

A FIELD GUIDE TO LIVING YOUR EDUCATION

at Midland School
Santa Barbara County, California



THE
FIELD
GUIDE

**"Today we are seeing
the dreams of inspired
poets merging with
the findings of careful
scientists. The dreamer
and the doer are
showing the thinker
new vistas of life on
earth. New glories
are coming to light for
thoughtful minds."**



Paul Squibb
Founder, 1932

MIDLAND SCHOOL

COLLEGE-PREPARATORY • BOARDING • CO-ED
PLACE-BASED AND EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION





Midland School, located on a 2,860-acre ranch in Santa Barbara County, is the leader in place-based, experiential education.

Everything we do—from how we maintain our co-ed campus to the way we feed ourselves to the rigorous courses we teach—originates from an intentional curriculum that focuses not only on high-caliber, college-preparatory classes, but also on true leadership, intentional community, and environmental stewardship.

COME PREPARED

Living your education starts with taking control of your education.

In 1932, Paul Squibb and the first class of 9 students bravely founded a school that would be an alternative to the regular thing. They defined its optimistic spirit. Today, each incoming class leaves its own indelible mark on Midland's legacy.

Follow in their footsteps or chart your own course. Or, take the best from both endeavors. You'll have the freedom to explore, discover and shape your own learning—to *live your education*.



WHAT WE DO MATTERS

The Midland program merges high-caliber college preparation with innovative experiential learning. With extraordinary resources at hand—2,860 acres in Santa Barbara County, a 90-year-old culture of responsibility to community and environment, and a deeply committed faculty—we develop personal agency in our students.

Midland cultivates the belief that it matters what we do, and we actively engage students in their high school journey, both within and outside the classroom.

CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE:

Students and faculty install a new set of campus solar panels, Mateo '21 splits wood for his showerfire, Head of School Christopher Barnes works with students during their free period, US History class discusses the Cold War, cabin hang-out time, and José Juan '87, Dean of Students, leads his class in conversation.





GEAR UP

Having the right tools is essential for any venture.
Whether for work or for play, you'll want to be well equipped.

SOME OF THE ITEMS MIDLANDERS OFTEN BRING:



Jot down class notes, plan your homework and study schedule, or write a short story inspired by your Midland adventures.



Delve into research, master Google classroom, catch up on the news, or simply watch a funny video with friends.



Learn how to split wood with the help of your prefect, and get those shower fires glowing hot!



Zoom from your cabin to Stillman Hall, or ride out to the Res for a dip in the swimming hole on a hot afternoon.



Take your first Natural Horsemanship lesson, or head out for a group ride on Golden Horseshoe Trail.



Catch a glimpse of our campus' beautiful landscapes and diverse flora and fauna, and snap a photo to share with friends and family back home.



Head out on an Outdoor Program backpacking trip on the Midland property, to Los Padres National Forest, or through Joshua Tree National Park.



Hang out with friends during an afternoon half holiday, catch up on your English reading or learn a new song on the guitar.



Bring your favorite furry (or scaly!) friend from home. That's right: dogs, cats, horses, iguanas... they're all welcome here at Midland.





