

## The Importance of *Creativity*

By Sasha Clayton

In April 2008, a report was released from the Conference Board and Americans for the Arts, in partnership with the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) which indicated that while companies are increasingly ranking creativity and innovation amongst the most important workplace skills, schools are not providing opportunities for students to build these skills. Furthermore, with mid-year budget cuts in schools a reality, training in the arts is certain to be drastically cut back.

At Hilldale, students are afforded the opportunity to study music, visual art, drama, and foreign language on a regular basis—all areas which foster creativity and nurture existing talents. Without access to the arts, students are less likely to succeed in traditional subjects. The arts activate and develop different parts of the brain; they provide concrete examples of history and culture; and they present connections amongst the various subjects that students learn. Additionally, students see themselves and each other in alternative capacities. Students learn that people have different areas of strengths and challenge, and they form team-building skills.

As we study our theme of the month, Success, we have learned that according to President Theodore Roosevelt, "The single most important ingredient in the formula for success is knowing how to get along with people." Therefore, we continue practicing social interaction skills during ethics and self-awareness classes in a formal capacity, as well as informally during core classes and in drama and music practice.

The AASA study also indicates that during the interview process, employers are seeking candidates who are able to think creatively when problem solving, who can respond to hypothetical scenarios, and who have experience in volunteer or extra-curricular activities. Hilldale students not only have access to learning these skills during Art, Music, Spanish, and Drama classes, they are asked to think creatively in all subjects! Whether Ms. Cohen is asking her students a "thinking-cap" question, Ms. Mendoza has assigned her students to write their own math word problems, Mr. Barnes is requiring his students to formulate hypotheses about a science experiment, or Mrs. Yoo-Lee is inviting her students to be their most innovative selves during creative writing, Hilldale students are meeting these expectations daily. They will be prepared to take on the careers of their choosing, because they will be armed with the knowledge, skills, and ability to think creatively. They will achieve success!