



October 15, 2021

Dear Middlesex Community,

Since its founding in 1901, the core mission of Middlesex School has been to “find the promise in every student.” In our early years, those students were all boys. While they were somewhat diverse in their religious belief, they varied by few other markers, including race and ethnicity.

That is not who we are today.

In the intervening 120 years, Middlesex has sought to make the School a more diverse community, and forged a path for underrepresented and marginalized groups. We have sought to transform the meaning of a Middlesex education from one of power and privilege to one of openness and opportunity. This is a history of which we are proud—and on which we intend to build.

You have shared vital feedback with us on matters of equity within Middlesex. We are deeply grateful that members of the Middlesex community have provided their input through several avenues, including a yearlong assessment by our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion consultants. This ongoing collaboration has led us to renewed guiding principles and specific ongoing work that the Board and the School are undertaking to strengthen our community.

We write today representing a Board of 34 individuals who care deeply about Middlesex. Together, we are uniform in our belief that the breadth of personal identities within Middlesex is a key element that makes the school a special, vibrant place of learning and growth. The Board recognizes that there is still work to do between our foundational ideals and the actual lived experience of many Black, Hispanic, Asian American Pacific Islander, LGBTQIA+, Jewish, international, and disabled students, faculty, staff, and alumni.

As an educational institution, we believe an open exchange of viewpoints is vital to student development and intellectual excellence. We believe that respectful debate and disagreement are not only healthy, but the very ground upon which a learning community thrives. We realize that, at times, that discourse may become uncomfortable.

There is no ground, however, for any behavior, policy, or social climate that elevates some individuals over others based on race, class, religion, gender, or identity. It is antithetical to our Mission and our desire to develop an inclusive community.

The Board recognizes the need for increased accountability when an individual’s personal identity is used against them. The use of power in support of harm is deeply concerning and fundamentally unacceptable at Middlesex.

We will work with faculty, staff, and administration to take the following steps to allow the unimpaird pursuit of individual promise, as well as the promise of a truly inclusive community.

The Board of Trustees will:

- Provide the School with the resources required to establish additional positions that will work with our Dean of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in support of students and employees in equity and inclusion.
- Continue to address Board composition to better reflect the breadth of identities and backgrounds of the student body.
- Receive consistent professional development in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

- Incorporate DEI training for all new trustees as part of their Board orientation.
- Work with the Alumni Association to create better channels of communication and feedback between alumni, the Board, and the School.
- Develop a framework for tracking progress on quantitative diversity measures of representation, access, and equity within the School.

The School will:

- Continue our focus on broadening our recruitment and retention efforts, so that we build a more diverse student body and a faculty that better reflects the composition of our student body.
- Enhance DEI opportunities for students, faculty, and staff so we are better equipped to manage difficult conversations and understand our own biases.
- Continue our review of the discipline process at Middlesex to ensure that all students are treated equally.
- Invest in more professional development in DEI for both faculty and staff.
- Enhance our faculty evaluation process to incorporate cultural competency as a measure for reflection, feedback, and improvement.
- Continue our traditional and ongoing curriculum review and work with department heads and faculty to ensure that a broad range of voices and perspectives are represented in our academic program.
- Continue our consideration of the “true cost” of a Middlesex education and provide the resources needed for all students to fully engage with and feel at home in the community.
- Support affinity groups that foster opportunities for connection and conversation with the School.

The Board’s work will be ongoing. Please look for an update on the School’s progress on many of these initiatives later this school year. The Trustees DEI Committee invites your feedback at deitrustees@mxschool.edu. We look forward to our continued partnership with you on this important and ongoing work.

Sincerely,



Stephen D. Lari ‘90
President
Board of Trustees



Brickson Diamond P’13
Chair
Trustees Diversity,
Equity, and Inclusion
Committee



David J. Beare
Head of School