



July 8, 2014

Dear Members of the Green Meadow Waldorf School Community:

This letter is very difficult to write and will be very upsetting to read. On August 6, 2013, we informed you about deeply disturbing allegations made by Green Meadow alumna Kate Christensen '80 in her recently published memoir, "Blue Plate Special: An Autobiography of My Appetites." In her memoir, Ms. Christensen wrote that she had been sexually abused at our school by a teacher (referred to as "Tomcat" in the book) on a number of occasions in the late 1970s. We identified the teacher as John Alexandra, who stopped teaching on a full-time basis at Green Meadow in 1979. Upon learning of Ms. Christensen's allegations, we immediately informed local authorities and barred Mr. Alexandra from our campus and property.

Recognizing that the safety and well-being of our past and present students and faculty is paramount, we also indicated that Green Meadow was beginning a full, independent investigation into the allegations of sexual abuse. We retained Steven Gerber, a former federal prosecutor, a legal expert in this field, and partner of the firm Gonzalez Saggio & Harlan. Mr. Gerber's firm hired Lisa Friel, a senior executive at T&M Protection Resources (T&M). Ms. Friel is the former Chief of the Manhattan District Attorney's Office's Sex Crimes Unit, has conducted thousands of sexual misconduct investigations, and is a well-recognized expert on sexual misconduct issues.

I am writing to inform you that Ms. Friel and her team have completed their investigation. Attached to this letter is our summary of T&M's factual findings, as contained in their investigative report, as well as a summary of their recommendations to better safeguard our students. Many of these recommendations, as you will read, have already been put into place.

T&M was granted unfettered access to interview all relevant witnesses, and to conduct a thorough and comprehensive examination of past and present practices and policies. While this investigation was initiated because of allegations made about John Alexandra, its scope was much broader, and included an examination of allegations of inappropriate conduct or boundaries crossed by any teacher or faculty member here at Green Meadow, and indeed within the larger Threefold Educational Foundation Community ("Threefold"). Ninety-five people were interviewed and thousands of pages of documents were examined. As a result, T&M's investigative report is highly detailed, extremely thorough, and quite lengthy. The report

itself cannot be provided to the Green Meadow community because it contains privileged and confidential information concerning individuals, including the identity of former students and others who provided relevant information on a confidential basis.

One of the purposes of this letter and our summary of critical factual findings and recommendations by T&M is to share with you what we have learned, keeping in mind that we will protect the privacy rights of those who were minors at the time, and those victims and other witnesses who came forward and wish to remain anonymous. We have proceeded very carefully in this regard, balancing the need to fully address and take responsibility for the pain of the victims and past mistakes made at Green Meadow, while recognizing the rights of those who participated in this investigation, as well as those who were accused. Those investigated for sexual misconduct were only named in this report if, according to T&M's expert analysis, there was substantial evidence to support that conclusion.

Before we address the results of the investigation, we feel it is very important that you, our community, understand that there is another reason that we are writing to you at this time. It is to apologize. To Ms. Christensen and all other victims, we are so sorry for your pain and anguish, including any suffering endured by those close to you. We also apologize to parents, alumni, and all members of the faculty and staff who were impacted by this environment. We cannot undo what has been done in the past, nor can we ever know the full extent of pain that has been caused. We do know that we can disclose what we know now, offer this apology, and do what we can to support healing for all involved. But we offer more than an apology. We pledge to everyone affected and to everyone in our community that we are fully committed to the safety and emotional well-being of our past, present, and future community members. We promise not to waver from this commitment to you.

We also thank everyone who provided information during this investigation, those of you who were victimized as well as those of you who were not, but who possessed relevant information. We understand that in many cases this was very difficult to do and we honor your bravery. And finally, before we share the findings of the investigation, we take this opportunity to acknowledge the courage of Kate Christensen in coming forward as she did, which allowed us to fully acknowledge errors and misjudgments of the past. We will emerge a better, stronger school because of her.

