

OPENING TALK
1989-1990 SCHOOL YEAR
FRIDAY, AUGUST 25, 1989
"MOVING FORWARD ON CREATING OUR FUTURE"

GOOD MORNING. IT IS VERY SPECIAL TO HAVE ALL MEMBERS OF THE ACADEMY COMMUNITY TOGETHER.

I HOPE YOU HAVE ALL HAD A GOOD WEEK, AND ARE READY FOR THE CHALLENGES THAT WILL FACE US ON MONDAY, WHEN OUR ACADEMIC YEAR OFFICIALLY BEGINS.

I KNOW YOU HAVE MANY THINGS ON YOUR MIND AS THEY RELATE TO GETTING READY AND PREPARED FOR OUR STUDENTS; AND IN THAT REGARD, SOME OF YOU MAY BE WONDERING WHY I AM ASKING US TO COME TOGETHER AS A COMMUNITY TO TALK ABOUT OUR FUTURE, ESPECIALLY WHEN OUR PRESENT IS SO IMMINENT.

HOWEVER, I BELIEVE WE MUST BEGIN THE YEAR BY FOCUSING ON THE IMPORTANT AND NOT JUST THE URGENT; AND I HOPE YOU FIND SOME VALUE IN THE THINGS THAT I WILL SHARE BECAUSE THIS IS NOT INTENDED TO BE A SPEECH, ALTHOUGHT IT MAY SEEM LIKE THAT, IT IS, RATHER, SOME PERSONAL REFLECTIONS, AND AN INVITATION TO A CONTINUING CONVERSATION AND DIALOGUE.

YOU MUST ALSO KNOW THAT I APPROACHED THIS MORNING WITH SOME LEVEL OF APPREHENSION. AS MANY OF YOU KNOW, I SPEAK TO LITERALLY HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE DURING AN ACADEMIC YEAR, ON VARIOUS DIMENSIONS OF THE ACADEMY PROGRAM, AND WHAT WE ARE DOING AND WHY. BUT YOU, AS A COMMUNITY, ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT GROUP THAT I TALK WITH EACH YEAR; THE RESPONSIBILITY I FEEL TOWARD THE ACADEMY AND THE PROFOUND RESPECT THAT I HAVE FOR YOU, REQUIRES ME TO WEIGH MY THOUGHTS, IDEAS, AND WORDS MORE CAREFULLY THAN I MIGHT USUALLY. HOW YOU SPEND YOUR TIME AND WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT, AND HOW YOU EMBODY AND PRACTICE WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT MATTERS TO ME, AND I DON'T WANT TO BE ONE THAT EITHER WASTES YOUR TIME OR ASKS YOU TO REFLECT ON TRIVIAL THINGS.

AS THE LEADER OF THIS INSTITUTION, I ALSO FEEL A RESPONSIBILITY TO LET YOU KNOW WHAT I AM THINKING; BECAUSE WHAT I THINK ABOUT, AND THE WAY I SHAPE MY IDEAS, AND IN FACT THE WAY I SPEND MY TIME, HAS IMPACT ON THIS PLACE, AND AS MEMBERS OF THIS INSTITUTION, YOU NEED TO KNOW HOW I THINK WE MUST MOVE FORWARD IN CREATING OUR FUTURE.

IN JUNE AT OUR FACULTY AND STAFF RETREAT, WE BEGAN OUR TWO DAYS WITH AN ACTIVITY CALLED "STEPPING STONES." THE FIRST STEPPING STONE WAS THE CREATION OF THE ACADEMY, AND THE LAST STEPPING STONE WAS CALLED, "AND THEN THERE IS NOW."

AND IT IS WITH THAT LAST STEPPING STONE THAT WE BEGIN...

IN THE LAST FEW DAYS MANY OF YOU HAVE RECEIVED A LOT OF NUT-AND-BOLTS INFORMATION. WHAT I WANT TO IS TO SHARE SOME THOUGHTS AND SOME BEHAVIORAL AND OPERATIONAL ASSUMPTIONS AND PREMISES--TO RAISE SOME QUESTIONS TO GIVE YOU A SENSE OF HOW I SEE OUR UNFOLDING AND DEVELOPING COMMUNITY NOW AND IN THE FUTURE, AND TO SHARE WITH YOU THE SENSE OF BOTH PRIVILEGE AND RESPONSIBILITY THAT I BELIEVE WE HAVE IN BEING A PART OF THIS VERY SPECIAL AND UNIQUE SCHOOL--A SCHOOL THAT THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE HAS SAID, "HAS KEPT ITS PROMISE."

