



2011 - 2012 Student Handbook

The vision of Porter School is to be a learning environment where all students will gain the academic knowledge and skills necessary for success.

The mission of Porter School is to create opportunities for students to learn skills, acquire knowledge and develop respect for diversity in a safe environment where excellence is achieved through each individual's success.

The Student Handbook supports Porter's vision and mission by outlining the proactive expectations, rules, and guidelines created to promote an environment of student growth and achievement.

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Administration

Francine Coss, Superintendent
Jean Trask, Principal
Robert Parenti, Assistant Principal

Board of Education

The Town of Columbia owns and operates Horace W. Porter School for students in Preschool through Grade 8. The Board of Education is comprised of seven (7) elected members. The Board of Education conducts regular meetings on the first and third Mondays of each month at 7:30 P.M. in the Library Media Center at Horace W. Porter School. Information on board governance, subcommittee meetings, and activities can be obtained by contacting the Secretary to the Superintendent. The Columbia Board of Education policies are available in the Office of the Superintendent of Schools

Current Board of Education members include:

Lauren Perrotti-Verboven, Chairperson , Lisa Jurovaty, Vice Chairperson

Paula Belekewicz , William Mulcahy Nelson Petrone, John Schroder James Thorn

The educational philosophy of the Columbia Board of Education (as outlined in policy 5010) has established the following objectives:

- To teach the essential skills traditionally associated with various disciplines
- To develop the four communication skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
- To extend and refine the students' ability to comprehend, interpret, and evaluate printed, visual, and aural material.
- To develop critical thinking.
- To further the students' development of self-awareness, self-discipline, and self-esteem.
- To promote the physical well being of all students.
- To promote creativity and appreciation of the arts, humanities, and sciences.
- To encourage students to consider both the alternatives to and the consequences of their actions in the decision making process.
- To present career options and to assist students in setting tentative goals.
- To help the student appreciate that learning is integrated and continuous.
- To develop an appreciation of cultural diversity.

District Information

Horace W. Porter School
3 Schoolhouse Road
Columbia, CT 06237
(860) 228-9493
www.porterschool.org

Contact Information:

Assistant Principal:	860-228-9493, x102
Attendance:	860-228-9493, x116
Health Office:	860-228-9493, x109/x111
Library Media Center:	860-228-9493, x423
Main Office:	860-228-9493
Main Office Fax:	860-228-8592
Principal:	860-228-9493 x107
Student Services:	860-228-9493 x112
Superintendent's Office:	860-228-8590
Email Communications:	firstinitialsurname@hwporter.org (e.g., John Smith = jsmith@hwporter.org)

Hours of Operation (Regular Schedule):

Main Office:	7:45A.M.-4:00P.M.
Health Office:	8:00A.M.-3:30P.M.
Student Services Office:	8:00A.M.-4:00P.M.
Superintendent's Office:	8:00A.M.-4:00P.M.
Before School Care:	7:30A.M.-8:15A.M.
Students:	8:15A.M.-3:15P.M.

Hours of Operation (Early Dismissal Schedule):

Main Office:	7:45A.M.--2:00P.M.
Health Office:	8:00A.M.-1:30P.M.
Student Services Office:	8:00A.M.--2:00P.M.
Superintendent's Office:	8:00A.M.--2:00P.M.
Before School Care:	7:30A.M.-8:15A.M.
Students in Grades K-8:	8:25A.M. - 1:15P.M.
Morning Preschool:	8:30A.M. - 10:30A.M.
Afternoon Preschool:	11:30A.M. -1:15P.M.

Hours of Operation (Delayed Opening Schedule):

Main Office:	9:15A.M. - 4:00 P.M.
Health Office:	9:30A.M. - 3:30 P.M.
Student Services Office:	9:30A.M. - 4:00 P.M.
Superintendent's Office:	9:30A.M. - 4:00 P.M.
Before School Care:	9:30A.M. - 9:45 A.M.
Students in Grade K-8:	10:00A.M. - 3:15 P.M.
Morning Preschool:	10:00A.M. - 12:00 P.M.
Afternoon Preschool:	1:00A.M. - 3:15 P.M.

Equal Opportunity

Each student is encouraged to develop and achieve individual educational goals. The district will provide every student with equal educational opportunities regardless of race, color, creed, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, economic status, marital status, or disability. No student will be excluded on such basis from participating in or having access to any course offerings, student athletics, counseling services, employment assistance, extracurricular activities or other school resources. Programs and activities shall be accessible and usable by individuals with disabilities as prescribed by law. Jacqueline Middleton is the designated district compliance officer, who will coordinate compliance with the nondiscrimination requirements of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Admission/Placement

A student seeking enrollment in Horace W. Porter School for the first time, or following attendance in another Connecticut public school district, out-of-state attendance, private school attendance or admission through a bona fide foreign exchange program should contact the principal. A student who is transferring from non-public schools or schools outside the district will be placed at his/her current grade level pending evaluation and observation of the student after such assessment and consultation with the parents, the principal will determine the grade placement of the child. Nonresidents may attend school on a tuition basis provided space is available. Nonresident students from other school districts within the state, (districts in the Hartford, New Haven, Bridgeport and New London regions) who apply pursuant to Board of Education regulations, may enroll in particular programs or schools within the district on a space available basis, without payment of tuition, as part of the inter-district public school attendance program called Open Choice. The Regional Educational Service Centers will determine which school districts are close enough to make transportation feasible. The parent or person having control of a child sixteen or seventeen years of age may consent to such child's withdrawal from school. For the school year commencing July 1, 2011, and each school year thereafter, the parent or person having control of a child seventeen years of age may exercise the option by personally appearing at the school district office to sign a withdrawal form. This form will include an attestation from the school's guidance counselor or a school administrator that the district has provided the parent or person with information on the educational options available in the school system and in the community. A student who has attained the age of sixteen and who has voluntarily terminated enrollment in the district's schools and subsequently seeks admission may be denied readmission for up to ninety school days from the date of such termination unless such student seeks readmission to the District not later than ten school days after such termination in which school accommodation will be provided not later than three school days after such student seeks readmission. A student, nineteen years of age or older may be placed in an alternative school program or other suitable educational program if he/she cannot acquire a sufficient number of credits for

graduation by age twenty-one. Students who are classified as homeless under federal law and do not have a fixed residence will be admitted pursuant to federal law.

