HORACE MANN SCHOOL

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Dear Friends:

We are writing to let you know about an article that is online now and is expected to appear in this Sunday's *New York Times Magazine.* The article focuses on allegations of inappropriate behavior toward students at Horace Mann School a number of years back by former and, in some cases, now-deceased faculty members. These allegations are highly disturbing and absolutely abhorrent. We can assure you that none of the individuals mentioned in the article is currently employed by the School nor have they been for a number of years.

Providing our students with the best education possible is our top priority at Horace Mann School. At the same time, a critical component of our mission is to create and maintain a safe and secure environment for all members of our community that encourages mutual respect and appropriate behavior. The safety, security, and well-being of the children who attend Horace Mann are at the core of everything we do.

As an educational institution we are deeply concerned if allegations of abuse of children are raised – regardless of when or where they may have occurred. Horace Mann School's administration, faculty, staff and Board of Trustees strongly believe that we must hold ourselves to the highest moral and ethical standards.

As we informed *The New York Times*, Horace Mann School has in place clearly articulated and enforced rules, regulations, policies, procedures, and expectations concerning appropriate behavior within our community – including whistleblower protections to ensure that any member of the school community can freely report alleged violations. As an example of our rigorous protocols, a summary of the steps students or adults can take to report harassment/bullying or allegations of abuse and maltreatment is attached in Appendix A.

All of these policies and procedures are detailed in our *Family Handbook,* and are regularly updated and communicated. The *Family Handbook* is available at the link below:

http://www.horacemann.org/uploaded/HoraceMann/PDFs/School_Documents/FamilyHandbook_1-2012.pdf

We share and appreciate our community's frustration when the School cannot address specific allegations in the article. As we hope you can appreciate, we are not in a position to comment on accounts of events and conversations that took place prior to our administration. It should be noted that Horace Mann School has terminated teachers based on its determination of inappropriate conduct, including but not limited to certain of the individuals named in the New York Times article.

We did adhere to the School's longstanding practice not to discuss current or former students, members of the faculty, or other employees with the press, and we have not authorized anyone to do so. We answered factual questions about Horace Mann School, provided *The New York Times* a written statement (see Appendix B) and the School's *Family Handbook* but, as a matter of policy, there were a number of issues and questions regarding specific allegations or individuals that we were not able to address for privacy reasons and based upon advice of counsel. For the same reasons, we regret that we also are limited in our ability to communicate to the community about these past events.

We remain committed to the proactive communication and education of all members of our community, at all ages, about their rights and responsibilities, resources, and people to reach out to when there is a concern.

Consistent with that philosophy, we continue to plan opportunities for faculty and staff members, students, parents and others to learn more about our current policies and procedures. As we have done in the past few years, our faculty and staff members will participate in workshops at the start of the 2012-13 school year. For our students, there will be various forums appropriate for each age group. An example of our training for students this year, which we will repeat next year in other grade levels, is the sexual harassment seminars we had for all of our 9th graders two weeks ago.

As we move forward, we will continue to be strict and relentless in the enforcement of our codes of conduct and expected behavior. Above all, we will remain focused on fulfilling our mission of educating children consistent with the integrity and honesty omnipresent in our Core Values.

As always, please feel free to contact Dr. Kelly should you have any questions or concerns.

Yours respectfully,

Steven M. Friedman '72, P '03, '04, '08
Chairman, Board of Trustees

Thomas M. Kelly, P '18
Head of School

APPENDIX A
Excerpts from the *Family Handbook*

Reporting Allegations of Child Abuse and Maltreatment

Members of the Horace Mann School community who are non-mandated reporters, including parents and students, may make a report of suspected child abuse or maltreatment by calling the general public hotline at: 1-800-342-3720.

Members of the Horace Mann School community who are mandated reporters, including administrators, faculty and staff, may make a report of suspected child abuse or maltreatment by calling the toll free mandated reporter hotline at: 1-800-635-1522. For mandated reporters, the Head of School must be notified, either in consultation before a call is placed, or promptly thereafter.

For additional information about the School's handling of allegations of suspected child abuse and maltreatment, please see the School's *Family Handbook*.

Reporting Harassment/Bullying by Students

Any student who believes that he or she has been or is being harassed or bullied by a student or who has witnessed an incident of harassment/bullying by a fellow student should take the following steps to report the incident:

- Speak to the offender directly, if comfortable doing so, and request that the harassment/bullying stop;

- If the student is uncomfortable with speaking directly to the person or if the harassment/bullying does not stop, report the incident to a Point Person (a list of Point Persons can be found in the School's *Family Handbook*) who will report it to the Division Head; or

- Report the incident directly to the Division Head, who will consult with the Head of School and then direct the matter to the appropriate Point Person or other members of the School's Administrative Council for investigation; or

- Report the incident to a Designated Trustee through the School's Whistleblower Protection Policy as outlined in the School's *Family Handbook*.

Any parent who believes that a student has been or is being harassed/bullied by another student or any parent who has witnessed an incident of harassment/bullying by another student should:

- Report the incident to a Point Person (a list of Point Persons can be found in the School's Family Handbook) who will report it to the Division Head; or

- Report the incident directly to the Division Head, who will consult with the Head of School, then direct the matter to the appropriate Point Person or other members of the School's Administrative Council for investigation.

Reporting Harassment/Bullying By Adults

Any student who believes that he or she has been or is being harassed/bullied by an adult or that he or she has witnessed an incident of harassment/bullying by an adult, should take the following steps to report the incident:

- Report the incident to a Point Person (a list of Point Persons can be found in the School's *Family Handbook*), who will report it to the Division Head, who will report it to the Head of School; or

- Report the incident directly to the Division Head, who will consult with the Head of School, then direct the matter to the appropriate Point Person or other members of the School's Administrative Council for investigation.

- Report the incident to a Designated Trustee through the School's Whistleblower Protection Policy as outlined in the School's *Family Handbook*.

Any parent who believes that a student has been or is being harassed/bullied by an adult or any parent who has witnessed an incident of harassment/bullying by an adult, also should take the steps described above.

APPENDIX B
Statement Released to the New York Times

"As an educational institution, we are deeply concerned if allegations of abuse of children are raised, regardless of when or where they may have occurred. Horace Mann School's administration, faculty, staff and Board of Trustees strongly believe that we must hold ourselves to the highest moral and ethical standards.

"The current administration is not in a position to comment on the events involving former and, in some cases, now-deceased, faculty members that are said to have occurred years before we assumed leadership of the School. It should be noted that Horace Mann School has terminated teachers based on its determination of inappropriate conduct, including but not limited to certain of the individuals named in your article. It's also important to note that none of the individuals (who we understand are) mentioned in the article is currently employed by the School nor have they been for a number of years.

"We can state unequivocally that Horace Mann School today has in place clearly articulated and enforced rules, regulations, policies, procedures and expectations concerning appropriate behavior within the community – including whistleblower protections to ensure that any member of the school community can freely report alleged violations. All of these policies and procedures are detailed in the School's Family Handbook, and are regularly updated and communicated. The current administration proactively reinforces these standards with training, including discussions of ethical and legal obligations with faculty and staff members, training for students, and updates to the Board of Trustees.

"The safety, security and well-being of the children who attend Horace Mann are at the core of everything we do. The School will remain focused on fulfilling its mission of educating children consistent with this overriding priority."