

HOTCHKISS

December 19, 2022

Dear Ned, Mike, Penn, and Larry,

We are writing in response to your letter dated October 18, 2022. The Board is always open to hearing feedback from our alumni, and we appreciate the views that you and your fellow signatories have shared.

In addition, we were pleased that we were able to meet via Zoom in August so that you could express your perspective, and you could hear our Board's position. As we discussed in that meeting, the Board put considerable thought into the decisions that were made in 2018. Messrs. Olsen and White made enormous contributions to the Hotchkiss community. However, we cannot ignore the fact that Locke Lord did find credible evidence of failures to prioritize student safety, specifically as related to sexual abuse, during their respective tenures.

As we have relayed, we as a Board carefully considered all the facts presented to us and ultimately made the decision to remove the Olsen and White portraits from the Main Building out of respect for the survivors of this abuse. In that discussion, we tried to put ourselves in the shoes of survivors who have been carrying the weight of these experiences for decades. We were also mindful of the sentiments expressed by some survivors who perceived the portraits – which were intended to honor Olsen and White – as an affront to those experiences. It was the Board's view that taking the portraits down would be appropriate to acknowledge this painful chapter of the survivors' lives and the continuing impact of these portraits on survivors. The decision regarding honors and prizes bearing Messrs. Olsen and White's names was made for similar reasons.

To be clear, the removal of the distinctions detailed above is the only action the Board took in regard to Messrs. Olsen and White. Neither of them were banned from campus, and though Mr. Olsen is deceased, there is no prohibition on Mr. White returning to campus or participating in alumni events, either on campus or off.

We understand you are passionate about the issues addressed herein, and we have expressed a willingness to explore how we can, as a school, both recognize the contributions of these men and acknowledge the sexual abuse that occurred during their tenures. But Craig Bradley and the Board have made our position clear with respect to the portraits, spaces, and prizes, with Craig doing so most recently at the meaningful Courage Garden event that was held on October 1. We made a judgment as it relates to those particular honors – after a comprehensive investigation by an independent party and careful deliberation by the Board – and we do not intend to revisit those decisions. The healing of our survivor community and the safety of our current students must continue to inform our actions.

Again, thank you for sharing your views with us. We remain ready and willing to meet with you to discuss how we might move forward collectively, with the above realities in mind.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth G. Hines '93
Co-President of the Board of Trustees



Robert R. Gould '77
Co-President of the Board of Trustees


Response to Petition

Robert Gould <rgould@hotchkiss.org>

Mon 12/19/2022 1:47 PM

To: Larry Ross <lr@rosssearch.com>;Michael K. Gillis <mgillis@gillisandbikofsky.com>;Ned Brokaw <nedisbro@gmail.com>;Robert Hulburd <penn310@hotmail.com>

Cc: Elizabeth Hines <ehines@hotchkiss.org>

 1 attachments (97 KB)

Healing Hotchkiss 12-19-22.pdf;

Dear Larry, Mike, Ned and Penn,

Please find attached a response to the petition from Liz and me on behalf of the Hotchkiss Board of Trustees. If a hardcopy would be useful for any reason, please just let us know, and we will be happy to send it out. In addition, if you would like to discuss these issues further, our door is always open, and we would be happy to get together either in person or virtually at your convenience.

Best wishes to each of you and your families for the holiday season.

Bob and Liz