Students enrolled in a school identified for school improvement pursuant to federal law may transfer to another public school within the district that has not been identified for school improvement. The transfer will be allowed in accordance with law. Transportation will be provided by the district.

Parents of students attending District schools have the option to enroll their child(ren) in a magnet school with which the District is a non-participating district, if the magnet school has unused student capacity. The District will pay any tuition charge.

Advertising

The public schools maintain careful controls on the way in which students are exposed to materials and announcements, other than those directly related to school sponsored programs and activities. Caution is exercised to prevent exploitation of the system and its students. District-prescribed standards shall be met.

Agenda Books

Students in upper elementary and middle school grades are expected to use their Agenda Books to record daily homework assignments and long-term projects. If lost, replacement agendas are available for purchase (\$5.00) in the Main Office.

Announcements

Announcements are made daily using the public address system.

Asbestos

Legislation requires all school buildings to be reevaluated to determine if asbestos is present and if it poses a significant health hazard to the building's occupants. The District has on file plans showing the location of asbestos in each building and measures undertaken to comply with regulations to maintain a safe school environment. Requests to review these plans may be made in the school office.

Assemblies

"Porter Pride" assemblies are held throughout the year to celebrate achievements and showcase talents. The first and last assemblies of the year are attended by the entire student body while other assemblies during the year are held with grades K-4 and 5-8 respectively.

Attendance

Attendance Policy: The Columbia Board of Education believes the school/classroom provides unique educational experiences for students to develop to their fullest personal and intellectual potential; therefore, absence from class has a direct, negative impact on the education of the student and his or her classmates. The school and classroom environments are designed to encourage interactions with teachers, to facilitate the exchange of ideas with peers, to research and discover facts, to develop concepts, to test hypotheses, and to nurture talents. Therefore, class attendance is the primary method for students to avail themselves of these growth and learning experiences. As defined by state statute, parents or guardians are responsible to ensure regular and punctual attendance of their child(ren) at school. The administration and staff of Horace W. Porter School are committed to working cooperatively with parents, guardians and students to ensure all students attend all classes.

Attendance Procedure: Daily student attendance is recorded and maintained by the school.

Reporting Absences: Students who are absent from school are required to have a parent/guardian verify the absence by submitting a written note, by visiting, or by calling the Main Office at 860-228-9493 x 116 before the start of school on the day of the absence. If written verification of the absence is required, then such verification should be received upon the student's return to school. If an absence is not verified by the parent/guardian in this time frame, the absence will be considered unexcused until verification is received.

Students requiring more than five (5) consecutive absences due to illness or a medical issue must follow a written, Temporary Educational Plan collaboratively developed by parents, teachers and the administration. If possible, this Temporary Educational Plan should be developed before the absences occur or immediately after a parent/guardian notifies the school of the illness/medical issue.

The administration requests that parents/guardians schedule medical appointments outside of school hours when possible.

Excused Absences:

The following six (6) reasons are considered acceptable for an excused absence:

1. Illness/medical issues
Written documentation from a physician may be requested for a student to return to school when absent more than five (5) consecutive school days due to illness/medical issues.
2. Death or critical illness in the family

Written documentation from a parent/guardian is required for a student to return to school when absent more than five (5) consecutive school days due to death or critical illness in the family.

3. Religious Holidays
Prior written documentation from a parent/guardian is required for a student to receive an excused absence for a religious holiday.
4. Pre-arranged high school visits (Grade 8 students ONLY)
A completed high school visit form signed by the school guidance counselor and a parent/guardian is required for a student to receive an excused absence for visiting a receiving high school.
5. Out-of-School Suspension
6. An exceptional circumstance approved by school administration

Family Vacations: Parents/guardians are strongly urged to arrange family vacations to coincide with school vacations to avoid unexcused absences for their child as student academic success could be hindered by lower grades due to the lateness of submitted assignments, excessive work-load and other obstacles related to lack of communication of an absence. *Note: Class and homework assignments will not be provided prior to the absence.*

Attendance requirement for athletic and extra-curricular activities: Any student participating in any athletic or extra-curricular activity must be in school for a minimum of four (4) hours on the day of the activity or he/she will not be permitted to participate in or attend the activity.

Tardiness: Being in school on time each day is important to success in school and the development of good work habits. Students who arrive late to school in the morning (after 8:15 A.M. on regular and early dismissal days and after 9:45 A.M. on Delayed Opening days) must report to the main entrance Receptionist for a tardy pass and will be marked tardy on school records for that day.

Attendance/Tardy Review: The Administration will conduct a monthly Attendance/Tardy Review. Parents/Guardians will be provided with a written Attendance/Tardy Review if their child exceeds the absence/tardy levels listed below, per Columbia Board of Education Policy 5113.2

- 5 unexcused absences/tardies in a month
- 10 unexcused absences/tardies in a grading period
- 20 unexcused absences/tardies (and no evidence of student satisfying the temporary educational plan (if applicable))

The administration may request a meeting with parents/guardians of students who have frequent absences/tardies or a pattern of absences/tardies that may indicate a need for support.

Bullying

The Columbia Board of Education seeks to promote and maintain a safe environment based on the principle that every individual's personal security must be respected. Bullying behavior by any students in the Columbia Public Schools is strictly prohibited, and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from school. In addition, the Columbia Board of Education will not tolerate any form of reprisals or retaliation of any type from the investigation of bullying behavior complaints.

"Bullying" is defined as (A) 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 (B) a **physical act or gesture** by one or more students repeatedly directed at another student attending school in the same school district, that: (i) Causes **physical or emotional harm** to such student or damage to such student's property, (ii) places such student in **reasonable fear of harm** to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property, (iii) creates a **hostile environment** at school for such student, (iv) **infringes on the rights** of such student at school, or (v) **substantially disrupts the education process** or the orderly operation of a school.

Students and staff may file verbal or written complaints concerning suspected bullying behavior, and students and staff shall be permitted to anonymously report acts of bullying to teachers and school administrators. In addition, parents may also file written complaints concerning suspected bullying behavior. Any report of suspected bullying behavior will be promptly reviewed. If acts of bullying are verified, prompt disciplinary action may be taken against the perpetrator, consistent with his/her rights of due process. A copy of the full policy (5131.912) is on file in the Office of the Superintendent.

