



## **Historic Sexual Misconduct Investigation Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Why is Proctor launching this investigation now?**

Our school leadership was approached by a courageous Proctor alum regarding interactions of concern between a former employee and the alum during their time at Proctor more than thirty years ago. With deep care for our community's safety and well-being, and guided by Proctor's values of honesty, compassion, respect and responsibility, we are compelled to examine our past and ensure that our current policies and procedures promote a safe and supportive environment for all students.

### **What is the timeline for the investigation into historic sexual misconduct at Proctor?**

In May 2024, Proctor's Board of Trustees and School Leadership launched a comprehensive, third-party investigation into allegations of sexual misconduct at Proctor. We do not know how long the investigation will take, but we expect several months at the least. We continue to encourage anyone with information to contact investigators. When the investigators are done with their investigation, we will share the results with the full community.

### **What is the scope of the investigation?**

The scope of this investigation is to examine if there have been past transgressions involving sexual misconduct. This includes, but is not limited to, current or former Proctor employees engaging in sexual misconduct or grooming with then-current Proctor students, and/or whether Proctor failed to appropriately respond to allegations of sexual misconduct.

### **When did this alleged sexual misconduct occur?**

The allegations occurred more than thirty years ago. In order to protect the privacy of those involved, we will not share more details on the timing of the allegations.

### **Are any current employees involved in the allegations?**

There are no current Proctor employees involved in the allegation.

### **Does this investigation have anything to do with Proctor's transition in leadership?**

No, this investigation is unrelated to Head of School Brian Thomas' decision to step away from Proctor at the end of the school year. Brian has been a tremendous steward of this process this year, and has worked tirelessly to ensure a smooth transition of this process to Interim Head of School Steve Wilkins.

- Additionally, Alisa Barnard’s decision to shift from her role from Assistant Head of School at the end of the school year to a part-time position is unrelated to this investigation. Alisa will shift to part-time employment in order to pursue her Master’s of Divinity.

### **Who do I contact if I have information about historic sexual misconduct at Proctor?**

We encourage anyone in our community who experienced sexual misconduct by a Proctor employee while a student, or anyone with other pertinent information, to contact Kai McGintee (she/her), Managing Director of Aleta Law at [kmcgintee@aletalaw.com](mailto:kmcgintee@aletalaw.com) / 207-535-9520 who will be leading the third-party, external investigation at Proctor.

Other contact points include:

- Head of School Brian Thomas (until June 30, 2024) ([thomasbr@proctoracademy.org](mailto:thomasbr@proctoracademy.org) / 603-735-6642)
- Interim Head of School Steve Wilkins (beginning July 1, 2024) ([wilkinsst@proctoracademy.org](mailto:wilkinsst@proctoracademy.org) / 603-735-6642)
- Assistant Head of School Alisa Barnard ([barnardal@proctoracademy.org](mailto:barnardal@proctoracademy.org) / 603-735-6649)
- Jamie Forbes (he/him), CEO, Learning Courage ([jforbes@learningcourage.org](mailto:jforbes@learningcourage.org) / 603-315-0576)
- Amy Wheeler (she/her), Executive Director, Learning Courage ([awheeler@learningcourage.org](mailto:awheeler@learningcourage.org) /508-241-3429)

### **Is Aleta Law the School’s attorney?**

No. Aleta Law specializes in investigating misconduct at educational institutions. They have extensive experience conducting trauma-informed and equitable investigations. Aleta Law has been retained by Proctor to conduct an external, neutral investigation. Every report made to Aleta Law will be taken seriously, investigated thoroughly, and treated with the utmost sensitivity. Aleta Law’s trained, trauma-informed investigators will also examine what the School may have known about any alleged improper conduct and how they responded.

### **How does a third-party investigation work?**

An external investigation requires a neutral, objective investigator to collect feedback, hear concerns, and synthesize information that comes to them. As an external, third-party investigative firm, all reports made to Aleta Law will be treated with the utmost care and sensitivity. Aleta Law in no way advocates for the school and serves as a neutral, external investigator. Following the conclusion of the investigation, they will share their findings with Proctor’s leadership to inform the school’s future actions. Should Aleta Law find there have been past transgressions, Proctor will work to apologize, acknowledge harm, support healing, promote learning, and ensure we can provide an environment that is as safe, caring, and healthy for our

current and future students as possible. We encourage anyone in our community who experienced sexual misconduct by a Proctor employee while a student, or anyone with other pertinent information, to contact Kai and her team.

**Will the investigation’s findings be shared?**

After this investigation concludes, we will share what the investigators have learned, and we will present next steps with the full community. School leadership will use the findings to inform supportive and corrective measures. We are fully committed to learning the truth about what occurred in the past, so that we may extend support to survivors, address any past harm, and continue our efforts to safeguard the well-being of our students today and in the future. It is our goal to be as transparent as possible while protecting survivor/witness confidentiality and taking into account any trauma-related concerns.

**How is Proctor talking about this investigation with current students and employees?**

Proctor’s administrative team has worked closely with outside partner Learning Courage to inform our community conversations, and will continue to serve as a valuable resource for our on-going work acknowledging, healing, and learning about how to best support survivors of sexual misconduct. Faculty, staff, advisors, and members of the Health and Wellness Team have received training in how to talk with students about issues of sexual misconduct, and will be available as on-going support to our students. Students have been reminded, individually and in groups, how to recognize and report inappropriate conduct, have been provided time and space to process and ask questions, and been encouraged to make use of on-campus resources, including Proctor’s two mental health counselors and seven nurses who staff the Health Center 24-7.