With sincerity,



Eric Silber
Co-Administrator



Jonathan Lynn
Board President

KEY FACTUAL FINDINGS OF THE INVESTIGATION

Scope

After becoming aware of Kate Christensen's memoir in 2013, Green Meadow retained Steven Gerber of Gonzalez Saggio & Harlan with Lisa Friel of T&M Protection Resources (T&M) in order to conduct a thorough and independent investigation. Green Meadow is one of a community of schools and programs affiliated with the Threefold Educational Foundation ("Threefold"). T&M was allowed unrestricted access to past and present Green Meadow faculty and staff, former students, and any other members of the Green Meadow and Threefold communities to whom they wished to speak. The investigation was not limited to allegations concerning John Alexandra. Rather, T&M investigators were mandated to pursue any allegations of inappropriate sexually-related conduct that came to light about any other faculty or staff members. T&M began its investigation in August 2013, concluded it in February 2014, and provided us with a report in May 2014. T&M only identified individuals as victims or offenders if, in their expert opinion, there was substantial evidence to support that conclusion. T&M made specific findings concerning misconduct by certain faculty members at Green Meadow, and also recommended a number of changes in policies at Green Meadow and its affiliated organizations. Green Meadow, through its attorneys and T&M, communicated with the Rockland County District Attorney's Office regarding findings that fell within that Office's jurisdiction.

John Alexandra

John Alexandra was a Green Meadow teacher from 1965 until at least 1979. He was a Threefold Board member from at least 1975 through 1983 and has been a long-standing community member, right up until the time Green Meadow learned of these serious allegations. T&M's investigation has concluded that Mr. Alexandra committed a multitude of crimes, including sexual assault, stalking, harassment, and endangering the welfare of a child, all in violation of the New York State Penal Law. These crimes took place on Threefold property and the surrounding area while in his various capacities as teacher, Board member, and community member. Mr. Alexandra has now been permanently barred from Green Meadow and Threefold property as a result of these findings.

T&M attempted to interview Mr. Alexandra but was advised by his attorney that he had declined the opportunity to be interviewed. Based on T&M's interviews of victims and witnesses along with other corroborating evidence, the investigation has concluded that Mr. Alexandra sexually assaulted thirteen victims in total. Twelve of the victims were female GMWS students. The students' ages ranged from 12 to 17 years old, with one victim's abuse continuing until she graduated at 18. Eleven of the twelve victims were students during the 1970s and early 1980s, and one was a student in 2001. The thirteenth victim, an adult female, was assaulted in 2013.

T&M determined that Mr. Alexandra's abuse typically started with long, uncomfortable hugs that included inappropriate rubbing and touching, and oftentimes progressed to more egregious criminal conduct, including unwanted sexual intercourse and statutory rape. T&M's findings were that the incidents involving sexual intercourse took place in the late 1970s and early 1980s. None of his victims wanted to engage in this behavior and all but one were legally

incapable of consenting, as they were less than 17 years of age at the time of contact. His conduct also ranged from lesser forms of criminal conduct such as stalking and harassment to other conduct that did not rise to the level of a crime, but was certainly inappropriate under the circumstances, such as long, unsolicited, “uncomfortable” hugs, kisses, and prolonged handshakes.

T&M also determined that Mr. Alexandra stalked or harassed some of these same victims, which also violated New York State Law, by appearing unannounced when they were on walks or alone in their homes. Some victims also received handwritten letters from Mr. Alexandra, of an inappropriately personal nature, both in content and tone. In some cases, this same behavior continued for years after students had left Green Meadow.

Finally, evidence shows it was widely known that Mr. Alexandra would engage openly and often in “hugging” people, primarily women. A number of witnesses shared that they had experienced or witnessed these “hugs,” which have been described as long, forceful, with full frontal body contact and often included Mr. Alexandra rubbing himself inappropriately against them while, in some cases, becoming sexually aroused. Given the evidence uncovered by the investigation, it is clear that what has been described by these witnesses as “hugging” was in many cases a form of sexual abuse.