Informal/Verbal Complaints of Bullying by Students: Students and staff may make complaints of conduct that they consider to be bullying by verbally reporting to a teacher, administrator, or other professional employee such as a guidance counselor, school psychologist, nurse, social worker or school therapist. Student complaints of bullying should specify the actions giving rise to the suspicion of bullying, including the time and place of the conduct alleged, the number of such incidents, the target of such suspected bullying, and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. A teacher, other professional employee, or administrator who receives a student complaint shall promptly reduce the complaint to writing, including the information provided by the student. The written report by the teacher, other professional employee and/or administrator shall be promptly forwarded to the building principal (or other responsible program administrator) for review and action.

Formal/Written Complaints of Bullying: Students and/or their parents or guardians may also file formal written complaints of conduct that they consider to be bullying. Such written reports should specify the actions giving rise to the suspicion of bullying, including time and place of the conduct alleged, the number of such incidents, the target of suspected bullying, and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. Such reports may be filed with any teacher or administrator, and they shall be promptly forwarded to the building principal (or other responsible program administrator) for review and action.

Anonymous Complaints of Bullying: Students who make complaints of bullying to a teacher and/or administrator may request that their name be maintained in confidence by the teacher (s) or administrator (s) who receives the complaint. Should anonymity be requested, the principal or his/her designee shall meet with the student to review the request for anonymity and the impact that maintaining anonymity of the complaint may have on the investigation of the complaint and/or possible remedial action. At such meeting, the student shall be given the choice as to whether to maintain the anonymity of the complaint. Anonymous complaints shall be reviewed and reasonable action will be taken to address the situation, to the extent such action may be taken that (1) does not disclose the source of the complaint, and (2) is consistent with the due process rights of the student (s) alleged to have committed acts of bullying.

Cell Phones

Cell phone use is not allowed during school. If cell phones are heard/seen they will be given to the Main Office where they can be picked up by a parent/guardian. Cell phones may be used during school dances to contact parents if students are in the foyer and under supervision of staff.

Child Abuse

Teachers, superintendents, principals, coaches of intramural or interscholastic athletics, paraprofessionals and other professional school staff including guidance counselors, social workers, psychologists, and licensed nurses are obligated by law (C.G.S. 17a-101) to report suspected child abuse, neglect, or if a child is placed in imminent danger of serious harm to the Connecticut State Department of Children and Families Services. Specific procedures governing the reporting of abuse and neglect are in effect, and staff receives yearly training in their use.

Reporting of child abuse and neglect is a responsibility which is taken seriously. If there is any doubt about reporting suspected abuse or neglect a report will be made. The school will work with the parents and appropriate social agencies in all cases.

Child abuse is defined as any physical injury inflicted by other than accidental means or injuries which are not in keeping with the explanation given for their cause. Improper treatment such as malnutrition, sexual molestation, and deprivation of necessities, emotional abuse, cruel punishment or neglect is also considered child abuse.

Classroom Assignments

The Rostering Process is a thorough and collaborative assigning of students to class rosters by sending and receiving grade-level staff, Special Education staff, Intervention staff, and Administration. During the process, staff is diligent and prudent in taking into consideration the following factors when determining effective student placement for the following academic year:

- Academic progress
- Social/emotional development
- Intervention/Special Education Services
- Class size
- Gender
- Peer Impact
- Instructional Approach (Teacher Compatibility)

Compensation for Late/Overdue/Damaged/Lost Materials and Accounts

In accordance with Connecticut General Statute, Section 10-221 and Board of Education policy 3250, students will be charged for damaged or lost textbooks, library/media materials and other educational equipment or materials, including, but not limited to, debts for damaged/unreturned athletic uniforms, unpaid balances for class trips, fundraisers, and lunch accounts. Additionally, the school is authorized to withhold transcripts, grades, diplomas, or report cards until payment for or a return of the textbook, library/media, or other equipment or material is made.

Conduct

Students are responsible for conducting themselves properly in a responsible manner appropriate to their age and level of maturity. The district has authority over students during the regular school day and while going to and from school on district transportation. This jurisdiction includes any school-related activity, regardless of time or location, and any off campus school-related misconduct, regardless of time or location.

Student responsibilities for achieving a positive learning environment in school or school related activities include:

1. Attending all classes, regularly and on time.
2. Being prepared for each class with appropriate materials and assignments.
3. Being dressed appropriately.
4. Showing respect toward others.
5. Behaving in a responsible manner.
6. Paying required fees and fines.
7. Abiding by the code of conduct.

8. Obeying all school rules, including safety rules, and rules pertaining to Internet safety.
9. Seeking change in school policies and regulations in an orderly and responsible manner, through appropriate channels.
10. Cooperating with staff investigations of disciplinary cases and volunteering information relating to a serious offense.

Students who violate these rules will be subject to disciplinary action and shall be referred when appropriate to legal authorities for violation of the law.

Students at school or school-related activities are prohibited from:

1. Engaging in academic dishonesty, including cheating, intentionally plagiarizing, wrongfully giving or receiving help during an academic examination and wrongfully obtaining test copies or scores.
2. Throwing objects that can cause bodily injury or damage property.
3. Leaving school grounds or school-sponsored events without permission.
4. Directing profanity, vulgar language, or obscene gestures toward other students or staff.
5. Disobeying directives from school personnel or school policies, rules, and regulations.
6. Being disrespectful or directing profanity, vulgar language, or obscene gestures toward teachers or other school employees.
7. Playing with matches, fire, or committing arson.
8. Committing robbery or theft.
9. Damaging or vandalizing property owned by the school, other students, or school employees.
10. Disobeying school rules on school buses.
11. Fighting, committing physical abuse, or threatening physical abuse.
12. Committing extortion, coercion, or blackmail; that is, forcing an individual to act through the use of force or threat of force.
13. Name-calling, making ethnic or racial slurs or derogatory statements that may substantially disrupt the school program or incite violence.
14. Engaging in inappropriate physical or sexual contact disruptive to the school environment or disturbing to other students.
15. Assaulting a teacher, staff member or other individual.
16. Selling, giving, delivering, possessing, using, or being under the influence of drugs such as: marijuana; a controlled substance or drug; or an alcoholic beverage.
17. Possessing a weapon or dangerous instrument.
18. Prescription drugs which are given to person other than who the drug is prescribed.
19. Smoking or using tobacco products.
20. Hazing, bullying
21. Behaving in any way that disrupts the school environment or educational process.

22. No student is allowed to possess an electronic pager, "beeper" device, cellular telephone, two-way radio and/or other telecommunication device on school property without prior approval of the school principal.
23. Violating the district's Internet Safety policy.
24. Using or possessing a laser pointer unless under a staff member's supervision and in the context of instruction.
25. Cheating, plagiarizing.

