



CATE SCHOOL

Report Conclusions

Improving and strengthening the practices and protocols to ensure today's student safety and well-being is an ongoing priority of the School. The findings of the Oppenheimer Investigations Group have further informed those efforts and identified a number of areas for further attention.

- Student discomfort in using sexual assault reporting procedures.
- A need for increased central and/or inter-departmental coordination in collecting information around issues or allegations of misconduct.
- Increased education in identifying the signs of grooming behavior.
- Inconsistent communications to the community regarding incidents of sexual misconduct.
- Historic challenges with personnel record keeping.

Corrective Measures

After a three-year overhaul of all policies and protocols around sexual misconduct using National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) and The Association of Boarding Schools (TABS) guidelines and expert consultants, the School recently partnered with Standing Together to End Sexual Assault (STESA) to further review protocols with a more survivor-centric approach. Supported by this expert advice, and the findings of the independent report detailing the experiences of our survivors, the Board and School have approved the following corrective measures, many of which have already been implemented or are in process:

- 1. Commitment to increasing student awareness and comfort with sexual assault reporting procedures to make students more willing and able to share their experiences.**
 - a. The School and STESA will regularly review The Sexual Harassment Incident Response Team (SHIRT) procedures to ensure that reporting avenues are supportive, accessible, and available through a number of complementary channels, that the investigative and adjudicative processes are clearly defined, fairly and consistently applied, and that all actions are taken with a survivor-centered approach.

- b. The School will increase education for all community members on the specific avenues for reporting any sexual misconduct through both the internal SHIRT process and the confidential [STESA Crisis hotline](#), so that students and adults always have an avenue that they are comfortable using, without fear of shame or retaliation.
- c. SHIRT members will work with STESA to ensure continuous training that reflects the highest standards in sexual misconduct response protocols.

2. Increase faculty education around recognizing signs of grooming behavior and boundary-crossing.

- a. The School will continue its work with experts and consultants to expand adult training at Cate around sexual misconduct, focusing on awareness training for adults to recognize the signs of a student who may be in distress.
- b. The School is providing an expanded group of its faculty members and administrators with formal training regarding best practices in responding to allegations of sexual misconduct.
- c. Faculty and staff will continue to receive mandatory reporting training.

3. Improve consolidation and coordination of incident reporting between faculty and administrators in investigating allegations of sexual misconduct.

- a. The School's new Human Resources Director will evaluate and further establish and implement best-in-class faculty and staff training and management protocols.
- b. This new role will serve both the adult and student communities at Cate by ensuring that employees are knowledgeable in the School's sexual misconduct policies, with special attention to educating faculty and staff on reporting protocols across all school programs.

4. Establish criteria that would trigger the use of third-party investigators into allegations of sexual misconduct.

- a. The Board and School will consult with outside experts to evaluate best-in-class protocols regarding when it is appropriate to retain outside resources to conduct investigations of sexual misconduct. A third party in these instances will ensure a fair and impartial process and accountability.

5. Establish criteria for implementing interim measures upon receipt of allegations of sexual misconduct.

- a. The School will implement the recommendations that resulted in STESA's recent review of existing procedures and protocols to further improve current practices, specifically around sexual misconduct allegation response protocols.
- b. These updates will include establishing and incorporating best practices around when to implement interim measures such as no contact orders, administrative leave, bans from campus, designating faculty for student care and other support measures such as counseling services.
- c. The School will review and further update the Faculty Handbook to reflect any changes made as a result of STESA's evaluation of School policies and protocols.

6. Restructure communication policies around any incidents of sexual misconduct to both the Cate community and other constituencies to ensure a timely, transparent and survivor-centric approach.

- a. The School will establish and clearly communicate these new policy guidelines and standards with all constituencies of the School so that if allegations of misconduct are confirmed, all communications within the community and with external parties are handled using consistent and best-in-class industry standards.
- b. The School will regularly partner with STESA to improve and evolve, ensuring that all practices continue to be up to date, with special attention to survivor-centric communication practices.

7. Evaluate the Human Development program to ensure current best practices for student education on healthy relationships, boundaries, and consent.

- a. The School will enhance its efforts with outside experts to review and expand the Human Development program to reflect the needs of today's students including augmented education on healthy relationships, boundaries, consent, and communication around the topic of sexual misconduct and harassment.
- b. Curriculum will be augmented to cover signs of grooming behavior, strategies for responding in the moment, and protocols for reporting such behaviors.

8. Charge the new Human Resources Director with the evaluation of current personnel record keeping protocols.

- a. The new Human Resources Director will coordinate and maintain detailed employee records and ensure that hiring and evaluative practices reflect best-in-class standards.

9. Establish a therapy fund to support survivors through reimbursement for therapy related to sexual abuse perpetrated by School employees.

- a. The Board of Trustees with the School has [established a therapy fund](#) to support survivors by assisting alumni and former students desiring reimbursement for therapy-related to sexual abuse perpetrated by School employees. The School has engaged [RAINN](#) (Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network), the nation's largest anti-sexual violence organization, to operate the dedicated Cate School Therapy Fund Hotline, and provide confidential support and information on accessing the fund.

10. Create a mechanism for the Board to provide assurance of oversight of incidents of sexual misconduct.

- a. The Committee on Community Accountability (CCA) has been appointed as a standing committee of the Board to manage the implementation of corrective measures issued by the Board and will provide oversight and assurance that incidents of sexual misconduct that come before the School's Sexual Harassment Incident Response Team (SHIRT) are addressed in an appropriate, thorough, timely, and equitable manner.
- b. The CCA is also committed to ensuring that all corrective measures are implemented going forward.

11. Develop Board education around School policies and protocols.

- a. The Board will undergo education and training around the School's sexual misconduct policies and best practices in survivor-centered and trauma-informed care and will work with STESA to receive survivor sensitivity education.

12. The School has provided the local authorities with the full investigative report and will continue to cooperate with any investigations.

13. Permanently ban named perpetrators from Cate's campus and void any public recognition or honors given to these individuals.

- a. The Board voted and agreed to void any public recognition, acknowledgments, or honors given to perpetrators named in the report.
- b. All named perpetrators have been banned from campus in perpetuity.

While these actions and intentions are only a broad outline of the Board and the School's commitments to ensuring student safety and well-being, they represent a critical body of work in the School's efforts to learn from our own history. In the spirit of Servons, we all commit together to building the very best systems of support and protection for our students in perpetuity.