

We realize the timing of this update is not ideal as we are all navigating the rapid change related to COVID-19. However, we believe the information we are sharing is important at this moment in time.



March 16, 2020

Dear Catlin Gabel Alumni and Community Members,

We are writing to update you on what has happened since the release a few months ago of the [Summary of Key Factual Findings](#) from the [investigation](#) of sexual misconduct at Catlin Gabel School.

As we've communicated previously, on December 11, 2019, we shared the findings with survivors via the independent investigator. We contacted the Washington County Sheriff's Office and the Oregon Department of Human Services. We then notified our entire community and the news media. We have been cooperating fully with law enforcement and relevant government agencies as they conduct their own investigations.

THERAPY FUND NOW LIVE

As of March 16, 2020, the [Catlin Gabel Therapy Fund](#) is available, providing alumni with financial assistance for current and past therapy costs related to sexual abuse or misconduct by former employees at the school. All requests related to the fund are handled by RAINN, the nation's largest anti-sexual violence organization. All inquiries and utilization of the fund are confidential and will not be shared with Catlin Gabel. The fund provides a \$10,000 lifetime maximum for covered services. Requests for additional treatment will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. The toll-free hotline number is (855) 944-2235. More details are available at catlin.edu/investigation.

STATUS OF INVESTIGATION

Our independent investigator is still available to receive reports, but she has been asked by the Washington County Sheriff's Office to pause her work while they complete their criminal investigation, which means she cannot release any further findings. We are cooperating fully with law enforcement, but we are not privy to when their work will be complete. Reports can still be made to:

- Detective Chuck Anderson at the Washington County Sheriff's Office. He can be reached directly at chuck_anderson@co.washington.or.us or (503) 846-2704.
- Lori Watson via voicemail (for those who wish to be anonymous) at (503) 972-1581; or directly by email lori@watsonlawpdx.com or by phone (971) 291-7672.

CONNECTING WITH OUR COMMUNITY

Since the announcement, school administrators have met with alumni, parents, faculty and staff, and with students in the Upper and Middle Schools, to answer their questions. The school hosted two alumni gatherings in Portland, one in December 2019 and another in January 2020. Svava Brooks, an abuse survivor coach and herself a survivor of child sexual abuse, facilitated the latter session. We are grateful for everyone who participated in these gatherings. Because we are now in litigation, we can no longer hold additional listening sessions, nor can we sponsor any alumni-driven listening sessions. RAINN, however, is still a resource, and we hope alumni continue to connect with each other both online and in person.

SAFETY EDUCATION & PROGRAMS FOR CURRENT STUDENTS

Our greatest priority is to provide an educational environment in which students feel safe. To foster this type of environment, Catlin Gabel has developed a range of curriculum, resources, and policies that establish the school's expectations for all members of our community, including students, parents, faculty, and staff, as well as visitors to campus. Here is an overview of the curriculum and prevention in place today at Catlin:

- We begin abuse education from preschool through second grade, with teachers using the book *The Right Touch* by Sandy Kleven as a teaching tool. In third to fifth grades, the "Consent for Kids" video is shown to generate questions and provide answers. Parents are notified via email.
- In sixth through eighth grades, the Middle School health class provides in-class trainings. Sixth graders are taught "protect yourself rules" based on the website fightchildabuse.org. Seventh graders are taught what constitutes sexual harassment and abuse. Eighth graders review laws around sexting, abuse and pornography. Parents are notified via email.
- In the Upper School, ninth and tenth graders take Health, a semester-long course, which includes extensive instruction on consent and healthy relationships, as well as information on overall mental health, addictions, human psychology and well-being. A guest speaker talks about Title IX on college campuses during the senior seminar class. Green Dot Upstander/Bystander training is also offered. Students and parents are informed about upcoming training sessions.

[Our safety policies and procedures](#) meet or exceed national benchmarks set by the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS), are peer-referenced, and follow association recommendations, including recommendations from the NAIS report [Prevention and Response: Recommendations for Independent School Leaders from the Independent School Task Force on Educator Sexual Misconduct](#), which is accessible to the public. And we will continue to do more. This includes inviting an external organization to assess our safety programs and policies.

Catlin Gabel prohibits and will not tolerate child abuse, sexual misconduct, sexual harassment or boundary violations. All Catlin Gabel employees are mandatory reporters and must immediately report any concerns about adult-student boundary violations, sexual harassment, sexual misconduct or child abuse. It is also expected that students, parents, volunteers or other members of the community report any concerns. Catlin Gabel takes all such reports seriously and will have concerns investigated. As appropriate, we will notify law enforcement and the Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS) in cases of suspected abuse, and we will report sexual misconduct to the Oregon Teacher Standards and Practices Commission (TSPC) and/or the Oregon Department of Education (ODE). Reports can be sent to any member of Catlin Gabel's Response Team including Head of School Tim Bazemore (bazemoret@catlin.edu); Assistant Head of School Barbara Ostos (ostosb@catlin.edu); or Director

of Human Resources Gloria Martin (marting@catlin.edu). No retaliation will be tolerated against individuals who in good faith report adult-student boundary violations, sexual harassment, sexual misconduct or child abuse.