During school dances, students may not leave the building unless written permission is received from parents indicating that the parents will pick up the student prior to the scheduled end time. At 10 P.M., the school building and school grounds will be secured and adult supervision will end. Students without such written permission will not be allowed to leave and reenter the dance activity. All school rules are in effect during such activity.

Dangerous Weapons and Instruments

No guns, knives or any other objects, including martial arts weapons, capable of threatening or causing injury or death may be brought onto school grounds. Any object used to cause injury will be considered a weapon. Violators will be subject to arrest and prosecution, as well as, appropriate disciplinary action. Any student found to possess a weapon on school grounds or during a school-activity will be expelled from school.

An expelled student may apply for early readmission to school. Such readmission is at the discretion of the Board of Education (unless the Board has delegated authority for readmission decisions to the Superintendent.) The Board or Superintendent, as appropriate, may condition such readmission on specified criteria.

Smoking

Students shall not smoke or use tobacco products on school property or at any school-related or school-sanctioned activity, on or off school property as provided by state and federal law.

Substance Abuse

As stated in the CONDUCT section of this handbook, the school prohibits the manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of alcohol or controlled substances on school grounds or during school activities.

Substance abuse or distribution of drugs and/or drug paraphernalia including alcohol may indicate serious, underlying problems. Every effort will be made to offer student assistance, including early identification, referral for treatment to private or community agencies and aftercare support.

Disciplinary procedures will be administered with the best interests of the student, school population and community in mind and with due consideration of the rights of students. However, consideration must be given to the fact that substance abuse is illegal and subject to criminal prosecution. Unauthorized possession, distribution, sale or consumption of dangerous drugs, narcotics or alcoholic beverages are considered grounds for expulsion.

Students are encouraged to consult with teachers, administrators and other professional staff on substance abuse problems. A staff member who is contacted by a student regarding a drug or alcohol problem may elect to keep that information confidential and not disclose it to any other person in accordance with state law. However, the student will be encouraged at the earliest appropriate time to seek help from parents or guardians.

In such cases, the decision to involve the parents/guardians will be arrived jointly by the student and educator unless, in the judgment of the educator, the mental or physical health of the student is immediately and dangerously threatened by drug/alcohol use. If such danger is imminent, the parents/guardians and health officials will be notified so that appropriate action can be taken.

Counseling Services

Horace W. Porter School Counselors work with students and their families around issues that cause academic, behavioral, and social difficulties in school. Individual and group counseling sessions are provided for students in grades K - 8 to help with difficulties in the areas of peer and adult relationships, physical or mental health, learning, life changes, and decision making. The counseling staff works closely with grade-level staff and parents around these and related issues and is responsible for implementation of our school-wide Developmental Guidance Curriculum.

Guidance Information: The primary charge of the Horace W. Porter School Guidance Program is to provide academic guidance, high school advisement, personal/social support, and career education to all students. Our Guidance Counselor demonstrates respect for the dignity and worth of each individual and encourages each student to develop personal responsibility and effective decision-making skills. The Guidance Counselor coordinates the school guidance program and involves all staff members in designing and implementing plans to meet three major goals: educational development, personal/social development, and career goal setting.

The Guidance Counselor achieves these goals by:

- Cultivating relationships with students, faculty/staff, and parents/guardians.
- Presenting a comprehensive curriculum and program of services.
- Becoming the first source of help in planning courses, researching high school options, and listening to, responding to, and giving advice to students and parents who express academic, behavioral, and/or social/emotional concerns.

- Conducting individual meetings, small group sessions, and classroom exercises providing the means to meet the personal, academic, and vocational needs of all students.
- Assisting students with designated elective programs.
- Addressing students' personal interests, cognitive processing styles, goal behaviors, career and self-exploration activities are specifically in the middle school years.
- Addressing communication styles and the high school planning process.
- Providing on-going personal counseling for students in need.

Cubbies and Lockers

Cubbies (Preschool – Grade 3) and lockers (Grades 4 - 8) are assigned at the beginning of each school year. These cubbies and lockers are the property of Horace W. Porter School; the school reserves the right to open and inspect cubbies and lockers.

Preschool – Grade 3 students are expected to:

- Keep cubbies clean and neat at all times.
- Only use their assigned cubby for personal storage.
- Only go to their assigned cubby after securing teacher permission.

Grade 4 – 8 students are expected to:

- Maintain a closed, clean and neat locker at all times.
- Keep lockers completely closed (none of its contents should be visible).
- Only use their assigned locker for personal storage.
- Only go to their assigned locker during passing time or after securing teacher permission.
- Forfeit locker use if any of the above expectations are repeatedly violated.

Cubby/Locker Searches: Student Cubbies/Lockers are considered school property; therefore, School Administrators may conduct random inspections of student cubbies/lockers. Further, with due cause, an administrator may conduct searches of student personal storage items including purses, backpacks, book bags, totes, and clothing pockets. Further, backpacks, book bags, and totes are to be kept in lockers during the school day.

Discipline

At Horace W. Porter School, students are instructed on the connection between actions and their associated effects in an endeavor to shape and mature students' character, thus freeing them from the need for external controllers.

Rules are the proactive guidelines that maintain a positive school environment which is safe and conducive to learning. To that end, we expect that students will:

- Treat others the way you want to be treated
- Keep others safe and healthy

- Take care of school and classroom materials
- Behave like respectful learners

Consequences are the reactive piece of discipline, a response that provides a learning experience as well as an opportunity for students to make respectful, relevant, and reasonable amends for their actions resulting from instances in which the student has violated school rules, endangered persons/property, or has been seriously disruptive to the educational process. For example, students may pay for broken/damaged property, offer a verbal/written apology, or earn a detention, suspension, or expulsion. When determining disciplinary actions to be taken, administration and staff will make every effort to be consistent and fair while remaining sensitive to situational and individual dimensions where appropriate.

Dress Code

The Columbia Board of Education encourages students to dress in clothing appropriate in the school environment. At Horace W. Porter School, the Student Dress Code is specific and encourages personal responsibility, health, safety and self-worth. Restrictions to student dress may be applied whenever the mode of dress in question threatens the health and safety of students or staff, impinges upon the rights of others, or causes a disruption of the learning process.

Nothing in this policy shall intrude on the constitutional or statutory rights of any student. The exercise of such rights by students must be consistent with the public purposes for which the public schools have been established.