WE TRULY HAVE AN UNPARALLELED OPPORTUNITY TO CREATE AN EXTRAORDINARY EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT, AND TO BECOME A LIGHTHOUSE INSTITUTION FOR ILLINOIS AND THE NATION BY DEVELOPING A COMPREHENSIVE, INTERDISCIPLINARY AND INTEGRATIVE PROGRAM IN MATHEMATICS, SCIENCE, AND HUMANITIES. A PROGRAM THAT BOTH INSPIRES AND PROVOKES--THAT STRETCHES

THE IMAGINATION AND DEMANDS DETAIL, THAT ENCOURAGES REFLECTION, AND REQUIRES ACCOUNTABILITY--THAT PROVIDES INFORMATION AND DEVELOPS INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION, AND THAT NURTURES AND MAKES SAFE, AND THEN SENDS OUT.

WE HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO CONTINUE TO CULTIVATE DICHOTOMIES AND PARADOXES, AND TO MAKE THEM WORK. AND IN MANY WAYS, I BELIEVE, THIS IS A YEAR OF WRESTLING WITH PARADOXES AND POSSIBILITIES.

IT IS A TIME FOR US TO RESOLVE ISSUES OF CONTROL AND EMPOWERMENT--ISSUES OF SECURITY AND RISK--ISSUES OF SYSTEMATIZATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP. AND OUR ABILITY TO SEEK OUT THE RESOLUTION OF THESE PARADOXES WILL HAVE A PROFOUND IMPACT ON OUR ABILITY TO CREATE OUR PREFERRED FUTURE.

WE ALL CAME HERE BECAUSE WE BELIEVED WE COULD MAKE A SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF CHILDREN, THROUGH THE PROFESSIONS WE ALL CHOSE, IF WE COULD ONLY DO IT OUR WAY, IF WE COULD SYNTHESIZE ALL WE BELIEVED ABOUT LEARNING, AND EMPOWERING PEOPLE, AND TRY TO REPLICATE IT WITHIN ALL FACETS OF THE ACADEMY'S PROGRAMS AND OPERATIONS. I BELIEVE WE HAVE

THAT OPPORTUNITY AND IT IS EVEN STRONGER TODAY THAN IT WAS THREE YEARS AGO.

WHAT WE DO FROM NOW ON WILL SET THE COURSE FOR THIS INSTITUTION FOR YEARS TO COME, AND FOR THAT REASON WE MUST PROCEED WITH CARE--NOT NECESSARILY CAUTION--MAKING SURE WE ALWAYS HAVE THE COURAGE TO ASK THE RIGHT QUESTIONS, AND THEN TO DO WHAT IS RIGHT.

WARREN BENNIS MADE AN INTERESTING DISTINCTION BETWEEN A LEADER AND A MANAGER. HE SAYS, "LEADERS DO THE RIGHT THING; MANAGERS DO THINGS RIGHT."

I RECOGNIZE THAT DOING THE RIGHT THING MAY MEAN THAT WE AS LEADERS DO IT ALL OVER AGAIN, AND AGAIN--AND AGAIN--WHETHER IT'S REDOING A SCHEDULE, REFORMULATING A PROGRAM, RETYPING A MEMO, OR RECLEANSING A CARPET.

WE ARE ALL hand-picked for this institution, and for THAT REASON, I BELIEVE IN OUR COLLECTIVE INTELLIGENCE AND COMMITMENT, AND THE CONCEPT OF CONSENSUAL VALIDATION. IF ENOUGH OF US THINK SOMETHING IS RIGHT FOR THE ACADEMY, IT PROBABLY IS. AND NONE OF US HAS A MONOPOLY ON WISDOM.

THE POINT I HOPE I AM MAKING IS THAT WE HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO DEVELOP A COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP.

IN AN EFFORT TO GET THE ACADEMY OPEN YEARS AGO, AND TO GET THINGS STARTED AND WORKING IN A VERY SHORT PERIOD OF TIME, WE'VE MADE MISTAKES, AND WE ARE FAR FROM PERFECT. BUT THE CONTROL IS OURS TO CHANGE THEM, AND WE HAVE MADE IMPORTANT STRIDES. WE NEED TO TAKE TIME TO CELEBRATE, REFLECT ON, AND PLAN FOR WHAT WE WANT TO BECOME, AND DO IT TOGETHER, AND THAT IS THE CONTEXT OF OUR COMMITMENT TO THE PROCESS OF STRATEGIC PLANNING.