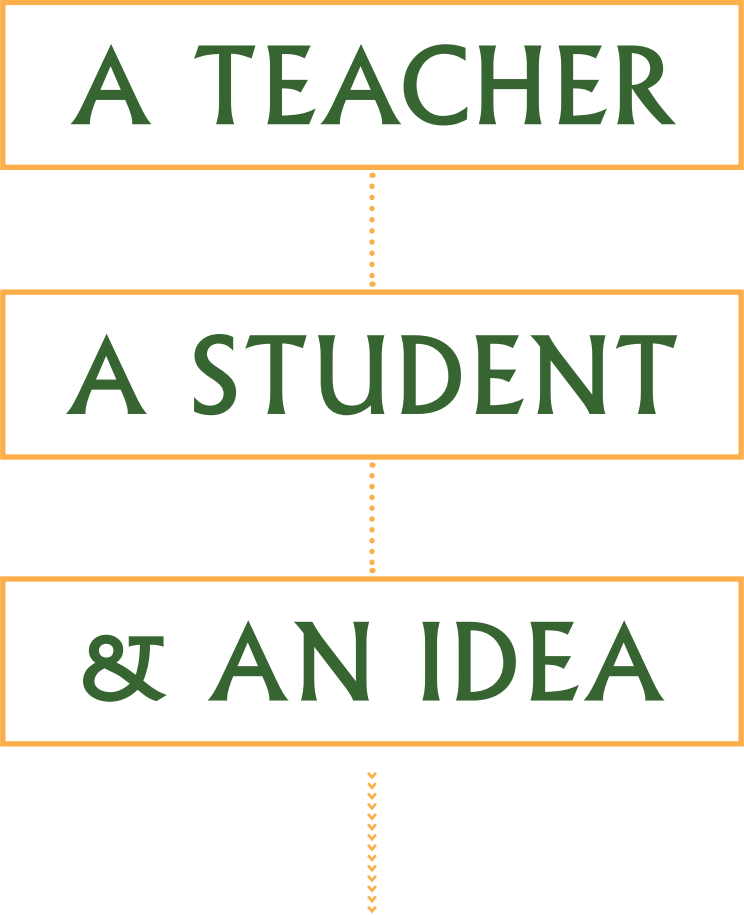
ASK
QUESTIONS

**When you're curious and eager to learn,
living your education becomes second nature.**

Midland students come from all different
backgrounds and interests, but the one trait they all
share is a desire to know more, how, and why.



MIDLAND 101: Lise Goddard, Dean of Studies, teaches Midland 101, a UC-approved science course that delves into the geology, topography, history, anthropology, and the flora and fauna of our 2,860 acre campus.



A TEACHER

A STUDENT

& AN IDEA

These three essential ingredients for learning guide our instructional efforts.

Students and faculty work together to gain a deeper understanding of the world. Our teachers don't know everything there is to know about their subject; they work with the students to discover as much about the subject as they can—*together*. Of course, our teachers do have a solid knowledge of their field, a necessary foundation to help discover what's most important.

SMALL CLASSES BIG CLASSROOM

**Because learning happens
everywhere.**

Using our 2,860 acres as a home base, our program offers a vibrant and challenging exploration of place, spanning environment, history, and culture.





LEARN BY DOING

▼

Explore the natural and cultural history of the world beneath our feet in field-based UC-approved science and social science courses



▼

Research, write and present your own senior thesis on an issue that's important to you



▼

Build a toolkit of college preparatory and life preparatory skills through our experiential curriculum



**"We are doing
what everybody
else is learning
about in the
classroom."**

—Isaiah '19

Take a variety of classes

With courses ranging from Algebra 1 to Calculus 3 and English 9 to British Literature, Midland meets students where they are and challenges them to think critically and problem solve resourcefully.

Construct a picnic tables in geometry, install solar panels in chemistry, learn how to gentle a horse in the horsemanship program, or take a birding class!

(See the curriculum guide for a list of courses we offer.)



GETTING YOUR HANDS DIRTY: In

April of every year, the Junior class travels to the Central Valley to build affordable housing for low-income families.

SATURDAYS ARE FOR TRYING NEW THINGS

**Discover a new passion during a
Saturday experiential block!**

Our weekly Saturday experiential programming provides structure for ungraded 3-hour blocks of exploration that tap into the passions of faculty and students, including farm, ranch, and outdoor activities; cultural events and talks through UCSB's Arts & Lectures program; projects on campus; health and wellness discussions; and diversity, equity, and inclusion workshops at peer schools.





FROM TOP, CLOCKWISE: Students learn about beekeeping while working with Midland's hives; octopus discovery during a Marine Biology trip to the Central Coast; students work with Ranch Manager Nick in the garden; freshmen return home from a night out on the Midland property.



HOW TO DEVELOP A

► 1.

Learn with faculty.

The learning environment at Midland extends beyond the classroom to the outdoors, farm, kitchen, and campus. All adults are teachers and guides who partner with students in exploring and caring for our place while working together and honing their craft in the jobs program, on projects, on trails, in athletics, and at meals.

