



# MIDLAND SCHOOL PROFILE 2022-2023

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**Midland School**, located on a 2,860-acre ranch at the edge of the Los Padres National Forest, is a leader in place-based education. Midland’s diverse student body chooses a simple, self-reliant lifestyle that leads them to develop inner resources, to understand the difference between needs and wants, and to serve others. Everything we do—from how we maintain our campus to the way we feed ourselves to the courses we choose to teach—originates from an intentional college preparatory curriculum that focuses not only on academics, but also on leadership, community, and stewardship.

## ESTABLISHED 1932 • COLLEGE PREPARATORY • 9-12 BOARDING

80 students, boarding only  
 14 seniors  
 24% domestic students of color  
 6% international students

Average financial aid grant \$46,012  
 Farm to table (we grow 50% of our food)  
 Natural horsemanship program  
 704 student nights outside

**4:1**  
*student-to-faculty ratio*

**30%**  
*students of color*

**47%**  
*of students receive financial aid*

**95%**  
*plan to enroll in 4-year colleges or universities*



## COURSES AVAILABLE TO THE CLASS OF 2022

“Advanced” indicates a second year and further study in a subject. Courses with an \*asterisk may be taken for honors credit; honors indicates deeper level of study. Courses in italics are *electives*. Electives that don’t fall within the traditional curriculum include the .25 credit P/NC internships for Farm, Kitchen, or Ranch.

### GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS: A MINIMUM OF 20 UNITS

- 4 yrs English
- 3 yrs Mathematics
- 3 yrs Spanish
- 2 yrs Laboratory Science
- 3 yrs History and Social Science
- 1 yr Visual Arts
- 1 yr Midland 101 (.5 Natural Science, .5 Social Science)
- 1 sem Senior Thesis
- 2-3 yrs Electives

### ENGLISH

- English 9
- World Studies: Literature
- American Studies: Literature
- \*English 12
- Writing and a Sense of Place (.5 cr)*

### SCIENCE

- Midland 101: Natural History (.5 cr)
- Chemistry
- \*Biology
- Physics
- Geology (.5 cr)*

### MATHEMATICS

- Algebra 1
- Geometry
- Algebra 2
- Algebra 2 Accelerated
- Precalculus*
- \*Calculus 1*
- Statistics*

### HISTORY AND SOCIAL SCIENCE

- Midland 101: Cultural History (.5 cr)
- World Studies: History
- \*American Studies: History
- \*Cultural Anthropology (.5 cr)*

### VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

- Foundations of Visual Art
- Ceramics*
- Advanced Ceramics*
- Design*
- Drawing, Painting, and 2D Design*
- Performing Arts*

### SPANISH

- Spanish 1
- Spanish 2
- Spanish 3
- \*Spanish 4*
- Spanish Culture and Conversation*

## READING THE TRANSCRIPT

A typical course load includes five to six classes per semester. High achieving juniors often take two honors classes; some honors options may be limited due to the student's level of math and Spanish when they enrolled. We try to accommodate students who wish to take a variety of electives, but scheduling conflicts due to our small size can prevent some students from taking extra classes.

The GPA is calculated using an **unweighted 4.00 scale**. Midland's grading system awards 100-93 for an A, 92-90 for an A-, 89-87 for a B+, 86-83 for a B, 82-80 for a B-, and so on. A "D-" is a passing grade, but we often require a student who earns a C- or lower in core courses to take an approved summer course.

**Midland does not rank** its students because there are so few students per grade level. We have selective admissions criteria and offer only college preparatory classes.

**Farm Interns** learn soil science and year-round planning to coordinate with kitchen needs, and they weed, plant, pick, and wash produce. **Kitchen Interns** serve as a chef's apprentice and help plan meals and prepare food. **Ranch Interns** learn herd and ranch management as they handle horses, work with farriers and vets, move cattle, repair fences, and maintain pastures.

**The Senior Thesis**, a graduation requirement, culminates each student's Midland education by embodying the values of academic self-reliance, personal responsibility, and information literacy. Seniors explore a topic of their choice, prepare a 10-15 page formal research paper, and give a 20-minute oral presentation to the entire school. Occasionally, we grant students permission, in place of a written thesis paper, to complete a hands-on thesis project, which generally requires a more significant time commitment.

**Midland 101** is an interdisciplinary academic course that introduces first-year students to the ecosystems, geology, topography, botany, history, anthropology (our land is the site for what has been the largest Chumash community in California), and water science of Midland's 2,860 acres.