THAT PROCESS HAS ENABLED US TO REFLECT ONCE AGAIN ON THE MISSION, PURPOSE, AND VALUES OF THE ACADEMY--TO WRESTLE WITH OUR BEDROCK CONVICTIONS AND BELIEFS, TO ESTABLISH OPERATIONAL PARAMETERS FOR SELF-GOVERNANCE, TO DEVELOP OUR OWN CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS, AND TO ESTABLISH OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES THAT WILL MOVE US FORWARD TO ACCOMPLISH THAT WHICH WE BELIEVE IN.

DESPITE THE ANXIETY THAT THE DRAFT DOCUMENT HAS CREATED IN SOME MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITY, IT HAS PROVIDED A FOUNDATION FOR CRITICAL DEBATE AND DISCUSSION. PEOPLE OF GOODWILL CAN AND DO DISAGREE. AND WE WILL HAVE ANOTHER FORUM IN THE NOT TOO DISTANT FUTURE WHERE ALL MEMBERS OF THE ACADEMY COMMUNITY CAN COME TOGETHER AGAIN TO VOICE THEIR CONCERNS, BECAUSE A FUNDAMENTAL CONTEXT OF THIS PLAN IS TRUST in the institution and its people, so that the mission CAN BE ACCEPTED AND THE BELIEFS CAN BE EMBODIED.

AS I TOLD OUR NEW STAFF ON MONDAY, IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT WE CULTIVATE OWNERSHIP IN THIS PLAN BECAUSE IT REPRESENTS THE TEMPLATE FOR OUR DESIGN OF THE FUTURE, AND UNLESS WE ALL KNOW WHERE WE ARE GOING, ANY DIRECTION WILL DO.

WHEN IT IS COMPLETED, THE STRATEGIC PLAN WILL BE A DYNAMIC DOCUMENT OF OUR CULTURE, WHICH ARE NOW IN THE PROCESS OF RESTRUCTURING AND RESHAPING. HOWEVER DESPITE THE RESTRUCTURING AND RESHAPING, THERE ARE NORMS ALREADY IN PLACE, OPERATIONAL NORMS THAT HAVE UNCONSCIOUSLY OR INTUITIVELY BEEN INFUSED INTO OUR BEHAVIOR, AND HAVE CONTRIBUTED DRAMATICALLY TO OUR SUCCESS; THEY INCLUDE THESE:

- * TREMENDOUS ENERGY AND COMMITMENT TO THIS INSTITUTION AND WHAT IT STANDS FOR

- * A SENSE OF HUMOR AND AN ABILITY TO LAUGH AT OURSELVES
- * SHARED OWNERSHIP OF PROBLEMS; A RECOGNITION THAT PROBLEMS NEVER BELONG TO ONE INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP
- * A DEEP SENSE OF PROFESSIONALISM AND RESPECT FOR SCHOLARSHIP AND LEARNING
- * A COMMITMENT TO PARTNERSHIP, COLLABORATION, AND ALLIANCE BUILDING
- * A WILLINGNESS TO TAKE RISKS, AND A HIGH TOLERANCE FOR AMBIGUITY
- * A WILLINGNESS TO BE ACCOUNTABLE TO THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY
- * A COMMITMENT TO OWNERSHIP, AND THE BELIEF THAT IT'S ESSENTIAL FOR THE MAXIMUM DEVELOPMENT OF PEOPLE
- * A SENSE OF AUTHENTICITY, AND A BELIEF IN BEING CONGRUENT
- * AN ACCEPTANCE OF MISTAKES BECAUSE THEY DEMONSTRATE THAT WE'VE AT LEAST TRIED SOMETHING
- * A FEELING AMONG STAFF THAT WE CAN HAVE AN IMPACT, AND WE CAN EFFECT CHANGE, AND THAT PROBLEMS CAN BE SOLVED AND ARE NOT INSURMOUNTABLE
- * A BELIEF THAT EXCELLENCE IS POSSIBLE, AND THAT PEOPLE WANT TO GROW AND ACHIEVE
- * A BELIEF THAT TRUST IS ESSENTIAL FOR GROWTH

- * A WILLINGNESS TO EXPERIMENT AND TO DREAM, AND AS THOREAU SAID, "DREAMS ARE THE TOUCHSTONES OF OUR CHARACTER."