One of the central conclusions from the independent investigation is that Green Meadow failed to adequately protect its students, faculty, staff, and community members from Mr. Alexandra. Allowing Mr. Alexandra to freely roam Threefold property resulted in giving him essentially unrestricted access to students and faculty members, and thereby enabled him to continue to victimize others. A number of the adults at Green Meadow and Threefold were in a position to have stopped Mr. Alexandra’s inappropriate and sometimes criminal behavior. However they did not do so, either because they were unaware of the breadth of his misconduct, or because they failed to understand the seriousness of what they had been told or had seen.

A number of factors have been identified as contributing to the School’s failure to stop Mr. Alexandra’s inappropriate and at times criminal conduct when it occurred:

- a lack of expertise in what constitutes sexual abuse;
- a failure to investigate or properly investigate facts when brought to faculty members’ attention;
- a reluctance to avoid confronting a person with prominent standing in the community;
- an administrative structure that was not well-suited to dealing with these types of issues;
- a lack of communication between Threefold-affiliated schools and programs;
- a lack of a written policy identifying clear and appropriate boundary lines between faculty and students and a clear protocol for reporting and investigating such reports; and
- a lack of education and training for GMWS students, faculty and staff, and parents regarding identifying and reporting inappropriate conduct.

T&M's investigation revealed that many of Mr. Alexandra's victims did not report their victimization to anyone at the time that it occurred. T&M determined there were many reasons why victims did not report Mr. Alexandra's abusive conduct. All but one of his victims was a child. T&M noted that it is well-known and well-documented that child victims of abuse, especially sexual abuse, rarely report their abuse while they are still children. There are a multitude of reasons for this: their fear they will not be believed, embarrassment, fear they will get in trouble, and sometimes, a lack of understanding as to the true nature of what is being done to them, i.e., that what is happening is in fact sexual abuse. These fears are compounded when the abuser is someone in a position of authority and/or respect in their community. Mr. Alexandra was a prominent member of the community and in a position of authority. Therefore his child victims were even less likely to come forward. In addition, T&M found that there was a feeling among some victims that adults at Green Meadow were complicit in what Mr. Alexandra was doing, since they observed his inappropriate behavior yet encouraged students to maintain a relationship with him. In addition, some victims told T&M that they did not think the adults at Green Meadow would do anything about Mr. Alexandra's behavior if they complained because some of these adults, the victims believed, were having inappropriate relationships with other students. Finally, T&M concluded that the lack of clear and appropriate boundary lines between students and teachers at Green Meadow contributed to the victims' failure to report Mr. Alexandra's inappropriate and sometimes criminal behavior.

Richard Moeschl

Richard Moeschl was a middle school teacher at Green Meadow from 1979 to June 1983. In 1983, Mr. Moeschl sexually assaulted a female middle school student during a school-sponsored trip. T&M's investigation revealed that this female student's victimization became known to Green Meadow when Mr. Moeschl admitted to another Green Meadow teacher shortly thereafter what had happened. Mr. Moeschl had already planned to leave Green Meadow at the end of the 1983 school term, having taken a teaching job at a Waldorf School in California, thus Green Meadow did not have to determine if he should be fired. However, there were other steps T&M concluded Green Meadow should have taken.

The investigation concluded that Green Meadow failed to act appropriately when the School became aware of the incident. There was no formal internal investigation conducted, nor were the police contacted. Other than the faculty member to whom Mr. Moeschl admitted his criminal behavior, no other Green Meadow personnel questioned him about this. When contacted by T&M during its investigation, Mr. Moeschl admitted to inappropriate sexual contact with this student and no doubt would have done so at the time. No one from Green Meadow ever spoke to the victim about what happened, nor did anyone determine if she needed counseling. The victim's parents were not contacted that year in a timely or appropriate fashion and indeed did not become aware of what happened to their daughter until she told them a number of years later in an effort to prevent Green Meadow from allowing Mr. Moeschl back on campus. In short, Green Meadow failed to handle this matter in an appropriate fashion.

