strength program through the State Department of Education’s Idaho Lives Project, Superintendent Sherri Ybarra announced today.

“The Idaho Lives Project and the Sources of Strength program is a great resource to create awareness of suicide prevention strategies, and to ultimately provide support and create community within a school,” Superintendent Ybarra said. “The schools that are implementing this program are taking a very positive step in providing support to students and recognizing that this effort is essential to ensure that students have trusted adults as well as peer support—the department will do all that we can to help these schools be successful.”

The following schools will be implementing the Sources of Strength program for the current Idaho Lives Project cohort:

- Sandpoint HS, Sandpoint
- Lakes MS, Coeur d’Alene
- Homedale MS, Homedale
- Challis Jr/Sr HS, Challis
- Shelley HS, Shelley
- Hobb MS, Shelley
- Compass Academy, Idaho Falls

Schools involved in the Sources of Strength program will work directly with the Idaho Lives Project and the Idaho State Department of Education to educate staff, students and the surrounding community about how to build resilience and address the root causes of suicide.

“I look forward to working with these schools to implement the Sources of Strength program, and to ensure that we as a state department are doing all that we can to cultivate supportive learning environments in these schools,” Matt McCarter, Director of Student Engagement, Career & Technical Readiness said. “I applaud the commitment of these schools to create a positive culture where all of their students are supported and feel like they belong.”

For more information about the Sources of Strength program please visit [www.sourcesofstrength.org](http://www.sourcesofstrength.org) or contact Matt McCarter at (208) 332-6961 or by email at [mamccarter@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:mamccarter@sde.idaho.gov).

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