► 2.

Think critically.

Midland students are challenged and supported to observe and read closely, to synthesize information, and to use evidence to craft arguments. Across disciplines, we cultivate effective communication skills—written and spoken. Students practice quantitative and scientific reasoning while also exploring a diversity of cultures, identities, and ideas. Not only do Midland students think, they also identify problems that need solving and they act, using appropriate available resources.

LOVE OF LEARNING:

► 3.

Never settle.

At Midland, every student is known, valued, and needed. A mark of Midland students is that they're more resourceful, responsible, and adventurous than typical teenagers. Just as Midland students develop internal motivation to finish each job strong in the dining hall, dish house, or shower fire, they also work through multiple drafts and iterations in their writing and research.

► 4.

Stay curious.

With a program built around caring for our place and each other, students develop their inner resources and know they can contribute anywhere. Committed to experiential and lifelong learning motivated by the interests of students and faculty, our schedule offers dedicated weekly blocks that expose students to activities, places, perspectives, voices, and modalities that open new frames of experience, both on and off campus.

A TRADITION: Every student's first campus job is in Stillman Hall, where they learn how to sweep, mop, clear the table, and wash the dishes.



TAKE ON REAL RESPONSIBILITY

Learn on the job

Learn self-reliance, leadership, and responsibility in our jobs program. Daily duties contribute not only to the operations of the school, but to students' sense of belonging and ownership of their community.

Help run Midland

Every aspect of our operation is supported by our students, from washing dishes to picking produce in our garden. Seniors step into leadership roles as job heads and prefects, guiding and mentoring underclassmen in their work.

Contribute and benefit

Throughout the Midland experience, students internalize the benefits of working as a team, knowing that we're all in this together, as well as the responsibilities of mastering real tasks as an individual.



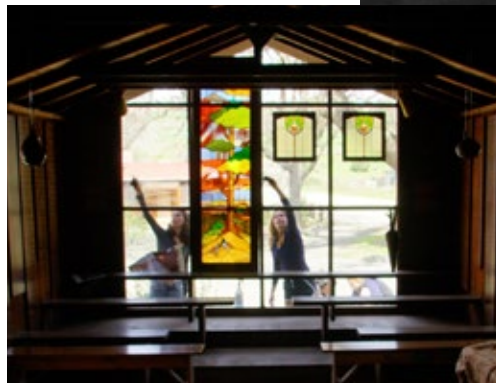
“Midland has been a place to be human; to make mistakes, to grow, to develop valuable connections, and to give me the skills and experiences I need to lead a successful and impactful life.”

—Tate Ewing '17

"I'LL TAKE CARE OF THAT"

Contributing to your community

What's remarkable is that volunteering at Midland isn't remarkable. Midland students jump to the task when they identify a community need. Be it covering dish house duty for a classmate, Squibbing (picking up trash anytime you see it laying around), or lending a shoulder to a friend in need, our students bravely endeavor to be the best stewards of our land and citizens of our community. It's all part of learning the life well-lived.





HAVING FUN, HELPING OUT:

Students finish up the dishes after a farm fresh, homegrown meal in the dining hall, as their favorite music plays in the background.

THE PREFECT SYSTEM

At Midland, senior class members have **leadership responsibilities** focused on supporting—teaching, coaching, and supervising—freshmen, sophomores, and juniors succeed academically, socially, and in the work program.

As prefects, Midland seniors are typically assigned responsibility for a certain class (e.g. Freshman prefect). Two students each year are **Head Prefects**, with responsibility for supporting the overall jobs program, work periods, and leadership of the Student Council.

The Student Council, which includes elected representatives from each class, has responsibility for student advocacy as well as input into disciplinary policy in partnership with the Head of School and the administrative team.