IN A BRIEF THREE YEARS, WE HAVE GONE THROUGH ESSENTIALLY THREE CRITICAL PHASES...

THE FIRST YEAR WAS OUR DEVELOPMENT OR INFANCY;
THE SECOND YEAR WAS OUR SURVIVAL--OR PERHAPS CHILDHOOD;
THE THIRD YEAR WAS ADOLESCENCE; AND
YEAR FOUR, I BELIEVE, WILL REPRESENT A NEW BEGINNING, A SYNTHESIS, AND A SYNERGY AS WE MOVE TOWARD MATURITY.

WE ARE NOW AT A TIME WHERE WE HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY AND RESPONSIBILITY TO SHAPE THE CONTEXT OF STUDENT LEARNING; TO SHAPE THE WAYS STUDENT'S VIEW MATHEMATICS, SCIENCE, AND HUMANITIES AND THEIR INTERCONNECTIONS, AND TO SHAPE THE CONTEXT WITHIN WHICH THEY PERCEIVE MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE AS ESSENTIAL TOOLS FOR SOLVING THE PROBLEMS THAT PLAGUE US AS A WORLD SOCIETY. AND WHAT IS THAT CONTEXT OF STUDENT THINKING AND LEARNING THAT WE ALL WISH TO SHAPE?

THE ACADEMY HAS SPENT A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF TIME BEGINNING TO DEFINE THAT CONTEXT. WE HAVE CHARACTERIZED IT AS OUR STUDENT LEARNER OUTCOMES, THOSE SKILLS, BEHAVIORS,

HABITS OF MIND AND SENSIBILITIES THAT WE WISH STUDENTS TO DEMONSTRATE AS A RESULT OF WORKING WITH US.

OUR COMMITMENT IS TO DEVELOP LEARNERS WHO ARE PREPARED TO FACE THE CHALLENGES OF THE 21ST CENTURY, WITH KNOWLEDGE, ANALYTICAL AND EVALUATIVE SKILLS, AND WITH ETHICS. THE PRIMARY FOCUS OF OUR PROGRAM IS, AND HAS ALWAYS BEEN, THE DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS AS SCHOLARS AND APPRENTICE INVESTIGATORS. AND OUR STUDENT LEARNER OUTCOMES, CRAFTED SEVERAL YEARS AGO, AND IN THE PROCESS OF REFINEMENT AND REDEFINITION, REPRESENT THE BEHAVIORAL CONSTRUCTS OF WHAT APPRENTICE INVESTIGATION MEANS AND LOOKS LIKE.

AND WHAT APPRENTICE INVESTIGATION MEANS IS REALLY VERY SIMPLE--IT MEANS STUDENTS WHO CAN FORMULATE QUESTIONS AND SEEK ANSWERS THROUGH OBSERVATION AND INTERPRETATION; STUDENTS WHO CAN SOLVE PROBLEMS AND THINK CRITICALLY IN ALL AREAS OF LEARNING BY ANALYZING, EVALUATING, AND INTEGRATING DATA; AND STUDENTS WHO CAN JUDGE THE RELEVANCE OF INFORMATION, WHO CAN DEMONSTRATE A CORE-BASE OF KNOWLEDGE, UNDERSTANDING AND SKILL IN ALL AREAS OF LEARNING; AND STUDENTS WHO KNOW HOW TO WRITE AND TO DO RESEARCH.

WE SAID WE WANT TO DEVELOP LEARNERS WHO WILL THINK CREATIVELY AND INNOVATIVELY--WHO WILL NOT BE AFRAID TO USE IMAGINATION AND INTUITION IN THE GENERATION AND SOLUTION OF PROBLEMS; WHO EXPERIENCE EXCITEMENT AND EXHILARATION IN LEARNING NEW THINGS; WHO APPRECIATE AESTHETICS--AND WHO HAVE HEALTHY AND POSITIVE SELF-CONCEPTS.

BUT OUR COMMITMENT GOES BEYOND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT. WE SAID WE ALSO WANT TO MAKE SURE OUR STUDENTS LEAVE OUR INSTITUTION WITH A SENSE OF SOCIAL AWARENESS AND RESPONSIBILITY; AN ABILITY TO MAKE DECISIONS WITHIN A MORAL AND ETHICAL CONTEXT, AND AN AWARENESS THAT THEY HAVE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY TO WORK TOWARD THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE PUBLIC GOOD, AND TOWARD THE SOLUTION OF THE TECHNOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS FACING OUR WORLD.