We have partnered with SafeSchools so that any student (or parent or employee) can anonymously report any concern via email, phone, text, or online. Catlin Gabel's identification code for reporting is 1832. Phone or text: (971) 351-1754. Email: 1832@alert1.us. Online: <http://1832.alert1.us>. All anonymous tips will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. Students can also access [Catlin Gabel's Sexual Assault Support and Resources Guide](#) on catlin.edu/safety, which provides self-care for survivors, guidance on how to report sexual assault, and legal and advocacy resources. An external resource is the National Sexual Assault Hotline, operated by RAINN, which can be used to access confidential and anonymous immediate support services, including crisis intervention, information, and resources in both English and Spanish at (800) 656-HOPE or hotline.rainn.org.

Our expectations for safe and healthy boundaries between adults and students are clearly established in our [Catlin Gabel Family Handbook](#) available on catlin.edu/safety. A strong and supportive adult-student relationship is a core value of a Catlin Gabel education. Catlin Gabel adults provide invaluable mentorship and support to our students, and these relationships foster a strong foundation for our students as they grow into young adults and go out and contribute to our larger community.

At the same time, faculty and staff are in a unique position of trust, care, authority, and influence with students, which means adults must take responsibility for knowing, establishing, and maintaining professional boundaries, and should always err on the side of protecting students. We expect adult interactions with students to follow the acronym TAP (T = Transparent; A = Accessible to Parents and Supervisors; P = Professional). We ask that everyone in our community views all student interactions with the following question in mind: "Are the interactions of this adult with this student transparent, accessible to parents and supervisors, and professional?" By setting these expectations, our community can be empowered to speak out when these guidelines are not followed.

ENSURING OUR CULTURE IS MISSION-ALIGNED

We will be forming a Culture Study Group, a multi-constituent body, to review the mission-aligned school culture we seek to foster, including our current professional conduct and student safety policies, and to recommend additional steps the school can take to support students and employees in a safe learning community.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

We knew when we shared the findings that lawsuits were possible, but we stand by our decision to investigate and share the summary of findings. Catlin Gabel has stewarded our finances responsibly over the years, but like any independent school, we do not have unlimited resources. We are working closely with our insurance carriers and anticipate our coverage will help defray the costs associated with litigation. We cannot comment directly on any case while litigation is pending.

Tuition dollars will continue to support the education of students. As a nonprofit institution, we carefully allocate our budget annually, and the revenue from tuition goes directly to supporting our classrooms and teachers. Approximately 80 percent of our annual budget comes from tuition, with the balance raised through fundraising and from returns on our endowment. This year's application numbers are on par with past years, and we anticipate a wonderful group of new students will join us in the fall. We are

also continuing with our long-range plans, including the development of the East Campus, which will eventually allow Catlin Gabel to provide a unique experience for 200+ Middle School students while also updating our spaces to best match the needs of Beginning and Lower School students and expand Upper School enrollment on our main campus.

REBUILDING TRUST

We want to ensure you have reliable, factual information to balance some of the inaccurate media reports. Our hope is that through our actions, we can rebuild trust with our community and our reputation as the best independent school in the state focused on progressive education, experiential learning, and strong student-teacher relationships. All of us at Catlin Gabel are dedicated to providing the best possible education for students today.

We would like to again express our gratitude to all of our Catlin Gabel community members for your patience and understanding as we take the necessary steps to ensure a healthy future for the school. We also wanted to let you know that we are moving toward sharing news with our community online, both general news and any further updates regarding the investigation, via email and on our website at catlin.edu/investigation. If you are interested in continuing to hear from us, please update your contact information using this form: catlin.edu/contactform.

On a different note, because many of you have been aware of Bart Eberwein's importance during the investigation process as chair of the Catlin Gabel School Board of Trustees, we wanted to share with you that he is taking time away from his role as he undergoes intensive treatment for lymphoma, a cancer he first battled five years ago. As vice chair, Indira Nallakrishnan is now serving as chairperson. We wish Bart strength and a full recovery.

Thank you for your support, and please feel free to contact us should you want to speak further.

Sincerely,



Tim Bazemore
Head of School



Indira Nallakrishnan
Vice Chair, Board of Trustees