



ST. PAUL'S SCHOOL

July 16, 2014

Dear SPS Parents,

I write today to tell you about a disturbing incident involving St. Paul's School students. One of our recent graduates, Owen Labrie '14, has been charged by the Concord Police Department with sexual assault. The accusation against this young man is based on an incident allegedly occurring at the School before graduation. When this matter was first brought to our attention by the young woman involved, we reported it to the authorities, as is our obligation, and we are cooperating fully with law enforcement.

This situation has been alarming to me personally and to all adults here, in a community that values healthy relationships so highly. Whatever further developments become known in this case, a serious breach of our standards of mutual trust and respect has occurred. I am determined to learn if this alleged violation is an aberration or represents a broader issue that our many School-wide conversations about a healthy community have not sufficiently addressed. This is as much a question about the nature and quality of relationships our students have with one another as it is about upholding basic standards of respect. You can be sure that our ongoing conversations about how we live together in community will be even more directed and open during the 2014-15 school year.

Some parents who have been aware of this particular situation and others who are concerned about sexual assault on college campuses as reported recently in the media have asked me good questions about safety and security measures at the School. This summer, as we do every summer, the vice rectors, dean of students, our director of safety and security and I will be reviewing our policies, practices and procedures to ensure we are doing everything we can to make St. Paul's the healthiest possible learning environment. Obviously, this allegation of sexual assault provides us another lens through which we will look at our practices.

I hope you will use this unfortunate incident to discuss with your child the nature of peer relationships at the School. I am eager to learn more about every student's experience at St. Paul's, especially their views on mutual respect, for the purpose of strengthening a community we so deeply value. As difficult as this moment is, I am confident that together in partnership we can make St. Paul's School an even stronger and healthier learning environment for your child.

Sincerely,

Mike Hirschfeld