IN SHORT WE SAID, WE WANTED TO DEVELOP LEARNERS AND LEADERS THAT DISPLAY NOT ONLY KNOWLEDGE AND CREATIVITY, BUT CARING, AND COURAGE.

OUR COMMITMENT TO THESE STUDENT LEARNER OUTCOMES MUST BE DEEP BECAUSE THEY PROVIDE THE CONTEXTUAL SCAFFOLD AND THE SCREEN THROUGH WHICH WE WILL EVALUATE OUR PROGRAM. IF OUR COMMITMENT IS TRULY TO DEVELOP APPRENTICE INVESTIGATORS,

THEN EVERYTHING WE DO MUST BE DEVELOPED FOR AND EVALUATED BY THAT STANDARD. FOR THIS REASON, WE HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN EXTENSIVE CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT, LEARNER ASSESSMENT, AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND ASSESSMENT.

TWO MONTHS AGO, WE PROUDLY GRADUATED OUR CHARTER CLASS, AND DURING THE EXIT INTERVIEWS, ONE OF THE MEMBERS OF THAT CLASS SAID TO ME, "DR. MARSHALL, WHAT DID YOU WANT US TO TURN OUT TO BE AFTER THREE YEARS?"

WELL, I THOUGHT THAT WAS AN IMPORTANT QUESTION, AND IT REALLY CAUSED ME TO PAUSE A MOMENT, BUT HERE IS WHAT I SAID, "I'D BE VERY PROUD, AS THE DIRECTOR OF THIS INSTITUTION, BUT EVEN MORE IMPORTANT, AS AN EDUCATOR, IF, AS A RESULT OF BEING AT THE ACADEMY, YOU HAD LEARNED HOW TO LEARN--YOU HAD TRULY LEARNED HOW TO FIND PROBLEMS AS WELL AS SOLVE THEM; HOW TO ASK QUESTIONS AS WELL AS ANSWER THEM; HOW TO VIEW KNOWLEDGE AND INFORMATION WITHIN AN ETHICAL FRAMEWORK; BUT PERHAPS MOST IMPORTANT IN THIS AGE OF CYNICISM WHERE I AM TOLD THAT MACHIAVELLI'S OUTNUMBER POLLYANNA'S, THAT YOU ARE A CARING AND COMPASSIONATE HUMAN BEING, AND THAT YOU ARE NOT AFRAID TO TRUST AND BE VULNERABLE."

AND AS I REFLECT ON THAT CONVERSATION, I WISH THE SAME FOR US AS A COMMUNITY, THAT WE CONTINUE TO

- * LEARN,
- * FIND PROBLEMS,
- * ASK QUESTIONS,
- * VIEW KNOWLEDGE AND INFORMATION WITHIN AN ETHICAL CONTEXT, AND PERHAPS MOST IMPORTANT
- * THAT WE ARE CARING AND COMPASSIONATE COMMUNITY, AND
- * THAT WE ARE NOT AFRAID TO TRUST AND BE VULNERABLE.

AS MEMBERS OF THIS VERY SPECIAL ACADEMIC COMMUNITY, AND AS PEOPLE DEDICATED TO INTELLECTUAL EXPLORATION AND DISCOVERY, I HOPE THAT YOU EMBRACE THE BOLD DIRECTIONS WE SAY WE WANT TO GO IN SHAPING STUDENT LEARNING AND THINKING BECAUSE ALL OF THE ADULTS HERE ARE ULTIMATELY RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL THE CHILDREN HERE.

- * AND IF WE DON'T ACT BOLDLY, WHO WILL?
- * IF WE DON'T FOSTER AND PROMOTE APPRENTICE INVESTIGATION, INTERDISCIPLINARY LEARNING AND ETHICAL DECISION-MAKING, WHO WILL?
- * IF WE DON'T ASK THE QUESTIONS THAT FOCUS STATE AND NATIONAL ATTENTION ON SCHOLARSHIP, IMAGINATION, AND CREATIVITY IN MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE, WHO WILL?

- * AND IF WE DON'T SERVE AS A CATALYST FOR EDUCATIONAL REFORM IN MATHEMATICS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, WHO WILL?