Show up: — Acknowledge that you have a responsibility



Do your job: — Be motivated and build self-confidence



Do it well: — Identify the need you're meeting and own your success



Work effectively

with others: — Be dependable, show initiative and grow in your leadership, but also know when to ask for help



Develop a sense of agency: —

Know what you do is important, set priorities and manage your time well



Pass it on and create a legacy: — Teach the next person what you've learned

PASSING IT ON: At Midland, Prefects serve both as leaders and mentors, checking in with their prefectees during the week to ensure they're supported throughout the boarding experience.



BE INTENTIONAL



**In a committed and supportive community,
living your education becomes a way of life.**

A technology policy that puts our community first, a commitment to caring for our land and the environment that goes back to 1932, and a community of people who choose to be here: Midland has long been the place that thoughtful and driven students love to call home.

UNPLUG AND CONNECT

Choose to connect differently.

At its core, Midland's intentional technology fosters a tight-knit educational community based on face-to-face relationships. We find that those relationships develop best without a cell phone glued to our hands, so we ask our students to leave them at home when coming to school.

WHAT MIDLAND MEANS TO ME:

"Midland shows us what is possible when a group of people truly come together to work as one. It teaches us what exists beyond the daily distractions of technology, and needless wants, while remaining relevant. It tells us who we are, and who we want to be."

—Duncan McCarthy '17



And, all of our students have wifi-accessible chrome books that they use both inside and outside of the classroom—meaning Midland students learn how to use Google Classroom, among other online educational platforms, throughout all four years at Midland.

We have Midland students who delve deep into coding, GIS mapping, computer creating and

electric car building. There's also plenty of time in the day to sit and watch funny YouTube videos or movies in the library with your friends.

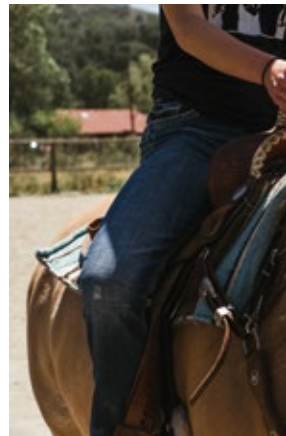
That's what we mean by intentional technology: we use our technology to delve deep into learning and to spend time together as a community, rather than feeling tied to our cell phones and social media throughout the day.



LIFE AT MIDLAND IS ONE BIG ADVENTURE

Midland students live in wood cabins in the shadow of mighty oak trees at the foot of Grass Mountain. From their doorsteps lie 2,860 acres of campus wilderness to explore, a 10 acre farm to pick strawberries from, faculty homes filled with warmth and homework help, a herd of 23 horses to ride, and adventure-seeking friends living in the cabins next door.

Our students learn responsibility and accountability through Midland's jobs program; they work hand-in-hand with our faculty to take care of our campus, facilities, and trail system as part of their daily routine. Midland students can bring their dogs with them to school, filling our cabins, classrooms, and hiking trails with happy wagging tails.





- 8:00 AM morning dish house duty this week!
- 8:30 AM bring field ecology guide
- 9:55 AM algebra II quiz ask Faith re: next ceramics PROJECT
- 11:20 AM finishing & pick glaze color
- 12:15 PM announce club idea @ assembly!
- 1:10 PM Harkness Roundtable in English
★ REMEMBER: BRING READING NOTES!!
- 2:35 PM Study for History w/ Sophia & Phoebe
- 3:30 PM LIGHT SHOWER FIRE 
★ ask Mira for help
- 3:40 PM Natural Horsemanship meet @ new BARN TODAY
- 6:00 PM Lucia's Chapel → wish her LUCK!!
- 6:20 PM dinner @ Christopher's table
- 7:30 PM Chemistry project
w/ Faiza & Lauren
- 10:00 PM group check in
w/ PREFECTS
- 10:20 PM zzzzzzz... lights out!