The rules and logical consequences related to the Student Dress Code mirror those relayed in the discipline section of this handbook. The detailed Student Dress Code rules are the proactive guidelines that are set up to help the students and staff achieve the goals for a positive, safe and non-disruptive climate for learning. In order to maintain the Student Dress Code, we expect students will dress appropriately thereby ensuring an environment where everyone:

- Treats others the way they want to be treated
- Keeps everyone safe and healthy
- Takes care of personal comfort while not infringing on the comfort of others
- Behaves like a respectful member of the community

The following clothing is deemed inappropriate and may not be worn in school:

- Clothing depicting logos/emblems encouraging use of drugs, tobacco products, or alcoholic beverages, or that may be considered as sexually harassing or portraying any form of violence/obscenity (including partially clad men/women)
- Clothing defined as undergarments that are visible at any time (for example, camisoles cannot be worn as shirts)

- Clothing that is see-through or does not cover the entire area below the armpit
- Clothing with spaghetti-style straps or resembling tank tops, halter tops, or belly shirts
- Clothing exposing skin between the top and bottom pieces
- Clothing exposing the wearer's thigh above the measurement of the tip of the longest finger while standing
- Clothing defined as outerwear (mittens, hats, jackets, coats, etc.) except during arrival, dismissal, outdoor recess transit, or when directed otherwise by staff
- Clothing defined as flannel lounge wear, pajamas, slippers and any clothing that resembles sleepwear

Students may not wear any footwear:

- that marks floors or have build-in/removal wheels (i.e. Heelys or similar wheeled shoes)
- exposing the toes/heels of the foot (flip-flops, open-toed shoes/sandals, open-back shoes/sandals/clogs) or having a sole/heel higher than one inch

Students may not wear any accessories:

- like chains/wallet chains
- like hats, caps, bandanas, or hoods unless part of a uniform necessary to participate in a school event

Special Event Attire: Students participating in a special event are expected to wear clothing that is appropriate to that function in accordance with the school dress code.

Band/Chorus Concert Dress Code: Boys: white dress shirt, tie, black pants, and dress shoes. Girls: white blouse, black skirt/pants, and dress shoes.

This Student Dress Code also applies to all school-sponsored events.

Logical consequences provide an opportunity for students to make amends for their actions. In this case, a logical consequence to inappropriate attire is a "you broke it you fix it" approach, removing or replacing the inappropriate attire. If necessary, the student will be permitted to contact a parent/guardian requesting appropriate replacement attire. If the parent/guardian is unable to deliver the appropriate replacement attire, the student will then receive an alternate logical consequence in the form of a loss of privilege. As with all consequences, administration and staff will make every effort to be consistent and fair while remaining sensitive to situational and individual dimensions where appropriate.

Electives (Middle School)

Incoming students in grades 5-8 are required to select electives for the next academic year. Elective descriptions are disseminated prior to elective selection. Elective assignments will be determined by availability; a lottery system will be utilized if any elective selection is oversubscribed. Students who do not submit a request will be placed into electives as space allows. It is important that parents assist with the selection of electives as they are full-year, graded courses requiring the same student attention as compulsory courses. Electives may not be changed once the school year has begun.

Eligibility for Middle School Extra-Curricular Activities

Participation in school-sponsored drama, sports, dances, clubs or other Middle School extra-curricular activities requires a passing grade (65 and above) in all subjects. Failure to maintain a passing grade on a Report Card or Progress Report will result in an automatic loss of eligibility to participate in extra-curricular activities. In addition, students who have earned a suspension are not eligible to participate in extra-curricular activities on the day they are suspended as well as during the suspension period.

Probation Contract: Teachers may utilize a Probation Contract, written based on the needs of each student, at any time during a Marking Period for students whose grades fall below 65 in any graded subject. During the length of the contract the student will not be allowed to participate in any extra-curricular activities.

Students whose grades fall below 65 in any graded subject at the time of Progress Reports are automatically suspended from extracurricular activities and required to complete a Probation Contract signed by the student, parent/guardian, teacher(s) and administrator. Extra-curricular activities can be resumed when completing the Probation Contract has resulted in a passing grade OR the next Report Card shows a passing grade.

Students whose grades fall below 65 in any graded subject at the time of Report Cards are automatically suspended from extracurricular activities until the next Progress Report shows a passing grade. A Probation Contract cannot be used to resume eligibility because the previous grade was final for the Marking Period.

Spectators: Students in grades 6-8 who desire permission to be spectators at an after school on-campus sporting event without a parent/guardian present need to bring a note to the Main Office on the morning of the event. The note must be signed by his/her parent/guardian indicating the time, date, and event the student will be attending. Notes for students who are in good standing both academically and behaviorally, have remained in attendance at previous sporting events until parent pick up, and maintained appropriate behaviors during previous sporting events will be approved. If a note is not approved, the parent/guardian will be contacted and the student will be

dismissed using the regularly scheduled method of transport. We cannot accept faxed notes.

Evacuation Procedure

A full evacuation begins with the below fire alarm procedure and continues with a complete evacuation of the school grounds. Each room in the school has an assigned evacuation route (posted in each room) to be used during an evacuation. Students, parents, guests and visitors must follow the direction of staff during a full evacuation. Under no circumstances will a student be released to a parent/guardian during a full evacuation drill. In the case of an actual emergency requiring a full evacuation, parents are asked to follow the procedures for student release announced by the Superintendent of Schools. A minimum of one Evacuation Drill is scheduled annually.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. § 1232g, et seq., affords parents and eligible students certain rights with respect to the student's education records. The full explanation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act is cited in the Columbia Board of Education Policy Book, located in the Office of the Superintendent of Schools and the Horace W. Porter School Library Media Center.

Fire Alarm Procedure

Each room in the school has an assigned evacuation route (posted in each room) to be used during a fire alarm. Students, parents, guests and visitors must follow the direction of staff during a fire alarm. Under no circumstances will a student be released to a parent/guardian during a fire alarm. Between ten and twelve fire drills are scheduled annually.

Grading

Grades are the responsibility and judgment of each teacher operating under the general guidelines of the Board of Education.

Preschool Students: PK students will receive a narrative progress report three times a year.

Elementary Students (K-4): A developmental philosophy is used to track student learning in the elementary grades. Students will receive report cards three times a year. Report cards utilizing the following codes will be mailed approximately one week after the last day of each trimester.

