

February 21, 2020

Dear Members of the Trinity-Pawling Community,

Over the last several years, you have heard from us regarding our continuing efforts to ensure we have both a strong culture and specific policies in place to prevent sexual misconduct of any kind at Trinity-Pawling. We have a solemn responsibility to all students, alumni, and parents to live up to the trust they have placed in us, be good stewards of the institution in service of our entire alumni community and society as a whole, and ensure that our practices adequately reflect these commitments. Most importantly, we want to ensure that students today and in the future feel – and are – safe at Trinity-Pawling. A critical component of these efforts is to identify, understand, and address any past instances of adult-student sexual misconduct at the School, whenever they may have occurred.

It is in this spirit that in 2017, after learning new information about past incidents of adult-student sexual misconduct that occurred in the 1980s and early 1990s, we retained Sanghavi Law Office, LLC – a Boston-based investigative law firm experienced in working with schools – to conduct an independent investigation of prior incidents, how they were investigated and addressed at the time, and to follow those facts wherever they may lead. Recently, the findings of the independent investigation were presented to the Board of Trustees, and we write to you today to share these findings and the full report.

The report, which you can read on our website under “Our School” and selecting “Commitment to Student Safety” (www.trinitypawling.org/studentsafety), includes findings that are very troubling, including multiple instances where Trinity-Pawling students were the victim of sexual misconduct. We are also very troubled by the nature of the School’s response, as outlined in the Investigator’s report, when matters involving sexual abuse were brought to its attention.

Sanghavi was given unrestricted authority and discretion in conducting the investigation, including determining the criteria for corroborating allegations of abuse. Sanghavi had access to Trinity-Pawling’s records, as well as to current and former personnel, to support this investigation. Sanghavi had full discretion and authority over findings of fact and the determinations set forth in the report – we are pleased that they shared our acute focus on protecting the identities of the victims.

We apologize for the pain and turmoil that the survivors have suffered over many years. The School extends its gratitude to those individuals who participated in this investigation for their strength and willingness to share their stories. Our hope is that this report serves as an opportunity for transparent institutional self-reflection and education.

Trinity-Pawling must always cultivate a safe and nurturing environment and continue to earn the trust of Trinity-Pawling students, parents, and alumni. To that end, in June 2016 we adopted and communicated enhanced policies and operating procedures, which we remain committed to regularly reviewing and updating whenever we see room for improvement. These include:

- In addition to at-hire and ad hoc training, faculty and staff are formally trained on a yearly basis on our policy against sexual contact and appropriate boundaries with students, as well as the consequences for violating that policy;
- The School has a hotline where anonymous reports can be made of any inappropriate or unethical behavior. This hotline is posted on fliers in all dormitories and other prominent places on campus; and,
- We have written a new protocol for investigating and reporting any future violations to ensure that our actions are thorough, fair, and fully documented.

Additionally, the School is working on partnering with RAINN (Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network), a respected and renowned national organization, to assist alumni who were the victims of sexual misconduct during their time at the School with financial assistance for therapy or counseling costs. We will provide further information on this partnership in the near future.

Although the formal investigation has concluded, we will continue to examine Trinity-Pawling's past in an effort to discover and appropriately address any and all instances of sexual misconduct. To that end, if you have knowledge of misconduct of any kind that occurred at Trinity-Pawling, we would encourage you to share that information through any channel with which you are comfortable:

- Contact Headmaster Bill Taylor directly through office phone (845)-855-4800 or by email wtaylor@trinitypawling.org;
- Use our highly confidential, anonymous reporting portal hosted by Navex by visiting www.trinitypawling.org/ethicspoint-hotline; or,
- Contact independent investigative counsel from Sanghavi Law Office, LLC directly – Elizabeth Sanghavi can be reached by email elizabeth@sanghivilawoffice.com or phone (617)-505-3010, and Trina Ingelfinger also can be reached by email trina@sanghivilawoffice.com or phone (617)-505-3012.

Trinity-Pawling has a responsibility to effectively protect our students and serve our community, today and going forward, in accordance with the highest standards of care and integrity. In order to best accomplish this, it is incumbent on us to be as transparent as possible with the Trinity-Pawling community about what we have found, what we have learned, and the steps we actualize every day to meet that commitment.

This report weighs heavily on all those who care about Trinity-Pawling. It is the School's profound hope that we will be able to rebuild the bonds of trust among the School community – past, present, and future. It is the School's greatest responsibility to protect the safety and well-being of the students entrusted to our care.

Sincerely,



William W. Taylor
Headmaster



Erik K. Olstein, '86, P'11, '14, '17
President, Board of Trustees