## THE WORK PROGRAM

For nine decades, Midland has operated without a maintenance or janitorial staff and instead relied on students to maintain the campus under the management of two school prefects and additional seniors who act as heads of specific jobs. **Midland honors the work that students do by including their jobs on the transcript under the WORK code.**

The average job requires 20-30 minutes per day for underclassmen and slightly more for seniors. Some students work in the dining hall, kitchen, bathrooms, athletic facilities, or library; others bring food to our tables from the organic garden, feed the pigs or horses, deliver mail, or ring the bell. Often a particular skill set or interest determines a student's job.

Additionally, many seniors also have a **Prefect** role that gives them tremendous **responsibility for the well-being of younger students**. These class prefects teach their prefectees about Midland's philosophy and traditions, and they act as positive role models, counselors, and guides.

Typically, two **Head Prefects** oversee the **Class Prefects** and the **Work Program** (assigning jobs and making sure they are done well), and they are the primary liaison between the Head of School and the students. Head Prefects also play an important role in disciplinary matters, working together with teachers through the student-faculty council.

Together, the demands of the Work Program and Prefect System make life at Midland uniquely challenging, requiring students to balance academics and athletics with responsibilities that their peers at other schools do not have. Midland students attend classes five days per week and have responsibilities on weekends and thus do not have time for traditional extracurricular activities. Our students have few opportunities to formally earn documented service hours, but they all perform a service to their immediate community every day, and they understand the value of helping others.

## AWARDS

We honor those *exceptionally rare* students—no more than 10% of the student body—whose contributions demonstrate the kind of truly remarkable excellence that would be recognized beyond Midland's campus. Typically, though not by mandate, awards are given mostly to seniors.

## STANDARDIZED AND AP TESTING

**Midland does not offer AP classes.** However, students in American Studies: History Honors, Spanish 4 Honors, or high level math courses occasionally take the AP exam, often at the end of senior year.

Midland students have access to take other College Board exams including the PSAT and SAT.

## DISCIPLINE REPORTING POLICY

Midland encourages students to discuss major disciplinary issues with colleges. However, because our students are subject to significantly more scrutiny than a typical day student whose weekend behaviors generally go unnoticed by school officials, we do not report most discipline incidents. Students with unresolved issues regarding disrespect, thievery, plagiarism, alcohol, or drugs will not graduate from Midland.

Midland recognizes the developmental challenges of adolescence and views discipline issues as opportunities to teach the importance of personal integrity, honesty, and community. Midland values its relationships with colleges and universities, and we will communicate about discipline issues if we feel the incident in question has not been thoroughly resolved on our campus or may have an impact on future communities.

## UNPLUGGED AND CONNECTED

Students do not have cell phones on campus. **Midland’s intentional technology fosters a tight-knit educational community based on face-to-face relationships, so students leave cell phones at home.** They use wifi-accessible chrome books both inside and outside the classroom. They check on the news or watch YouTube in the library with friends. They use technology to dive deep into learning and to spend time together as a community, but they do not feel tied to a cell phone or social media throughout the day.

## THINGS STUDENTS BRING TO MIDLAND

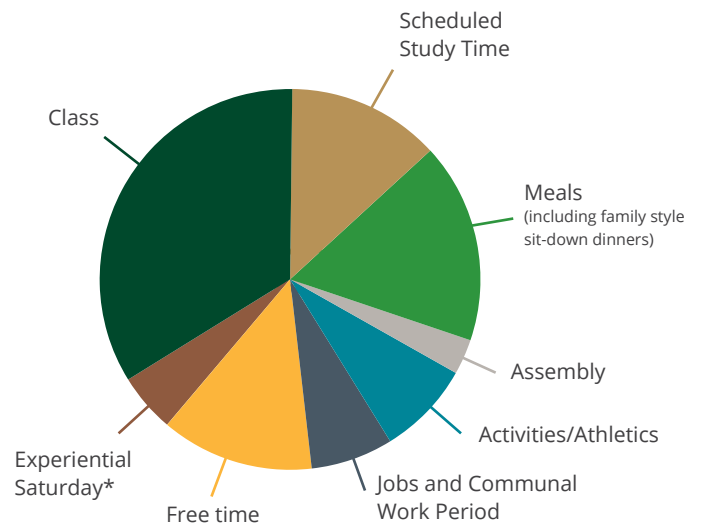
Axes, Lighters, Dogs, Horses, Hammocks, Bicycles, Work gloves, Pocket knives, Camping gear, iPods, Laptops, TI 84 calculators, and a plethora of musical instruments and costumes.

## SHOWERFIRES MAKE WAY FOR SOLAR

The iconic showerfire tank is now a thing of the past. Significant and necessary plumbing upgrades in 2021-2022 led us to construct new bathrooms in the living areas. The Class of 2023 will remember showers without electric water heaters. They will tell stories about gathering wood and preparing fires in tanks that heated the water. Not as onerous as it might seem, the job rotated among the grade levels, and senior Prefects helped those who needed assistance. These seniors were some of the last to teach this unique skill, and among the last to appreciate the community lessons taught by this anachronistic holdover from the 1930’s.



