

May 14, 2019

Dear Principal Rawson:

Exeter has undermined the relationship with Phillips Exeter Alumni for Truth and Healing ([PATH](#)) that both parties facilitated, beginning with Lisa MacFarlane's tenure. While PATH members - many of whom are survivors of sexual misconduct while at Exeter - invested their time, energies and resources to attend Circle Meetings on campus and participate in collaborative efforts to facilitate repairs, healing, and growth for the community, Exeter seems unwilling to stand by its expressed values and unable to move towards meaningful change with regard to historical sexual misconduct.

In May 2018, an Exeter [Communitas e-newsletter](#) cited "a shared commitment to designing safe and respectful pathways to community for those who experienced harm which estranged them from a place and people for whom they care; and ensuring that Exeter today sets the highest standard for education, prevention, and support (of sexual harm)." Yet there has been stark disconnect between the rhetoric from Exeter's leadership and the (in)actions taken with past sexual misconduct.

Specifically:

- One of the significant outcomes of the Circle Meetings with Lisa MacFarlane was a draft of a non-adversarial Mediation Process Agreement. The goal was a pathway for survivors towards meaningful reconnection and repairs without the further harm that is usually inflicted by pursuing traditional mediation or a lawsuit. After months of work by both parties, including vetting through respective lawyers and approval by Exeter leadership, Exeter seemingly abandoned the Mediation Process and backtracked on the spirit behind it. Whereas there was once an expressed mutual understanding that sexual harm does not have an expiration date, that has fallen by the wayside.
- As presented in [PATH's petition](#) in September 2018, the H&K report minimized the scope of sexual harm at Exeter. [Your response](#) to this petition, in February 2019, alleged, without further elaboration, that PATH's critique was due to "misunderstandings." We welcome further dialogue.
- PATH waited five months for your response to the petition with the understanding - from Circle Meetings - that Exeter was working on a plan to address accountability for sexual misconduct involving adult employees. Without any justification for the delay, this has

still not been addressed. Without publicly acknowledging how accountability is held for misconduct in the past and moving forward, Exeter will certainly fail in addressing sexual harm.

Witnessing the above as a betrayal of good faith, PATH is unwilling to continue in Circle Meetings and recommends that survivors refuse to participate. Exeter must live up to its commitment to take sexual misconduct seriously, and respond to survivors with the integrity, responsibility and care required by its *non sibi* principles. Exeter should re-engage with PATH, beginning with a public formalization of the Mediation Process. As part of this, Exeter must also make clear it will not hold the statute of limitations against survivors who seek fair and reasonable repairs. Exeter should also finally spare the resources to conduct a truly independent external investigation similar to those completed by its competitors and myriad other institutions (e.g. St. George's School) in which the primary goal is to determine not only who did what to whom, but how sexual misconduct occurred in the first place. With that knowledge, Exeter can develop tools to better protect its student body.

There is a big difference between doing "all we can do," as stated in your February 2019 letter to PATH, and doing all that should be done. The Board of Trustees has fiduciary responsibilities to protect financial assets, but Exeter is a residential school for adolescents, not a business, and the principals of *non sibi* and *in loco parentis* should be its highest priority. No child should be sexually harmed by anyone while under Exeter's care. There is no level of acceptable harm. Only by taking care of current survivors sincerely can Exeter claim it is working towards culture change to ensure that Exeter is a safe place for youth from all quarters, and that Exeter itself is a true leader in the elite preparatory school world.

Sincerely,

The Members of PATH