MIND YOUR SURROUNDINGS

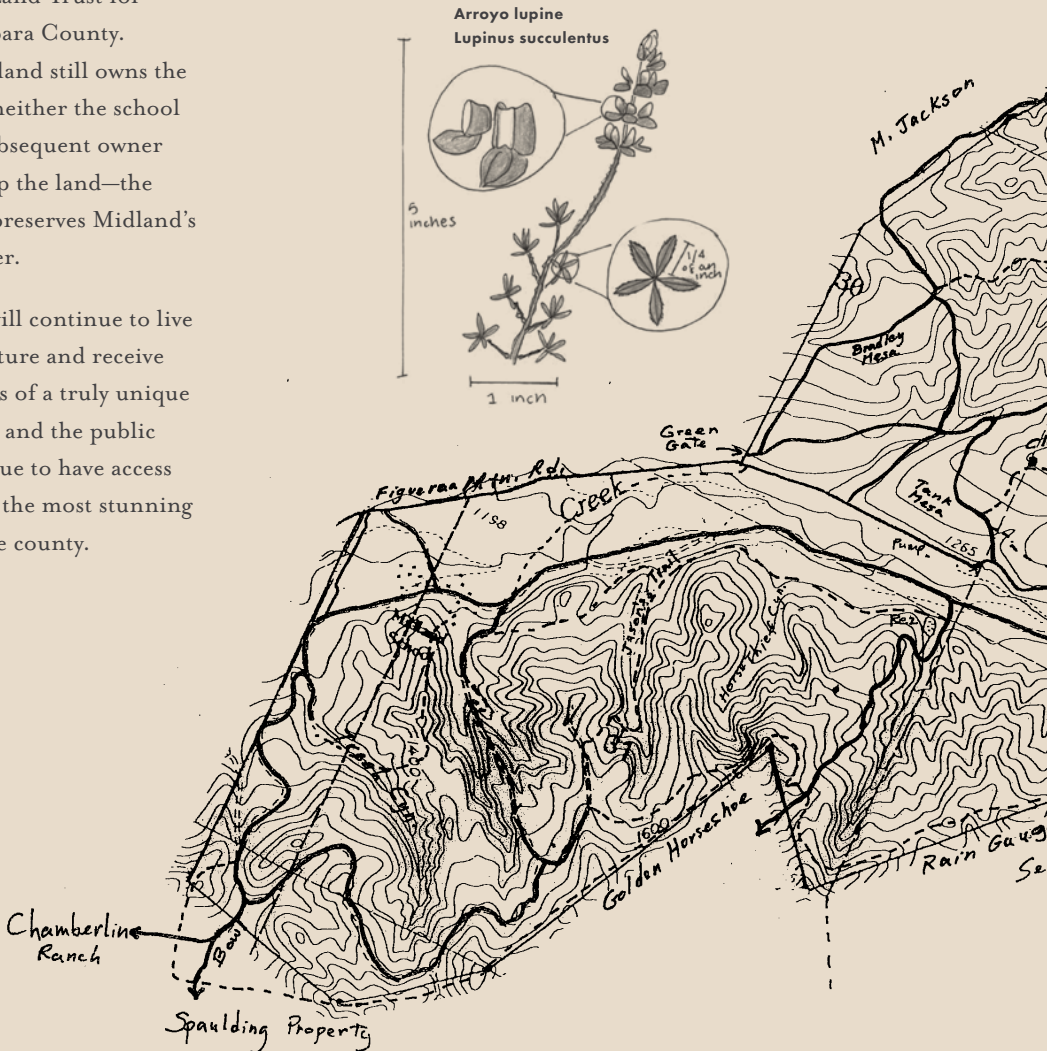
What brings us together is a love for the land.

In 2008, Midland placed 95% of its 2,860 acres into a conservation easement with The Land Trust for Santa Barbara County. While Midland still owns the property, neither the school nor any subsequent owner can develop the land—the easement preserves Midland's land forever.

Students will continue to live close to nature and receive the benefits of a truly unique education, and the public will continue to have access to some of the most stunning trails in the county.

