Dear Parents,

During the month of March the accreditation visiting team spent three days at Seabury Hall for the purpose of evaluating the school based on the self-study report that was developed over the past two years. Students, parents, teachers, administrators, staff, alumni, and the board were represented during the interviews with the visiting team. But, truly extraordinary is what everyone has done to make this school a “transformative” place for children.

What made me most proud is that we did not put on “airs” nor did we create a “dog and pony show” for the purpose of impressing them. They were able to see who we are from assemblies with teachers and students sharing their personal stories and celebrating the community to the “He Ha’upu Aloha” practice to the authentic classroom experiences.

I have never seen a visiting committee so moved by a school in my 36 years in independent education. We were all deeply touched by visiting team member Pua Ka’ai’s opening comments as she shared her impressions of our school and our school culture. She spoke about her first moments of her visit when three boys at assembly shared their deepest feelings while giving speeches and quoted excerpts. When Jim Lusby, the committee chair, came to me on the third morning for our review meeting, he disclosed that the committee did not want to just stand up and give commendations and recommendations. Instead they were so inspired by the school they wanted to give their commentary in a very different way. The delivery of their report was like no other that I have ever seen and it demonstrated their deep admiration for what they not only saw, but experienced.

So, the visiting team shared “their story of Seabury Hall”. The story is about us all, the work that is done by all of our gifted and caring teachers, the work that is done by all of the highly committed and skilled administrators, the work that is done by our generous and devoted Board of Trustees, the sacrifice and understanding of the importance of education by our parents, and most importantly, the hard work and commitment of our very special students. This occurs because we serve as a very functional and caring family. Together we make this happen. At times we may bicker and disagree, but most of the time we look at how we make things better. The freedom that we all have to create is what makes this place so very special. As the committee stated, “we clearly transform children, within a very special community. And, we would certainly like to know the recipe for the special sauce”.

I have pondered my accreditation involvement and realized that I have been on more than 40 accreditation teams and reviewed and assessed more than 200 accreditation reports. I have never seen a “grade report” this stellar in my 36 years of experience in independent schools. The comments and ratings that we received are beyond “honor roll” and “Headmaster’s List”. Most importantly was what the visiting team learned from our students regarding their experience and love for the school. It was demonstrated in their comments made by them when asked “How would you describe Seabury Hall?” Words like “tolerant with trust, caring, community, rigor, safe, inspiring, non-judgmental, loving” were repeated in many of the meetings. It is a testimony to all in the school as well as our parents for the fine work that has been done to ensure an excellent education as well as extraordinary experience.

You all have my most sincere thanks for making this school such an exceptional place for young people to thrive and prepare for a life filled with an equal dose of challenge and promise.

On another note, I would like to congratulate the seniors for their outstanding college acceptances. I invite you to review the college acceptances on the Seabury Hall website. You will be impressed with the quality and of colleges that are admitting Seabury Hall students from the Ivy League and outstanding smaller private colleges to the exceptional state colleges and universities throughout the country. We are very proud of the class of 2015 for all they have accomplished.

Aloha,

Joe Schmidt