Other Findings

Eugene Schwartz was a lower school teacher employed at Green Meadow from 1981 to 2005. T&M's comprehensive investigation led it to conclude that in 2005, Mr. Schwartz was in possession of child pornography at his residence on Threefold property. The child pornography

found in Mr. Schwartz's possession was viewed by other witnesses and was reported to the administrator at Green Meadow. At the time, there was less than one week left in the school year. Green Meadow assigned another teacher to teach with Mr. Schwartz in his class for that last week of school and to accompany him for all graduation activities. It then severed its professional relationship with him after the term ended.

T&M's investigation revealed that after the child pornography was discovered at his home, Mr. Schwartz admitted to at least one adult member of the Green Meadow community that he was attracted to young girls and to another that he was a sex addict. T&M also determined that Mr. Schwartz admitted to another witness in the Threefold community that he had a "problem" with child pornography. During the course of its investigation, T&M learned that Mr. Schwartz had taken many photographs of students, including students in swimwear, with at least one provocative photograph of a young female student on Threefold property.

T&M concluded that after Mr. Schwartz was discovered to have possessed child pornography, it was incumbent on the School to conduct a prompt and thorough investigation to determine if he had acted inappropriately with any Green Meadow students or other children in the area. At the time, this was not done. Subsequently, T&M did not find any evidence of inappropriate sexual contact between Mr. Schwartz and any Green Meadow student.

Possession of child pornography is, and was in 2005, both a State and Federal felony offense. However, the law did not *require* Green Meadow to report Mr. Schwartz's possession of child pornography to law enforcement. The School at the time sought, and followed, the advice of its then legal counsel as to how and to whom to communicate what they learned about Mr. Schwartz and why he was no longer working at Green Meadow.

Based on the results of T&M's investigation, Mr. Schwartz has now been permanently barred from Green Meadow and Threefold property.

Recommendations

T&M's investigation provided Green Meadow with a report card on the School's conduct spanning over several decades. It was tough, unflinching, and very painful to read. While we cannot go back to the past and undo what was done, we can learn from this and make the necessary changes in order to protect our current and future students, faculty and staff, and members of our community.

As a result of this independent investigation, T&M has made certain recommendations concerning Green Meadow policies regarding sexual harassment and abuse as well as boundary guidelines that it feels should be instituted. They also recommended training for all members of the Green Meadow community (students, faculty and staff, and parents) on these policies, procedures, and boundary guidelines. Green Meadow has taken all of these recommendations very seriously and we have begun implementing them. These recommendations will also be applied across all entities on Threefold property, where appropriate, to ensure the safety and well-being of all communities in addition to Green Meadow students.

From these recommendations, we have already conducted substantial training on sexual harassment, anti-discrimination, and boundary guidelines for all faculty and staff and have implemented a more comprehensive background screening for any adult who comes into contact with Green Meadow students. We are in the final stages of adopting a new written anti-harassment policy and procedure protocols, which will include clear definitions of harassment and abuse, reporting structures and responsibilities, retaliation protection, mandated reporting requirements, and consequences for policy violations, as well as adopting Boundary Guidelines to address appropriate interaction between Green Meadow students and Green Meadow employees. These new policies and guidelines will be aligned with other written Green Meadow policies and will be included in the student handbook and employee policy manual as well as placed on the School website.

We will continue to train faculty and staff as well as provide education for students and parents on these Anti-Harassment Policies and Boundary Guidelines on an annual basis. Additionally, we will be strengthening hiring practices already in place and establishing more formal inter-organizational communication regarding incidents of harassment between all entities on Threefold property. Finally, there will be a clear mechanism for any student, parent, faculty member, or staff member to make an anonymous report to a third party if they feel they are not able to report to someone within the School or Threefold community.

T&M has made all of these recommendations, and we have adopted them, with the unequivocal objective of making Green Meadow Waldorf School the safest, most hospitable learning environment it can possibly be.