Kindergarten Report Card Codes

E = Exceeds Expectations	S = Some Progress
M = Meets Expectations	N = Needs Improvement

Grades 1-4 Report Card Codes

E = Emerging	S = Secure
D = Developing	NET = Not Evaluated during this Term

Middle School Students (5-8): Students will receive Progress Reports (using letter grades) at the mid-term of each trimester and report cards (using number grades) at the end of each trimester. Students and parents/guardians may review student progress at any time using the Parent Portal throughout each trimester. Report cards will be mailed approximately one week after the last day of each trimester.

Grades 5-8 Report Card Grades

A+ = 98-100	B+ = 88-89	C+ = 78-79	D = 65-69
A = 93-97	B = 83-87	C = 73-77	F = Failing 64 & Below
A- = 90-92	B- = 80-82	C- = 70-72	I = Incomplete

Attendance at Band and Chorus concerts are mandatory for Middle School students taking those classes, as it is part of their class grade.

Failing Grades: Teachers will utilize a Probation Contract when students earn failing grades in order to offer students an opportunity to complete the criteria necessary to pass the class and reinstate eligibility for extra-curricular activities.

Graduation

Grade 8 Graduation normally takes place on the 180th day of the school year. The date of graduation is subject to change due to the closing of school as a result of inclement weather. Only those grade 8 students who have completed all graduation requirements (i.e. good academic standing and acceptable behavior) will be permitted to participate in the commencement exercise.

Gum Chewing

Gum chewing is not allowed in school.

Hall Pass

All students must have a hall pass from a staff member when moving through the corridors during class periods. Hall passes will be checked by staff when students are found in the hallway. In addition, students are expected to pass quietly through the halls at all times, as learning is taking place for other students.

Health and First Aid

The Health Office Staff is available to give assistance with health problems and to interpret the health needs of students to school personnel and parents. Please notify the Health Office of any contagious illness your child has, if they develop any medical conditions, or there are any changes in their medications.

Screenings: Vision screening, height and weight measurements are completed annually for each student. Hearing is tested annually in grades K – 3 and again in grade 5 and grade 8. A student who has a suspected vision, hearing or health problem can be referred to the Health Office Staff at any time. Students in grades 5-8 are also checked for scoliosis with parental permission.

Communicable Diseases: Parents are asked to inform the school when their child has a communicable disease. Students with a suspected communicable disease may be referred to their pediatrician or the School Medical Advisor and excluded from attendance at school until given permission to return by the Director of Health. Such exclusion shall be in accordance with the procedures under applicable state and federal laws.

Injury or Illness at School: When a student becomes injured or takes ill while at school, the parent/guardian or the designated emergency contact will be called to pick up the student. In case of serious accident, the parents and administration are notified immediately and emergency action is taken. It is important to maintain current emergency information in both the Main Office and Health Office throughout the school year. Further, it is important to provide the school with permission to take appropriate action in these instances

When to Keep a Child Home: Children should be kept home if they have a temperature over 100 degrees, a rash of unknown origin, vomiting, diarrhea, a severe sore throat, earache, or severe persistent cough.

Physical Examinations: Physical exams are required prior to entrance into pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and during the sixth grade year. Physicals are recommended for third grade. Annual vision tests, heights, and weights are done on all students. Referrals are made for follow-up if necessary.

Physicals for Athletic Eligibility: Physicals for athletic eligibility are to be completed every two years; however, a health history form must be completed annually for each sport.

Immunization: State law regarding immunization entry requirements for all public schools:

VACCINE	GRADE	# of doses	Start date
Pneumoccal	PK and K (born 1/1/07 or later and less than 5 yr old)	1 dose on or after 1st birthday	8/1/11
Hepatitis A	PK and K (born 1/1/07 or later)	2 doses given 6 months apart –1st dose on or after 1st birthday	8/1/11
Influenza	PK and K (children aged 24-59 months) given annually between 8/1 and 12/31 each year	1 dose (2 doses for those receiving flu vaccine for the first time)	8/1/11
MMR	K - 12	2 doses given at least 28 days apart – 1st dose on or after 1st birthday	8/1/11
Varicella	PK	1 dose on or after first birthday	8/1/11
Varicella	K and Grade 7 entry	2 doses given 3 months apart - 1st dose on or after 1st birthday	8/1/11
Tdap	Grade 7 entry	1 dose	8/1/11
Meningococcal	Grade 7 entry	1 dose	8/1/11

Health Records

School nurses maintain health records using the Connecticut "Health Assessment and Record Form." These records are accessible to certified staff working with the child and to school health aides if permission is granted by the nurse or building administrator. Parents may request to inspect the health records of their child. Copies may be provided if requested. Original copies of the record are sent where a student transfers to another school in the state. If moving out-of-state, a copy will be forwarded. Health records are maintained for at least six years after the student graduates. The District will comply with the requirements of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) to maintain the privacy of protected health information.

A diabetic student may test his/her own blood glucose level per the written order of a physician or advanced practice nurse stating the need and the capacity of the student to conduct self testing. Such self testing shall be done in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Commissioner of Education.

Homework

Homework time will vary depending on the student's academic and social performance. If a student frequently exceeds the recommended study time listed below or if a student expresses regular frustration when completing homework, it is recommended that parents contact the appropriate teacher for assistance and support.

Grades 1-8 Recommended Study Time Per Day

Kindergarten, average of 15 minutes

Grade 1, average of 15 minutes

Grade 5, average of 65 minutes

Grade 2, average of 15 minutes

Grade 6, average of 65 minutes

Grade 3, average of 30 minutes

Grade 7, average of 90 minutes

Grade 4, average of 40 minutes

Grade 8, average of 100 minutes

Honor Roll

An honor roll for students in Grades 6, 7 and 8 will be printed at the end of each marking period with each student attaining honors having the designation printed on the report card.

High Honors: A student must have a 90 or above in all graded subjects on their report card.

Honors: A student must have an 80 or above in all graded subjects on their report card.

Interscholastic Athletics

Horace W. Porter School offers a broad range of athletic programs. A degree of selectivity is required to enable us to field competitive interscholastic teams. All students who desire to participate in Interscholastic Athletics are encouraged to try out for their sport of interest. Coaches, working with the athletic director, develop appropriate selection criteria.

One of the objectives of middle school is to have a well-rounded athletic program. Permanent values, such as fair play, loyalties, team work, resourcefulness, determination, and leadership are gained from a sound athletic program. Every student is encouraged to participate in one or more sports on the junior varsity or varsity levels.