IN A WONDERFUL BOOK ENTITLED, CORPORATE PATHFINDERS, HAROLD LEAVITT DESCRIBES THE MANAGING PROCESS AS AN INTEGRATION OF THREE BROAD PHASES:

1. PATHFINDING
2. PROBLEM-SOLVING, AND
3. IMPLEMENTING

WHILE ALL OF THESE PHASES ARE CRITICAL TO MOVING ANY ORGANIZATION FORWARD, I AM GOING TO FOCUS ON THE ONE I FIND MOST COMPELLING, AND THAT IS PATHFINDING.

PATHFINDING IS ABOUT GETTING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS, RATHER THAN THE RIGHT ANSWERS. IT IS ABOUT MISSION AND PURPOSE, AND VISION. THE CENTRAL ISSUE IN PATHFINDING IS NOT INFLUENCE OR PERSUASIVENESS, IT IS NOT REASONING OR SYSTEMATIC ANALYSIS, COMMON TO PROBLEM-SOLVING, AND IT IS NOT DOING OR CHANGING OR INFLUENCING, COMMON TO IMPLEMENTING--THE KEY WORDS IN PATHFINDING ARE MISSION AND PURPOSE.

PATHFINDING IS THE HOMELAND OF THE VISIONARY, THE DREAMER, THE INNOVATOR, THE CREATOR, AND THE ENTREPRENEUR. IT IS THE EPHEMERAL PART OF MANAGING THAT DEALS WITH VALUES, ETHICS AND BELIEFS--PUTTING FAITH BEFORE EVIDENCE.

PATHFINDERS, WHICH I CHALLENGE US ALL TO BE, OFTEN VIOLATE PROBLEM-SOLVING PERCEPTIONS, BUT THEY ALSO BUILD NEW WORLDS. AND THAT CAPACITY TO BUILD NEW WORLDS, TO ASK NEW QUESTIONS, AND TO FORGE NEW COLLABORATIONS AND ALLIANCES EXISTS FOR US RIGHT NOW--AND IF NOT US, THEN WHO?

I SPOKE BEFORE ABOUT THE FACT THAT I THINK WE ARE AT A TIME OF PARADOX, AND OUR ABILITY TO DEAL WITH PARADOXES WILL SHAPE THE FUTURE. I ALSO THINK THIS IS THE TIME FOR STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP, FOR PATHFINDING LEADERSHIP, AND A TIME FOR A RENEWED COMMITMENT TO WHAT I AM CALLING "KALEIDOSCOPIIC THINKING."

MANY OF YOU KNOW THAT I COLLECT KALEIDOSCOPIES. THE KALEIDOSCOPE HAS BECOME A POWERFUL METAPHOR FOR ME; BOTH PERSONALLY AND PROFESSIONALLY BECAUSE IT IS ALSO AN INSTRUMENT OF PARADOX. IT IS PRECISE IN ITS SCIENTIFIC AND MATHEMATICAL DESIGN, AND YET IT IS FULL OF SURPRISE; IT IS METICULOUSLY CRAFTED AS A FINE OPTICAL INSTRUMENT, AND YET

IT SPEAKS OF LIMITLESS AND UNPREDICTABLE POSSIBILITIES; ITS DESIGNS APPEAR RANDOM AND YET EACH RESULTS IN SYMMETRY EVERY TIME. THE ELEMENTS ARE SIMPLE, THERE IS REALLY NOT MUCH TO A KALEIDOSCOPE, BUT THE OUTCOMES ARE COMPLEX AND POWERFUL. THE KALEIDOSCOPE IS A METAPHOR FOR ME BECAUSE IT ALLOWS ME TO CONTROL AND THEN LET GO; TO MANIPULATE AND THEN TO SEE THINGS IN NEW WAYS. THE ELEMENTS NEVER CHANGE IN A KALEIDOSCOPE, BUT THE IMAGES, PERCEPTIONS, REFLECTIONS AND CONFIGURATIONS ARE ALWAYS NEW.

FOR ME, A KALEIDOSCOPE IS AN INSTRUMENT OF WONDER.

I HOPE YOU WILL THINK OF THIS YEAR AS ONE REQUIRING KALEIDOSCOPIIC THINKING ON THE PART OF ALL of us at the ACADEMY, BECAUSE WE ARE THE PEOPLE WHO WILL HELP TO SHAPE THE MINDS OF OUR STUDENTS, AND IN SO DOING, THE DIRECTION OF THE FUTURE.