FLORA AND FAUNA FOREVER:

"An environmentalist long before we had a word for it, Paul Squibb never stopped taking responsibility for his surroundings, immediate or remote... He reveled in paradox but held one truth to be simply and always true: It matters what we do." — Gary Lewis '45

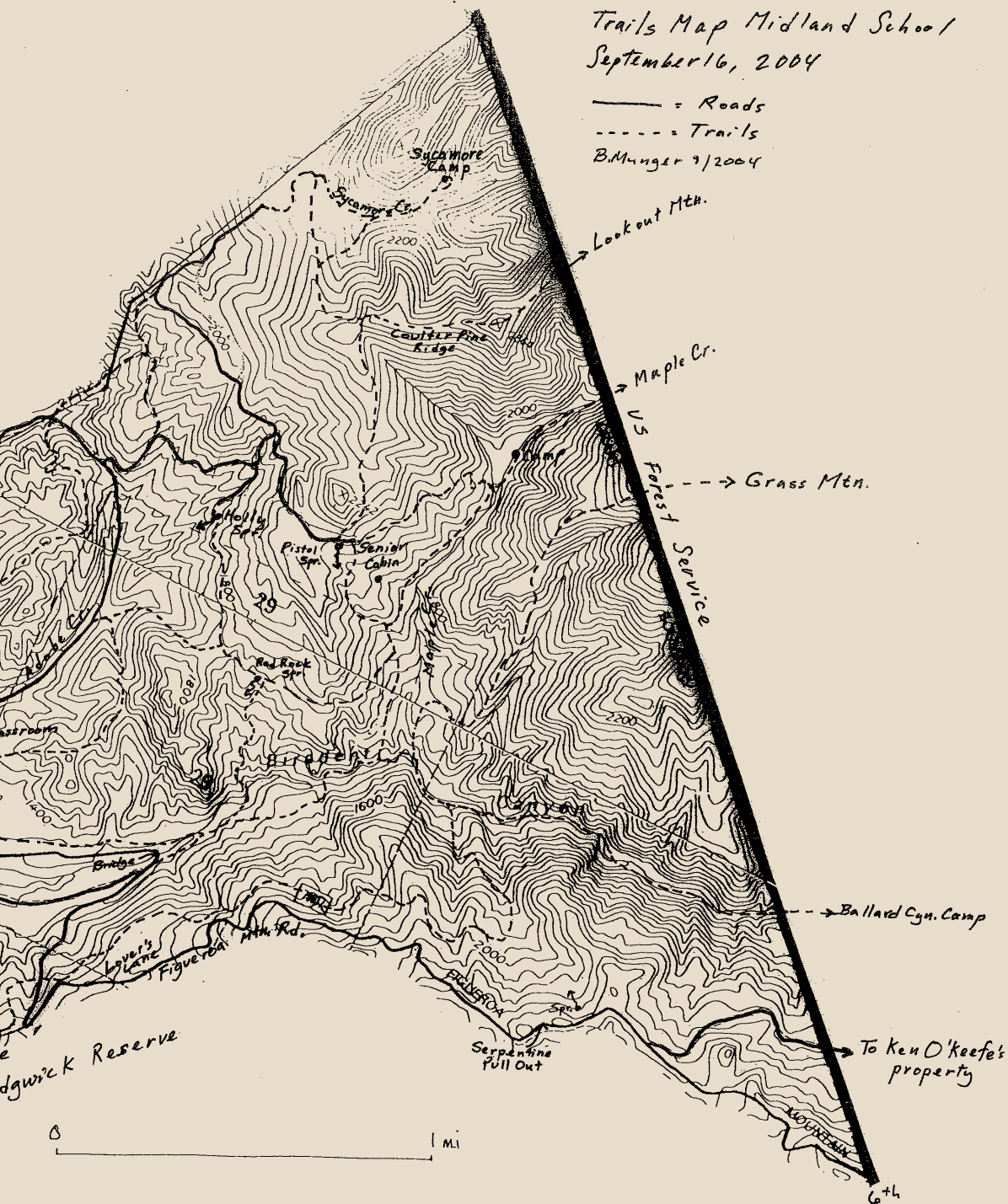


Trails Map Midland School / September 16, 2004

— = Roads

--- = Trails

B. Munger 9/2004



LIVE IN COMMUNITY

Actually farm-to-table

Our 10-acre organic garden and orchard produces 35-40 varieties of fruits and vegetables. 50% of what we eat, we grow on campus.