Fall	Winter	Spring
Soccer (B,G) Unified Sports (B,G)	Basketball (B,G) Cheerleading (B,G)	Baseball (B)/Softball (G) Track (B,G) Unified Sports (B,G)

Athletic Procedures:

1. Coaches establish the criteria for the selection of team members.
2. An athlete must try out for that team at the beginning of the season.
3. Athletes must supply some of their own equipment such as but not limited to shoes, gloves, and/or sneakers.
4. Athletic policies will be discussed with each team by the coach under the direction of the Athletic Director.

Before participating students must complete the following:

1. Student-athlete permission slip signed by parent or guardian for each sport.
2. Athletic Health Screening Procedure.

Each athlete must have a pre-participation health evaluation before participating on an interscholastic athletic team. The health evaluation must be conducted before participation in either a practice or a competitive contest is allowed. The components of the health evaluation are as follows:

- A. A Medical Health History Form must be completed for each season of participation by parent/guardian and athlete and submitted to the Health Office. The school nurse and/or medical advisor will review the medical history. If indicated, the athlete may be required to be seen by his/her family physician before being medically cleared for participation. Athletes sustaining a serious injury or illness will be required to be re-screened by their health care provider (legally qualified practitioner of medicine) before resuming participation in sports.
- B. A Physical Assessment must be conducted every two (2) years by a licensed medical professional. Physical assessments must be conducted prior to the student's participation on an interscholastic athletic team at Horace W. Porter School.

Eligibility for Participation in Interscholastic Athletics Policy: In order for students to participate in Interscholastic Athletics they must meet the requirements for participation in Extra-Curricular Activities.

Library Media Center

Over 23,000 books and hundreds of videos, CDs, magazines, and other online media are available for student use. The LMC is open from 8:30 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. daily. The LMC also houses a computer lab, photocopier, and Internet resources (students must complete, sign, and return the Telecommunications/Internet Acceptable Use Contract prior to using internet resources in the LMC). Students must maintain quiet and order while in the LMC to allow others to read and study effectively. Unacceptable behavior will be grounds for removal and/or curtailment of LMC privileges.

Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Students

Parents of Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students participating in a language instructional program will be notified within 30 days of their child's placement in the program. The notification will include an explanation of why, a description of the program, and the parent's rights to remove their child from the LEP program. In addition, the notification will explain how the program will help the child to develop academically, learn English and achieve the standards necessary for promotion.

Students not meeting the English mastery standard or demonstrating limited progress will be provided with additional language support services which may include, but are not limited to, English as a Second Language program, sheltered English programs, English Immersion programs, summer school, after-school assistance, homework assistance, and tutoring. Students after 30 months in a bilingual program will not be offered additional bilingual education.

Lockdown Procedure

Each room in the school has been assigned a lockdown area to be used during a lockdown. Students, parents, guests and visitors must follow the direction of staff during a lockdown. Under no circumstances will a student be released to a parent during a lockdown drill. A minimum of one Lockdown Drill is scheduled annually.

Lost and Found

Lost items are taken to double doors behind the Main Office and placed in the Lost and Found container. Students seeking to find an item lost during the school day are advised to seek teacher permission to search the Lost and Found container before the last school day of the week the item was lost. Unclaimed items are removed from the Lost and Found container on the last school day of the week and donated to charity.

Lunch

Students in grades K – 8 must eat lunch in the cafetorium unless granted special permission by a staff member. Any student leaving the lunchroom must sign out on the clipboard. Students are to cross their names off the list upon returning to the lunchroom.

Students may purchase a variety of food items through our Food Service Program during their lunch period. Lunches may be purchased with cash or with a pre-paid lunch card. Free or reduced lunches may be requested under special circumstances. Applications are available through the Main Office.

Students are responsible for maintaining the cleanliness of the eating area; this includes disposing of or recycling all lunch-related refuse on, near and under the eating area and preparing the table surface for washing by Food Service Staff between lunch waves.

Food Allergy Table: A social expectation of our students is a demonstration of personal responsibility. In providing support for this social expectation, Horace W. Porter School makes available a Food Allergy Table for those students not yet able to independently demonstrate such responsibility for their food-related allergy.

Lunch Cards: Lunch cards allow parents to pre-pay for lunch purchases; these cards are not credit-type cards (a la carte sales are cash only). If insufficient pre-paid funds exist when purchasing lunch, the student is provided a peanut butter & jelly sandwich and carton of milk for that lunch period at an IOU charge of \$3.00. The Food Service Manager will contact parents by telephone or letter at the end of every week to inform them of the depleted balance and \$3.00 IOU charges. Parents not maintaining a sufficient balance for lunch purchases risk account delinquency and delinquency fees.

Lunch Rules and Consequences: At Horace W. Porter School, lunch is an extension of the classroom with opportunities for peer interaction and personal responsibility. The rules and logical consequences related to participation in lunch interactions with peers mirror those relayed in the discipline section of this handbook. These proactive guidelines are intended to help the students and staff achieve the goals for peer interaction and personal responsibility during lunch. In order to maintain a positive lunch experience, we expect students will:

- Treat others the way they want to be treated
- Keep everyone safe and healthy
- Take care of school/lunch related materials
- Behave like a respectful diner

Logical consequences provide an opportunity for students to make amends for their actions, for example, logical consequence to inappropriate peer interactions or irresponsible behavior may lead to a time-out away from peers or a loss of privilege

during the current or future lunch period. As with all consequences, administration and staff will make every effort to be consistent and fair while remaining sensitive to situational and individual dimensions where appropriate.

Make-Up Work

Students absent for unavoidable reasons are required to make-up work according to the chart below. It is a student's responsibility to communicate with the teacher(s), however, we understand that success in communication is linked to each student's developmental ability. Parents and teachers should work together to support communication related to school work and homework. *Note: No class work or homework will be provided in advance of an absence*

Number of Days Absent	Time Allowed to Make Up Work
1	1 day upon returning to school
2 – 3	2 days upon returning to school
4 – 5	3 days upon returning to school
6 or more	Special arrangement with Teacher

Students who have been excluded from school privileges as the result of a suspension or expulsion will be afforded an alternative educational opportunity or an opportunity to make up work.

