

Dear Principal Rawson,

PATH agrees that Exeter's relationship with Alumni survivors should continue in a spirit of compassion, understanding and fundamental fairness. PATH will support this commitment and is open to resuming circle meetings if the work makes meaningful progress toward reaching these goals. However, meeting these goals requires action by Exeter that aligns with these stated values.

The joint PEA/PATH letter in May 2018 stated 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 for ensuring that Exeter today sets the highest standard for education, prevention, and support." These are shared foundational values.

There has been a breakdown of trust between PATH and PEA. One source is the disconnect between Exeter's stated values and the way in which it actually presents in mediation. Exeter's openness to mediations regardless of the statute of limitations ("SOL") status of a survivor's claim means little when Exeter asserts the SOL as a significant factor during mediations. In our circle meetings, we had clearly established and agreed that sexual harm, well known for its delayed effects, does not expire or spontaneously stop on a certain date. Exeter cannot make public pronouncements about its purported understanding of the long term nature of sexual trauma while using this technical legal defense to diminish the claims of survivors. In pursuing mediations actively using the SOL defense to diminish survivors, Exeter compounds the trauma that its failings in the past caused.

SOL laws regarding sexual abuse are changing across the country in recognition of their fundamental unfairness. Exeter has an opportunity to stand out as visionary in the cultural dialog around sexual trauma and rape culture. Exeter must demonstrate the seriousness with which it takes sexual misconduct through its action, not merely its words. Exeter cannot agree that sexual trauma has no timeline while using time as a legal defense. Exeter's duty to its students is not merely legal, it is moral and quasi-parental. In short, Exeter cannot be a moral institution that fulfills its responsibility to care for the children over whom it has accepted in loco parentis while relying on legal defenses to the harm it caused to some of those children.

PATH also urges Exeter to make more concrete movement towards a process that embodies truth and reconciliation. This would include supported impact statements by survivors, formal acknowledgement of failures, transparency, accountability and meaningful repairs, including a restorative mediation process in alignment with our shared goals. Before the mediation document is final and public, PATH needs to ensure that it aligns with restorative values that focus on healing and repairing rather than amplifying harm. The goal, as we've discussed in circles, is to build a process in which harmed Exonians are returned to dignity and belonging in a stronger, more aware and compassionate community. This would serve not only those who have experienced harm, but the entire Exeter community. The way in which Exeter treats survivors of harm- both past and present- directly informs current culture. We cannot move forward together until we fully address the past.

Sincerely,

The Members of PATH