**How will Proctor discuss this situation with alumni at Alumni Reunion?**

The resources provided within this FAQ document and on our Student Safety and Well Being website will guide our conversations with alumni at in-person events and at Alumni Reunion in June. Recognizing that we may not have answers to many of the questions that arise, our goal remains to support survivors who come forward, to continue to educate the community around issues of sexual misconduct, and to work toward providing our current students as safe and as healthy an experience at Proctor as possible. For alumni attending Alumni Reunion during the first weekend in June, we will provide an opportunity to both receive support and to engage school leadership and with our partners, Learning Courage.

**Does Proctor have policies regarding appropriate student-adult boundaries?**

Yes, Proctor has long standing, comprehensive hiring policies and practices and conducts comprehensive background checks on all employees prior to their employment. Proctor also conducts annual training for all faculty and staff regarding appropriate professional boundaries with students. Related Proctor policies can be found [HERE](#). We also educate our students about

pathways for them to report if they experience or witness any inappropriate behavior on our campus.

### **Are Proctor employees mandatory reporters?**

Yes. As mandatory reporters, Proctor adults are required to notify the state's Department of Children and Families (DCF) if they suspect that a child has been — or is at risk of being — abused or neglected. All Proctor employees take annual Boundary and Mandatory Reporting training. Proctor's mandatory reporting policies can be found [HERE](#).

### **Will Proctor be updating or amending its policies and procedures going forward?**

Proctor's administration reviews and revises its policies annually and will be doing so this year with on-going feedback from our outside partners. Once the external investigation has been completed, we will also take what we have learned from the investigation and use it to inform any corrective measures regarding our existing policies and procedures. We are fully committed to learning the truth about what occurred in the past so that we may extend support to survivors, address any past harm, and continue our efforts to safeguard the well-being of our students today and in the future.

### **Who should I contact if I witnessed or suspect sexual misconduct took place?**

Students and employees should report to any member of the School's Leadership Team or the [Human Resources Director, Rachel MacDuffie](#). Complaints may be filed in writing or verbally. Filing a complaint with Proctor's administration does not prohibit filing a complaint with any appropriate government agency. Additional points of contact include:

- Proctor Academy Point of Contact: [Assistant Head of School Alisa Barnard](#)
- External Investigator: Kai McGintee (she/her), Managing Director of Aleta Law [kmcgintee@aletalaw.com](mailto:kmcgintee@aletalaw.com) / 207-535-9520
- Learning Courage Partners: Jamie Forbes (he/him), CEO, [jforbes@learningcourage.org](mailto:jforbes@learningcourage.org) /603-315-0576, or Amy Wheeler (she/her), Executive Director, [awheeler@learningcourage.org](mailto:awheeler@learningcourage.org) / 508-241-3429.

### **How are Proctor alumni and adults protected against retaliation in the event they allege misconduct?**

All Proctor students and employees are covered by a No Retaliation Policy, and employees are covered by a whistleblower policy within the Employee Handbooks which protect them if they come forward in good faith to disclose truthful information regarding any Proctor Academy practice, policy, activity, or employee believed to be in violation of a law, rule, regulation, or clear mandate of public policy. The School also will not retaliate against any student or employee who participates in an investigation relating to any school practice, policy, activity, or employee that is or is suspected to be in violation of a law, rule, regulation, or clear mandate of public policy.

As we previously shared with the community, the external, neutral investigators from Aleta Law are also examining what administration may have known about any alleged improper conduct and how they responded. We are cooperating with all investigations, and we are fully committed to learning the truth about what may have occurred in the past, so that we may extend support to survivors, address any past harm, and continue our efforts to safeguard the well-being of our students today and in the future.

### **Where can alumni and families find information about receiving help following sexual misconduct?**

Alumni and students can always seek support from Proctor's Health and Wellness Team. If students feel more comfortable speaking with an outside resource, Proctor is able to connect individuals to the following resources:

- [Learning Courage](#) (Survivor-led sexual misconduct prevention, response and healing organization)
- [RAINN](#) (Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network): Contact the National Sexual Assault Hotline at 800.656.HOPE (4673)
- [Crisis Center of Central New Hampshire](#) Contact the Hotline at 866.841.6229

### **How can I talk to my family members if I suspect they may have witnessed or experienced sexual misconduct?**

Our Health and Wellness Team has put together these articles for families that we believe will be helpful for anyone who is wanting to learn how to talk to a family member about experiencing sexual misconduct:

- RAINN: [Talking to Your Kids about Sexual Assault](#)
- RAINN: [RAINN: How to Support a Loved One](#)
- Stop It Now: [Possible Reactions of Non-offending Parents and Caring Adults](#)
- RAINN: [Tips for Talking with Survivors of Sexual Assault](#)
- SAMHSA: [Tips for Talking to Children After a Traumatic Event](#)
- [Learning Courage Podcast on Investigations in Schools](#)
- [Learning Courage Podcast on Supporting Survivors During Historic Misconduct Cases](#)