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**COLUMBIA SCHOOL SYSTEM**  
**HORACE W. PORTER SCHOOL**  
**3 SCHOOL HOUSE ROAD P.O. BOX 166**  
**COLUMBIA, CONNECTICUT 06237**



August 19, 2020

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Students,

School safety and positive school climate is an important aspect of our school life. The Columbia Board of Education is committed to creating and maintaining an educational environment free from bullying, harassment, and discrimination.

“Bullying” is defined as the repeated use by one or more students of a written, oral or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying, directed at or referring to another student attending school in the same school district or a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed at another student attending school in the same school district that:

1. Causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student’s property,
2. Places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property,
3. Creates a hostile environment at school for such student,
4. Infringes on the rights of such student at school, or
5. Substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Bullying shall include, but not be limited to, a written, verbal or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or physical, mental, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics.

In accordance with state law and the Board’s Safe School Climate Plan, the Board expressly prohibits any form of bullying behavior on school grounds; at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program, whether on or off school grounds; at a school bus stop; on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a local or regional board of education; or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by Board of Education.

Furthermore, the Board also prohibits any form of bullying behavior outside of the school setting if such bullying;

1. Creates a hostile environment at school for the victim,

2. Infringes on the rights of the victim at school, or
3. Substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

If you suspect that bullying has occurred, students and/or parents may file written complaints concerning suspected bullying behavior. Students shall also be permitted to anonymously report acts of bullying to school employees. Any report of suspected bullying behavior will be promptly reviewed. Bullying behavior is strictly prohibited, and students who are determined to have engaged in such behavior are subject to disciplinary action, which may include suspension or expulsion from school.

We strive to create a safe, welcoming, and positive school climate at Horace W. Porter School. Please contact me with any questions or concerns at 860-228-9493, ext. 167.

*Regards,*

*Karen Caputo*  
*Assistant Principal/Safe School Climate Specialist*