



## Educational Technology at Midland School

### PHILOSOPHY

Midland strives to serve the educational technology needs of students while remaining faithful to the philosophy of the school. The school's goal of evaluating all choices based on needs as opposed to wants results in a carefully planned program that directs resources to technological choices that enhance student learning and understanding while avoiding those technologies that tend to undermine our goals.

### MIDLAND OFFERS

Three faculty members support the Midland technology program. Librarian, Michelle Bone, works with all students to ensure that each develops research and information fluency; Director of Information Technology, Phil Hasseljian, maintains the computers and school network; Educational Technology Coordinator, Don Redl, collaborates with faculty, staff and administration to support the curriculum and technology coordination efforts. All three classroom teachers are intimately connected with the school's curriculum and the Midland students.

Midland offers a comprehensive set of choices sustained by the idea that while technology enhances our lives, it should never define them. Midland also distinguishes itself by what it does not offer. In a world with unlimited access to technology, it is our belief that the occasional absence of technology helps students to develop an awareness of the limitations that the excessive use of technology can have on their academic, physical, and social development. Often the obsession to being continuously "plugged in" is better expressed as being "tuned out," tuned out from social interactions, interactions with the outdoors, and direct interactions with the academic material. Midland refrains from using technology as a crutch for managing larger classes. Instead, Midland chooses to focus its resources on having small classes of ten or fewer students where a *personal* exchange of ideas, opinions and viewpoints takes place between students and faculty.

With these goals in mind, Midland does not offer Internet access in the students' cabins, nor is Wi-Fi access available throughout the campus for student use. Students are required to refrain from using their cell phones while at school and cell phones are given to their academic advisors during the term. The result is that while students have the necessary access to the Internet and technology, their interaction with technology is turned into a thoughtful choice as opposed to a mindless compulsion.

Like many other schools, Midland does have: six T-1 lines for Internet access, complete network access in the academic portions of the campus, a computer lab with twenty-six computers for student use, LCD projectors in almost every classroom, and a variety of content-area specific technology aligned with our curricula.

## ARE CHILDREN BEING PREPARED AND EDUCATED FOR THE 21ST CENTURY?

Given Midland's unique perspective, many parents ask this question when considering independent boarding school options. Midland works hard to assure parents that their children have an excellent level of proficiency with computer technology as well as a variety of applications and websites. At Midland, students develop informational and technological literacy skills. The future of educational technology is not about learning to utilize the latest gadgets, but rather, the biggest challenge for young men and women is distinguishing between the appropriate and inappropriate uses of technology. In this sense, Midland is ahead of the curve when compared to other high school options and philosophies.

Midland's technology program and philosophy are based on the International Society for Technology in Education's (ISTE) National Education Technology Standards for Students (2007):

### **1. Creativity and Innovation**

Students demonstrate creative thinking, construct knowledge, and develop innovative products and processes using technology.

### **2. Communication and Collaboration**

Students use digital media and environments to communicate and work collaboratively, including at a distance, to support individual learning and contribute to the learning of others.

### **3. Research and Information Fluency**

Students apply digital tools to gather, evaluate, and use information.

### **4. Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, and Decision Making**

Students use critical thinking skills to plan and conduct research, manage projects, solve problems, and make informed decisions using appropriate digital tools and resources.

### **5. Digital Citizenship**

Students understand human, cultural, and societal issues related to technology and practice legal and ethical behavior.

### **6. Technology Operations and Concepts**

Students demonstrate a sound understanding of technology concepts, systems, and operations.