



August 24, 2021

To Catlin Gabel alumni and community members,

We are on notice that a lawsuit is being filed against Catlin Gabel by an alumnus alleging sexual misconduct that occurred during the 1997-98 school year. The employee accused of misconduct in this lawsuit is Lynn Silbernagel, who served for many years as a middle school librarian. On September 1, 2020, the Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS) informed us that a report had just been made that Ms. Silbernagel engaged in sexual misconduct some 24 years earlier. She was immediately put on leave on September 1, the day we learned of this report to DHS and also banned from campus. Ms. Silbernagel was terminated three days later. We also immediately contacted the Washington County Sheriff's Office and have cooperated fully with its investigation. Ms. Silbernagel has denied the allegations. We had received no other reports of alleged misconduct by this employee in the more than two decades since this incident allegedly took place.

As is typical, Ms. Silbernagel's departure from Catlin Gabel was shared with Middle School families through the divisional newsletter on September 18, 2020, and all employees were notified via email. As is also typical, we did not include the reason for her departure because discipline and termination are considered confidential personnel information. As the Head of School, I am cognizant of balancing employee privacy requirements with the needs of parents and guardians for transparency; in every instance, the safety of students is my top priority.

As you may know, we have developed a [range of resources, curricula and policies](#) to foster an environment free of all forms of harassment and discrimination. We will continue to expand these resources. For alumni survivors of sexual misconduct, we created the [Catlin Gabel Therapy Fund](#).

At Catlin Gabel, we have zero tolerance for misconduct of any kind. It is also incumbent upon me and my staff to create and uphold an environment in which the health and safety of students are paramount at all times.

Sincerely,

Tim Bazemore
Head of School