IN A WONDERFUL QUOTE, COMMENTING ON HIS OWN TALENTS, EINSTEIN SAID, "I KNOW QUITE CERTAINLY THAT I, MYSELF, HAVE NO SPECIAL TALENT. CURIOSITY, OBSESSION AND DOGGED ENDURANCE, COMBINED WITH SELF-CRITICISM HAVE BROUGHT ME TO MY IDEAS."

MOST OF YOU KNOW THAT I NAMED OUR ART COLLECTION, "POTENTIAL FOR GREATNESS." I DID THAT BECAUSE I BELIEVE IT IS TRUE ABOUT THIS INSTITUTION, OUR STUDENTS, AND ABOUT THOSE OF US IN THIS ROOM. WE WILL ALWAYS BE A GOOD SCHOOL, WE WILL ALWAYS BE AN OUTSTANDING SCHOOL, BECAUSE OF THE NATURE OF OUR STUDENTS AND THE NATURE OF OUR STAFF; BUT WE HAVE THE POTENTIAL AND PROMISE TO BE A GREAT SCHOOL.

AND THE FACT OF THE MATTER IS, IT REALLY DOESN'T TAKE SPECIAL PEOPLE TO MAKE A SPECIAL ORGANIZATION, IT TAKES REGULAR PEOPLE DOING VERY SPECIAL THINGS; IT TAKES ORDINARY PEOPLE TAKING EXTRAORDINARY RISKS, AND MAKING EXTRAORDINARY COMMITMENTS TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

JOHN DEWEY SAID THAT EVERY THINKING PERSON PUTS A STABLE WORLD IN PERIL, AND I HOPE THIS INSTITUTION WILL ALWAYS STAND FOR HONEST REFLECTION AND INQUIRY ABOUT TEACHING, LEARNING, AND CHILDREN.

ALTHOUGH WE ARE IN YEAR FOUR, IN SOME WAYS WE ARE JUST BEGINNING. THE STORY OF THIS INSTITUTION HAS BEEN WITH PEOPLE AND WITH VISIONS, CREATION, AND PROMISE.

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS SAID, "IN DREAMS BEGINS RESPONSIBILITY."

THE PEOPLE INVOLVED IN THE ACADEMY--YOU AND I IN THIS ROOM--ARE ARCHITECTS OF A DREAM, WITH A DEEP AND ABIDING BELIEF IN AND COMMITMENT TO THE NEED TO IMPROVE MATHEMATICS, SCIENCE, AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS, BECAUSE THE LANGUAGE OF MATH, SCIENCE, AND HUMANITIES WILL ENABLE STUDENTS TO BECOME LEADERS IN THE NEXT CENTURY.

AND IN MANY WAYS, I THINK WE ACTUALLY ARE A LANGUAGE ACADEMY BECAUSE ALL SUBJECTS ARE REALLY FORMS OF DISCOURSE, AND THE KNOWLEDGE OF A SUBJECT MOSTLY MEANS THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE LANGUAGE OF THAT SUBJECT.

ONE COULD ARGUE THAT BIOLOGY, AFTER ALL, IS NOT PLANTS AND ANIMALS, IT IS LANGUAGE ABOUT PLANTS AND ANIMALS; HISTORY IS NOT EVENTS THAT ONCE OCCURRED, IT IS LANGUAGE DESCRIBING AND INTERPRETING EVENTS; AND ASTRONOMY IS NOT PLANETS AND STARS, BUT A SPECIAL WAY OF TALKING ABOUT PLANETS AND STARS. AND SO A STUDENT MUST KNOW THE LANGUAGE OF THE SUBJECT AND ITS METAPHORS.

IF I ASKED YOU THE QUESTION, "WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THE UNIVERSE?" SOME OF US MIGHT PONDER THAT QUESTION IN THE LANGUAGE OF PHILOSOPHY, RELIGION, OR LITERATURE. THE LANGUAGE OF MATHEMATICS WOULD ANSWER IT DIFFERENTLY, AS WOULD THE LANGUAGE OF SCIENCE, SOCIAL SCIENCE, MUSIC AND ART, AND THEREFORE, OUR JOB IS TO TEACH THE LANGUAGE AND THE DISCOURSE OF THE DISCIPLINES. OUR TASK IS TO MAKE STUDENTS MULTI-LINGUAL.

