



Dear Members of the MICDS Community,

As we welcome our new Head of School Jay Rainey, the energy and excitement of our community is palpable. Between Jay's [induction](#) at an all-school assembly, [Homecoming festivities](#) and the many events and opportunities for community members to meet and get to know Jay and Ruth, it has been a great start to the year.

MICDS has much to be proud of and to celebrate! Our School continues to perform at the highest levels across key measures used to evaluate independent schools, including enrollment, endowment, college placement outcomes and standardized and AP test scores. Our facilities are exceptional, and our students are excelling both inside and outside the classroom and being recognized for achievements in community service, STEM research, robotics, athletics and visual and performing arts.

Now that school is in full swing, we write to share the Board's priorities for the 2019-20 academic year.

The focus of the Board is long-range and strategic. The [MICDS Mission](#) is our "North Star," and the [Strategic Plan](#) is our roadmap. We keep these documents at the forefront of our work and use them to guide us and remain focused on safeguarding MICDS' performance, financial condition and reputation.

In addition, the Board of Trustees is focusing on the following priorities this year:

Head of School Transition – The Board will onboard and partner closely with Jay in his first year and support him in delivering on the [Head of School charge](#).

Strategic Plan Implementation – Working with the administrative team and through Board Committees, the Board will monitor the progress and implementation of [Strategic Plan](#) priorities.

Good Governance Practices – Strong, open communication between the Board and Head of School is imperative and a top Board priority. The Board will continue to advance best practices in independent school governance, improving Board function, communication and effectiveness.

Culture of Community – The Board will help to advance and sustain a culture of community

centered on kindness, dignity and respect where every student, family and faculty member feels a sense of belonging and connection. Working through the Collaboration and Inclusion Committee and with the administrative team, the Board will promote and assess efforts to prepare students to thrive in a global world and will work to ensure that MICDS graduates compassionate and culturally-competent critical thinkers and problem-solvers.

Financial Sustainability—Safeguarding MICDS’ financial sustainability and ensuring that MICDS has a secure and diverse funding base that supports annual operations, strategic priorities and facilities maintenance are vital Board responsibilities and priorities. Working through the Finance and Audit, Investment and Facilities Committees, the Board will begin development of a long-range plan for targeted investment, facilities maintenance funding and other initiatives. The Board will also evaluate MICDS’ approach to tuition support to ensure accessibility of an MICDS education.

ISACS Accreditation Preparation – MICDS is in year two of the Independent Schools Association of the Central States (ISACS) [accreditation process](#), and this year’s focus is a comprehensive self-study which examines all major programs and aspects of the School. The self-study is an opportunity to reflect, celebrate progress and think together about our School’s future. Trustees will consult, as appropriate, on self-study committees, and the Board will affirm that MICDS is meeting ISACS’ standards for membership and governance.

As members of the Board of Trustees, it is truly an honor to serve our great School. We are inspired by the opportunity to advance the tradition of educational innovation and excellence that has earned MICDS the reputation as a leading independent school in the country.

Finally, we extend deep gratitude to our outstanding teachers and administrators. They help make MICDS the special place that it is, and the achievements of our students and School are due, in large part, to their dedication.

Thank you for your support and commitment to MICDS.

Sincerely,

Michelle Leith Cohen '88, Board Chair

Kent Rapp '76, First Vice Chair

Andy Cowen, Second Vice Chair and Treasurer

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