

Loomis Chaffee

September 18, 2018

Dear Members of the Loomis Chaffee Community,

In January 2017, we wrote to you to share the findings of an investigation by Cowdery & Murphy, a law firm based in Hartford, Connecticut, that we commissioned to look into past sexual misconduct at the school. We hired the firm to examine all reports we had of employee sexual misconduct—ranging from sexual advances to sexual abuse—that were alleged to have taken place as far back as the 1940s and as recently as the 2000s. For a summary of the investigation's findings, please refer to [our letter to the community dated January 10, 2017](#).

After we sent our letter last year, additional alumni came forward with allegations of sexual misconduct. Since learning of these allegations, we have reported them to the Connecticut Department of Children and Families. In addition, we asked Cowdery & Murphy to investigate the allegations.

The first case of abuse occurred in the 1980s and became known to the school in 1992 when a former student filed a lawsuit against the school. Following a thorough investigation at that time, including conversations with other students and faculty, the school ultimately resolved the case and made a financial settlement to the former student, who was represented by legal counsel. The faculty member denied the allegations of abuse and left the school; the administration disclosed the allegations in letters of recommendation but did not file a report with the Department of Children and Families, a failure that the school has since corrected. Because of multiparty confidentiality agreements entered into as part of the settlement of litigation, the school cannot disclose the name of this former faculty member. We are not aware of any other non-disclosure agreements by the school in sexual misconduct cases.

The second case involved Paul Betts, a faculty member who worked at the school for 19 months from December 1985 through June of 1987. Cowdery & Murphy interviewed former students as well as current and former faculty and administrators, reviewed school records, and interviewed Mr. Betts. While Mr. Betts denied the allegations of sexual misconduct, Cowdery & Murphy concluded that Mr. Betts had engaged in sexual misconduct with at least two students while he was at the school. At the time of the abuse, the students did not report the misconduct to the school. The school became aware of the abuse in the early 1990s but did not report it at that time. The school is naming Mr. Betts in accordance with the protocol we established last year for naming accused employees—the nature and extent of the allegations, the assessment of their credibility, and the response of the accused.

In addition to the two cases outlined above, Loomis recently learned that Saint Andrew's School in Florida named Evans Meinecke in its investigation into sexual misconduct at its school. Several years before Mr. Meinecke taught at Saint Andrew's, he was a teacher of German, French, and English at Loomis from 1945 to 1948. During Cowdery & Murphy's investigation into sexual misconduct at Loomis, the law firm received a credible report that Mr. Meinecke groped a former student on one occasion. The former student did not report the incident at that time, and school records indicate no knowledge of sexual misconduct by Mr. Meinecke at Loomis during his brief tenure. The record further shows that the school provided two letters of reference for Mr. Meinecke in 1948. Mr. Meinecke's collective misconduct at Loomis and Saint Andrew's meets our criteria for naming former employees. Mr. Meinecke died in 2006.

As we stated in the earlier letter on this subject, we acknowledge and apologize for all instances of sexual misconduct that have previously occurred at the school, and we are committed to protecting our students from any potential future sexual misconduct. With employees, faculty, administrators, and staff, we have regular meetings and training sessions on boundary issues, sexual misconduct, and mandatory reporting. We bring in outside experts, and we underline the responsibilities that every adult has to report and act on suspicious behavior. We now conduct background checks on all employees every two years and on all adult family members living in school housing. With prospective employees, we have a reference checking process to ensure that we ask questions regarding any past sexual misconduct or boundary violations. We also have a centralized procedure for providing references for employees who leave the school.

We extend our gratitude to those who came forward with information. We know that reporting took great personal courage as well as a commitment to help make a difference for current and future generations of students. The reports reflected painful experiences that were often difficult to talk about. We, along with the entire Board of Trustees and the school community, apologize unreservedly to those affected. As we said last year, we

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know that no action that we take today will erase the deep pain caused, but we do hope that our commitment to confront all such behavior now and in the future may bring some healing.

If you have additional information or comments that you would like to share, please feel free to communicate with Sheila at 860.687.6215 or sculbert@loomis.org.

Duncan A.L. MacLean '90
Chair, Board of Trustees

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