October 1, 2021

Dear Thacher Community,

Our July letter to the Thacher Community detailed a number of actions that the Board and School leadership had taken or committed to undertake as part of our efforts to demonstrate accountability, rebuild trust, and stay true to the values Thacher aspires to as a school and as a community. As we continue our work to support our survivors and strengthen the School’s prevention of and response to sexual misconduct, I write to you today on behalf of the Board of Trustees to update you on several of those actions.

It is important to remember that many of these initiatives now underway are due to the courage of survivors of abuse that occurred at Thacher, who made the painful and difficult decision to come forward with information about the sexual misconduct they endured. By doing so, along with other community members who shared relevant information, you have helped, and are continuing to help, the Thacher community reach a full understanding of its past and take all appropriate actions to ensure the safety and well-being of Thacher students today. Our commitment to supporting you, including through Thacher-funded therapeutic support*, is unwavering.

We continue to encourage anyone who has information about misconduct they were subjected to or were aware of, to come forward. You may continue to contact Munger, Tolles & Olson (MTO), which will be receiving reports until the end of the year, at thacher@mto.com or 213-683-4910. As noted in our last letter, MTO will be issuing a supplemental report later this fall that will address reports received subsequent to the release of the June report.

Once MTO’s supplemental report has been issued, Thacher will begin transitioning to a new firm for the investigation of allegations of sexual misconduct on the part of adult members of the Thacher community and allegations that the School mishandled or responded inappropriately to student-on-student sexual misconduct. This firm, whose name we will share as soon as they have been formally retained, also has significant experience in conducting trauma-informed investigations and will liaise with MTO on any allegations that may be reported subsequent to the release of MTO’s supplemental report (or those for which investigations were pending at the time the report was completed). Beginning on January 1, 2022, the new firm will be responsible for receiving and investigating reports. We remain resolute in our commitment to investigate all reports of sexual misconduct regardless of when they may have occurred or
when the report is received.

With the 2021-22 school year underway, Head of School Blossom Beatty Pidduck and Director of Student Life Sarah Schorn are actively implementing Corrective Actions with oversight by the Board’s new Committee on Student Safety and Well-being. In addition, the Governance Committee, responsible for providing ongoing sexual misconduct prevention and response education, has scheduled a series of Board trainings that will take place in October. Training presenters will include:

- Jamie Forbes, the founder of Learning Courage, a nonprofit organization whose mission is to reduce sexual abuse at schools and help them respond in ways that support healing. A survivor of sexual assault while a student at Milton Academy, Mr. Forbes is committed to using his experiences and perspective to help make schools safer.

- Lacy Crawford, an author and sexual assault survivor who will be presenting in partnership with Mr. Forbes. Ms. Crawford will share her experience as a student at St. Paul's School in Concord, NH, and her subsequent involvement with the New Hampshire state investigation into the school. She is the author of Notes on a Silencing, a memoir about her experience.

- Dr. Alex Bivens, a clinical psychologist experienced in working with adolescents and educators on the topics of maintaining professional boundaries and preventing sexual misconduct. Dr. Bivens recently presented a workshop to Thacher employees on these areas as well.

There is certainly more work to be done and, on behalf of the full Board, I want to reiterate our commitment to continuing these important efforts. At the October Board meeting, Trustees will be hearing reports on efforts underway by the Administration as well as by the Board and its committees, and assessing additional initiatives. The Board has also received questions from community members regarding the investigative process and the decisions made in light of the investigation and report. Rather than address them piecemeal, we will be providing a compilation of questions and answers, limited as necessary by legal and confidentiality constraints, once the supplemental report comes out later this fall.

While we acknowledge that it will take time to rebuild trust within our community, we hope that our efforts to support Thacher survivors, educate ourselves on how best to identify, prevent, and respond to sexual misconduct, and protect our students from harm will move that process forward.

Respectfully on behalf of The Thacher School Board of Trustees,
*Thacher has created a support fund to provide assistance with therapy related to the trauma of sexual misconduct experienced during a student's time at Thacher. The fund is confidentially and independently managed and operated by RAINN, the largest anti-sexual violence organization in the U.S., and by an independent third-party claims administrator. Alumni who wish to access these services are encouraged to call RAINN through the toll-free hotline at 844-908-4224 or the local number for international callers at 805-243-1692.