Family style dinners

Midland students share meals with faculty families 5 nights a week, engaging in lively conversation while enjoying the bounty of the ranch and garden.

Meaningful connection

A working understanding of what it takes to get healthy food from “farm to table” results in a deeper level of appreciation and sense of fulfillment in the community.

Encouraging one another

Students and faculty lead non-denominational community services in Midland’s historic chapel, a space for reflection, encouragement and learning.



Taking care of our environment

Living in community means being a good steward. Midland received a Governor’s Award for Environmental and Economic Leadership, California’s highest environmental honor.







TRAIN, PRACTICE, COMPETE AND PLAY

Midland Horse Program

Rooted in the principles of natural horsemanship, go beyond the basics of riding and learn horse behavior, preventative veterinary care, nutrition, pasture management, cowboy dressage and more!

Visual Arts

Develop a thoughtful way of observing the world, a language to describe it, and the creative skills to express what it means.

Competitive Sports

The field, court and trails are extensions of Midland's learning environment. Compete hard, have fun and develop leadership skills in a sport or activity of your choosing.

Outdoor Program

Learn and master the skills needed for backpacking, environmental stewardship, trip planning, camp craft, basic first aid, knots and trail work. Qualified students can pursue the Midland Ranger program to be able to lead their own overnight trips on the 2,860-acre Midland property.



FOCUS ON COLLEGE SUCCESS, NOT JUST ADMITTANCE

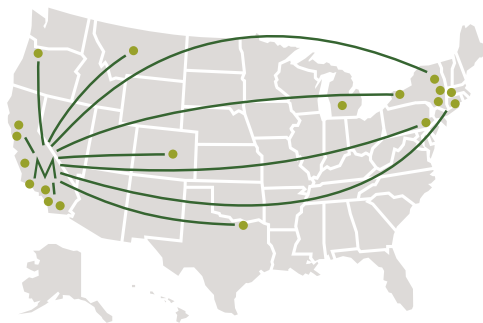
From here, you can go anywhere.

And we'll help you get there. Midland's college counseling office provides the tools, resources, and support to enable students to navigate the college search process, each step of the way.

Over 40 college representatives visit and recruit Midland students each fall. Our graduates stand out from the pack because of enriched leadership and experiential opportunities supported by our setting and academic and jobs programs.



Our recent graduates were admitted to top universities and liberal arts colleges:



Bard College
Bryn Mawr College
Boston College
Cal Poly, San Louis Obispo
Carnegie Mellon
Cornell University
Duke University
George Washington University
Harvard University
Kenyon College
Lewis & Clark College
Michigan State University
Middlebury College
MT State, Bozeman
New York University

Northeastern University
Oregon State University
Pitzer College
Pomona College
Purdue University
Stanford University
Tufts University
UC Berkeley
UC Davis
UC Los Angeles
UC Santa Barbara
UC San Diego
University of Pennsylvania
Whitman College
Williams College

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Application

- ☐ Apply online
- ☐ Application fee \$50 (non-refundable)
- ☐ Student interview (preferably in person, but If you're unable to visit Midland due to distance limitations, a telephone or Skype interview may be arranged.)

Supplemental Forms

- ☐ English teacher recommendation
- ☐ Math teacher recommendation
- ☐ School counselor recommendation
- ☐ Transcript release and confidentiality

Admission Test

- ☐ SSAT exam (Dates and registration information can be found at www.ssat.org. Midland's SSAT school code is 5074.)

PRIORITY DEADLINE: FEB. 15

Additional information about the admission process can be found online at www.midland-school.org/admission.



**VISIT
MIDLAND**

You really should see our campus for yourself!

Midland is located in Santa Barbara County in the town of Los Olivos, CA. Los Olivos is north of the cities of Santa Barbara and Buellton, and south of the cities of San Luis Obispo and Santa Maria.

SCHEDULE YOUR VISIT: 805-688-5114 or admissions@midland-school.org

MIDLAND SCHOOL

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