



PRESENTATION HIGH SCHOOL

December 14, 2017

Dear Alumnae of Presentation,

Presentation High School, the administration and this Board continue to receive questions in recent weeks concerning Facebook posts and media coverage regarding allegations of harassment from the early 1990s. Because we care about you and value our relationship, we want to take this opportunity to reach out to you directly.

Presentation has been sensitive and thoughtful in our response to these allegations. We respect all women who have the courage to speak out against injustice and call out sexual harassment. No woman should ever be subjected to sexual misconduct. We unequivocally stand in solidarity with the movement to respect and protect women. Furthermore, we applaud Time Magazine for recognizing this movement empowering women around the world.

Our measured response, however, should not be misconstrued as guilt or as an affirmation of what has been claimed. We want to reiterate that PHS is concerned and saddened by the account of alum Kathryn Leehane. Unfortunately, PHS at the time of the described incident was not provided with all the current details now being shared.

Some have opinions on the actions taken/not taken by PHS in the past. However, it is false to suggest that no actions were taken. Further, it is an egregious falsehood to state that PHS cares more about its reputation than the safety of its students.

PHS is a bastion of female empowerment and always encourages women to find their voice and use it. This, and the firm belief in the dignity of all people as children of God, is our mission. As graduates, we hope you know this in your hearts to be true. We will continue to provide a quality education and supportive community for our students, alumnae, and their families.

To further our goal to ensure the protection and education of the young women at PHS, we are frequently training and educating teachers, staff, and students and rigorously ensuring measures to protect and educate our students through mandated laws.

We want to make you aware of some of the existing and planned measures to prevent harassment/abuse and to educate and empower young women. The following policies are currently in place:

- Before employment, potential employees undergo a background check by PHS. This includes mandatory fingerprinting through the Sheriff's Department.
- All members of the faculty and staff understand their critical role in protecting students by recognizing and reporting child abuse and neglect as mandated reporters. All of our employees at the time of their employment, acknowledge in writing their obligations as mandatory reporters and receive training on this responsibility when they begin employment and periodically as required by law during their tenure at PHS. This has been true since the inception of the mandated reporter law in 1980.
- Our entire staff will complete an online Mandated Reporter Training by January 31, 2018 as offered by the Diocese of San Jose.
- At faculty meetings and/or in-service days our faculty participates in a variety of training programs. Past topics have included child abuse prevention, boundaries and harassment, school law, and diversity. This spring our faculty will receive additional training on harassment, bullying, and abuse.
- The PHS administration reviews all faculty policies and procedures with respect to student/faculty relations. They are refined and updated if appropriate, reviewed by the Board and communicated to the faculty and staff.

To strengthen our efforts, the following actions will also be implemented in 2018:

- A task force comprised of educators, Board members, current parents, alumnae and legal counsel will review current school policies and procedures to ensure they are best in practice starting in January. It will make recommendations to The Board of Directors to ensure we have the most up-to-date practices.
- This year's Student Development Day in the spring will focus on healthy relationships, boundaries, and consent. All students will attend.

We strive to ensure that PHS remains a safe and supportive environment and community for students and faculty alike. This commitment has never wavered.

Also unwavering is our support for Mary Miller as she completes her planned transition from 24 years as Principal of Presentation to her new role as our first President. Mary's dedicated leadership at PHS has been essential to the school's growth and success. In the role of President, Mary will continue to direct the vision and mission of Presentation into the future.

Peace and blessings to you this Christmas season.

Sincerely,

The Board of Directors of Presentation

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