OUR ABILITY TO AFFECT SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN OUR INSTITUTION AND IN OUR STATE WILL BE LIMITED ONLY BY OUR IMAGINATION AND BY OUR INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE COMMITMENT TO OUR MISSION.

I'D LIKE TO CLOSE WITH SOME THOUGHTS I WROTE TO THE MEMBERS OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING TEAM AT THE END OF OUR VERY INTENSE FOUR DAYS TOGETHER. I AM SHARING THIS WITH ALL OF YOU NOT ONLY TO RE-INVITE YOUR OWNERSHIP IN THE PLAN, BUT TO SAY ALSO THAT I BELIEVE THAT ITS MEANING IS CRITICAL FOR ALL OF US AS WE ENTER THIS YEAR.

IT IS ENTITLED, "SYNERGIES OF HOPE," AND PERHAPS THAT IS THE BEST THEME OF ALL FOR THIS YEAR.

SYNERGIES OF HOPE

I NOW BELONG TO YOU AND YOU TO ME;
TRUST HAS ENABLED US TO TAME EACH OTHER
AND WE HAVE BONDED FOREVER.

THROUGH SPOKEN WORDS AND UNSPOKEN THOUGHTS,
WE GAVE OURSELVES PERMISSION
TO LISTEN TO OUR HEARTS.

I WATCHED YOU YESTERDAY, BECAUSE
I WAS WATCHING MYSELF, AND I SAW OUR
VULNERABILITY, OUR HONESTY, OUR HURT, AND
OUR SPIRITUALITY, DERIVED FROM AN ABIDING COMMITMENT
TO WHO WE ARE, AND WHAT WE CAN BECOME.

WE CHIPPED AWAY UNTIL
WE FOUND OURSELVES.

WE NEVER REALLY LOST OUR FAITH,
WE JUST ALLOWED DOUBTS TO DIMINISH US.
WE NEVER REALLY LOST OUR OPTIMISM,
WE JUST PERMITTED RESENTMENT TO SUBVERT US.
WE NEVER REALLY LOST OUR COURAGE,
BUT WE WERE WEARY, AND
ALLOWED FATIGUE TO DEplete US.

BUT THIS ENCOUNTER,
THIS ENCOUNTER OF CONNECTIONS,
OF HARMONY, OF MEANING,
HAS FREED AND ENNOBLED US TO BE
THE PEOPLE WE WANT TO BE,
AND TO LIVE THE LIFE WE WANT TO LIVE.

OUR LEADER, BILL COOK, TOLD US
REALITIES DON'T HAPPEN, THEY ARE BUILT,
AND WE ARE NOW THE ARCHITECTS OF OUR DREAM
CAREFULLY DESIGNED, LOVINGLY CRAFTED,
PASSIONATELY EMBRACED.

OUR WILLINGNESS TO RISK HAS PUSHED US
TO REAFFIRM OURSELVES.
NOT WITH NEW WORDS, BUT WITH NEW MEANING.

LET'S NOT GO BACK AND TELL THEM THAT THE
LAST FEW DAYS HAVE BEEN EXTRAORDINARY
BUT WE CAN'T EXPLAIN IT AND WISH THEY
HAD BEEN THERE.

LET'S BUILD WITH THEM WHAT WE HAVE BUILT
WITH EACH OTHER,
NEW SYNERGIES OF HOPE.

ONE OF OUR MEMBERS, GAIL DIGATE, TOLD ME THE OTHER DAY,
"SOMETIMES WHEN WE ARE VERY CLOSE TO A SITUATION WE DO NOT
SEE WHAT OTHERS OBSERVE, WE DO NOT SENSE WHAT OTHERS
PERCEIVE, AND WE DO NOT APPRECIATE WHAT OTHERS ENVY."

WE HAVE MUCH TO APPRECIATE AND BE GRATEFUL FOR AS
MEMBERS OF THIS SPECIAL COMMUNITY. WE HAVE BEEN ENTRUSTED
WITH A UNIQUE RESOURCE, AND WE HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO
CREATE A POWERFUL LEGACY.

EDWARD GIBBONS SAID THAT THE "WIND AND THE WAVES ARE
ALWAYS ON THE SIDE OF THE ABLEST NAVIGATORS." WE ARE THOSE
NAVIGATORS. I, FOR ONE, CONTINUE TO BE EXCITED ABOUT OUR
JOURNEY, AND I HOPE I HAVE GIVEN US SOMETHINGS TO TALK ABOUT
ALONG THE WAY.