## HOW MIDLAND STUDENTS SPEND THEIR TIME (AVERAGE TIME PER WEEK)



**\*Experiential Saturdays** accommodate truly experiential learning and offer students opportunities to try something new without the pressure of grades. Sample offerings include: Bee Keeping, Beyond The Bubble—Dialogue Across Political Lines, Photography in the Fire Burn Zone, Origami and the Science of Folding 3D Objects, The Science of Composting, Financial Literacy, Introduction to Improvisation, and Knots, Tangles, and Other Adventures in Spatial Mathematics.

## ACCREDITATION AND MEMBERSHIP

Midland is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges and is a member of the National Association of Independent Schools, the California Association of Independent Schools, and The Association of Boarding Schools.

# CHARACTER CREATED IN COMMUNITY

## THE CLASS OF 2023—LEADING BY EXAMPLE

The class of 2023 is the last class on campus to have fully experienced life at Midland School before the COVID pandemic. Students were sent home in March of the 2019-2020 academic year and studied online until October 2020. Like many schools around the world, Midland was not able to run its full gamut of experiential programming during this time. Upon returning to Midland as sophomores, the class of '23 was separated by gendered living cohorts as part of pandemic protocols. Students noted how challenging it was to be more separated from each other than during their initial boarding experience.

As school slowly eased toward normalcy, these students were challenged to work together, delegate jobs, and learn to communicate as they moved into upperclassmen leadership roles in their Junior year. Through their Junior Leadership blocks and group challenges such as planning Junior Dance Weekend, they started to rebuild that sense of community. The current Head Prefect for the class of '23 notes, "When we returned to school earlier than the other students to take on our roles as Seniors, something clicked. We found ourselves listening to one another and working as a team to support each other." This small group of 14 seniors may have missed a window of bonding time at the beginning of their high school careers, but they are always ready to work with what they have. They strive to set the example of being responsible and dependable student leaders, and they now work together as a more cohesive team despite the impacts of COVID.

These seniors have helped set the tone for Midland's inclusive community, where 42% of current students identify as LGBTQ. Students led the initiative to revise the school dress code and to be further attuned to a wider range of expressions that may not sit

comfortably within a gender binary. Additionally, senior students lead a variety of affinity groups including LatinX, Black Student Alliance, Asian Alliance, Jew Crew and Queercus (a play on the Latin word for oak, quercus) that sponsor events and raise awareness of critical issues to the whole community.

All students in the class of 2023 are leaders in their own way, whether through heading up early morning feedings with Horse Crew, serving as prefects and mentors to younger students, or keeping the line on punctuality and quality control with their job crews. While one student may lead by their thoughtful, welcoming nature, another will inspire through their out-of-the-box thinking and free spirited adventures around campus. The class of 2023 will graduate driven athletes, curious intellectuals, advocates for social justice, and passionate risk-takers. We are so excited to see what they choose as the next stop along their learning journeys.



## FROM HERE THEY CAN GO ANYWHERE

**Typically, 100% of seniors enroll in a wide variety of selective and highly selective 4-year colleges and universities.** These institutions range from small, private liberal arts colleges to public, flagship universities. With a reasonable frequency that we are proud of, they also enroll in California's community college system and at Ivy, or Ivy-like, institutions. We are happy to share the full list at any time.

## MIDLAND DURING COVID

On March 20, 2020, Midland sent all students home and transitioned to remote learning. Because we had the ability to transition quickly and to offer tech support to everyone and because we have such a strong relationship with our students, we confidently continued to offer a full academic program and letter grades for the remainder of the second semester.

On October 22, 2020, after a few weeks of remote learning, we welcomed students back on campus, following all protocols mandated by the Santa Barbara County of Public Health.

## WHEN MIDLAND STUDENTS...

Live at a boarding school with a roommate in a cabin heated with a wood stove	→	kindness, forgiveness, loyalty
Complete a daily job that contributes significantly to the daily operation of the school	→	responsibility, humility, confidence
Experience life on a 2,860-acre ranch with 40+ miles of wilderness trails	→	independence, resourcefulness, resilience
Light fires to heat cabins, classrooms, and shower water	→	reliability, conscientiousness, generosity
Dine with faculty families and all grade levels at family-style, sit-down dinners five nights per week	→	politeness, compassion, respect
Live and learn alongside teachers in a rigorous college prep community	→	curiosity, perseverance, integrity
Have no access to cell service and therefore navigate life without a smartphone	→	self-discipline, self-reliance, authenticity

## THEY DEVELOP...