



THINKING AHEAD SINCE 1932

William L. Graham
Head of School

A Midland Moment
December 1, 2008

Paradox of our Age

We have bigger houses but smaller families; more conveniences, but less time; we have more degrees, but less sense; more knowledge, but less judgment; more experts, but more problems; more medicines, but less healthiness; we've been all the way to the moon and back, but have trouble crossing the street to meet the new neighbor. We build more computers to hold more information to produce more copies than ever, but have less communication; we have become long on quantity, but short on quality. These are times of fast foods but slow digestion; tall men but short on character; steep profits but shallow relationships. It is a time when there is much in the window, but nothing in the room.
-The 14th Dalai Lama

Dear Friends:

Today's news and the volatile financial markets brought comparisons to the 1930's, and November's historic election brought focus to the current issues facing our country. I think about what the United States "needs" and "wants," and I feel fortunate to have Midland School as a backdrop to the ongoing national debate. As the country and Midland School move forward, "keeping it simple" is sound advice for President Obama and a reminder to all of us. Whether we are looking at the nation or considering the Midland community, learning to be more fulfilled with less, to improve our knowledge, to cultivate our love for this land, to be responsible for ourselves as we help others are the guiding principles that serve us well as we address the challenges that face us all. Paul and Louise Squibb's vision and values are enduring, and the Midland model remains true for our time.

Upon acquiring the original ranch and property, Paul Squibb wrote, ***"We shall be securing not only the buildings, but the open country and the protection that we shall need for generations to come. Many schools have suffered from the encroachments of real estate developments that might have been staved off with a little foresight. To our way of thinking, it is better to invest in preserving the unspoiled character of the country than in providing comforts and luxuries."*** Midland's Board of Trustees and our community certainly agree with Mr. Squibb. On November 20th, The State of California Conservation Board awarded the Land Trust for Santa Barbara a \$4,155,000.00 grant that will be used to purchase a conservation easement for 2,727 acres of Midland's 2,860-acre property. The easement is a cooperative project between the Trust for Public Land and the California Transportation Commission.

On November 27th, former faculty members, graduates, parents, friends, and families returned to campus for the annual Thanksgiving pilgrimage. Almost five hundred people were treated to a meal

that included Laurie Munger's Midland raised turkeys and squash and vegetables grown by Ben's garden crew. The rolls and stuffing were made from scratch. The food scraps went to the pigs, and the starch based plates, cups, knives and forks are now decomposing in student built compost piles which will enrich the garden soil next spring. The students and guests provided the labor; the leftovers were delicious, and we are thankful for this Midland tradition.

November 2008 was historic, and I have confidence to move forward. For two years we have enrolled over 90 students, and we are committed to a financial aid budget that on average supports 42% of our families. Our students, faculty, and parents understand that being a member of the Midland community brings challenges, connection, purpose and sense of belonging that is powerful and transformative. We support an exceptional staff of adults that make teaching and learning the priority. We have updated library and computer resources, increased health services, and a developing relationship between our garden and our kitchen. Over time, raising our own beef and producing increasing levels of fruits and vegetables moves us toward better nutrition, sustainability, and an improved carbon footprint. We manage our endowment; we are not in debt, and we are developing a financial model to serve Midland for years to come.

I know that the friends and families connected with Midland understand that we are all responsible for the stewardship of the school. We hold the *trust* of those that came before us. Let's all do our best to strengthen Midland and educate the next generation knowing that those that come after us are led to do the same.

Come see us when you are in the area, and spread the word to your friends and neighbors that this small school with big ideas is ready to prepare their children for college and for this changing world.

Marguerite and I wish you all well; we hope your families will enjoy the holiday season as we look forward to the possibilities the New Year brings.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William L. Graham". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

William L. Graham
Head of School

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