Medication Policy

The Connecticut State Law and Regulations require a physician/dentist/APRN/PA's written order and the parent/guardian's authorization for a nurse to administer prescription and over-the-counter medications. Students are not allowed to carry medications to or from school. Medications must be delivered to the nurse by a parent or guardian in pharmacy prepared containers labeled with the name of the student, drug, strength, dosage, frequency, authorized prescriber's name, and the date of the original prescription. Medication must be stored in the Health Office.

Medication: Medications prescribed by an authorized prescriber may be administered to students during school hours or at school-sponsored activities by licensed nursing personnel or a trained designee. An authorized prescriber's written order and a parent/guardian's written authorization are required for the medication to be administered.

Acetaminophen and Ibuprofen may be administered to students with written parental permission according to the medical standing orders. All other medications must have a written order from an authorized prescriber and a written parent/guardian authorization for administration. These drugs must be stored in their original package in the Health Office.

Students in Grades 5 - 8 may carry prescription inhalers or Epi-pen type treatments and self administer, provided there is a written medical order, parent/guardian authorization, and the school procedure for self administration is followed. The consent of the medical advisor is required for an exemption to the policy for self-administering medications. State law forbids students to be in possession of any medication (prescription or non-prescription) other than the above while at school or school-sponsored activities.

Messages

Parents should limit messages for students to items of an emergency nature. Classes will not be interrupted except under emergency circumstances as determined by the Main Office personnel. When necessary, parents should leave routine messages with the Main Office secretaries (228-9493); messages will be forwarded to student at the most convenient and appropriate time (i.e., lunch, recess, SSR, Flex).

Migrant Students

A full range of services will be provided to migrant students, including applicable Title I programs, special education, gifted education, vocational education, language programs, counseling programs and elective classes. Parents/guardians of migrant students will be involved in and regularly consulted about the development, implementation, operation and evaluation of the migrant program.

National Junior Honor Society

As supported by BOE policy 6145.51 and Regulations 6145.51 (a) and 6145.51 (b), students who have a cumulative average of at least 93 during four consecutive marking periods (beginning in sixth grade for seventh grade candidates, and seventh grade for eighth grade candidates) are academically eligible to be considered for membership in the National Junior Honor Society. This will be calculated in the following manner: cumulative refers to 93% for each marking period, i.e. for a seventh grader: 93% for the third quarter of sixth grade, 93% for the fourth quarter of sixth grade, 93% for the first quarter of seventh grade, and 93% for the second quarter of seventh grade. However, membership cannot be granted on the basis of academics alone. Students who qualify as outstanding in the area of academics will then be considered for induction based on citizenship, service, character, and leadership.

Newsletter

A school newsletter is distributed each Thursday in order to share news of note, upcoming school activities, and PTO and Saxton B. Little events. Electronic versions of the newsletter are available via parent subscription. In addition, the newsletter can also be accessed via the school website.

Non-Discrimination Notice

The Columbia School District does not discriminate on the basis of a disabling condition as it applies under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

The Columbia School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national/ethnic origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, or disability in its programs, activities, and employment practices.

The following individuals are coordinators for Title IX (sex discrimination), Title VI (race, creed and color), and Section 504 (disabled):

Title IX and Title VI	Jacqueline A. Middleton	(860) 228-0585
Section 504	Robert Parenti	(860) 228-9493

Office Referral

If a student's behavior or actions warrants an Office Referral the student will meet with an administrator to discuss the logical consequence(s) related to his/her actions.

Parent Involvement/Communications

Education succeeds best when there is a strong partnership between home and school based on communications and interactions. Parents/guardians are urged to encourage their children to put a high priority on education and to make the most of their educational opportunities available. Parents/guardians should become familiar with all of the child's school activities and with the District's academic programs, including special programs. Attendance at parent-teacher conferences, participation in campus parent organizations, attendance at board of education meetings and being a school volunteer are strongly encouraged.

Parent Portal

Porter's Parent Portal is our web-based student information system which allows us to access and maintain numerous types of student oriented data. A complete description can be found online via the main Porter website located at:

<http://www.hwporter.org//Portal%20Parent%20Guide.pdf>

If you have questions or need assistance with logging in, please contact Tammy Nye in the main office (860-228-9493, ext. 105)

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-Teacher Conferences are held in November and March each school year. Conferences are generally not expected to exceed 15 minutes in length; teachers arrange the specific times for conferences.

Personal Property

Student personal property must be kept in cubbies (Preschool – Grade 3) or lockers (Grade 4 – 8). Electronic games, cell phones, i-pods, disc players, radios, toys, or any other personal property considered disruptive to the educational process may not be brought to school. Student personal property found to be disruptive to the educational process may be confiscated by a staff member, a bus driver, or an administrator, and held in the Main Office until a parent/guardian is available for retrieval. The school is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged personal property brought to school or on a school bus.

Pesticide Application

Only certified pesticide applicators shall be used in schools for any non-emergency pesticide use in school buildings or on school grounds. Pesticide applications are limited to non-school hours and when activities are not taking place. Areas to receive pesticide application will be posted and a written record of all pesticide applications will be maintained for five years. Parents/guardians and staff who want to receive advance notice of all pesticide use will be listed on a registry and such notice will be provided as required by law. Parents/guardians who want to be notified prior to pesticide applications inside their child(ren)'s school assignment area may contact Michael Sylvester.

Physical Education Exemption Policy

At times, for health reasons, a student's participation in physical education activities may need to be limited. Any exemption from physical education activities requires signed documentation from the student's physician identifying the reason for and duration of the exemption. This documentation must be provided to the Health Office prior to honoring the exemption. All exemptions related to physical education activities apply to recess and school-related athletics activities.

Procedures for Addressing General Concerns

Concerns and problems are best resolved when presented in a timely fashion to the individuals in the order listed below:

Academic Program

1. Classroom Teacher
2. Principal
3. Superintendent
4. Board of Education

Athletic Program

1. Coach
2. Athletic Director
3. Principal
4. Superintendent
5. Board of Education

Promotion and Retention Policy

The Promotion and Retention Policy (BOE policy 5123) is intended to articulate clearly the Board of Education's intention to foster achievement, reduce the incidence of social promotion, and to foster standards for student accomplishment.

If at any time during the school year a teacher or parent would like to initiate the retention process, a meeting will take place with the teacher, parent, principal, and other staff deemed appropriate by the principal. All retention recommendations should be discussed with parents/guardians by April 15th regarding students in grades K-2 and by March 15th for students in grades 3 and above. Final decisions with regard to retention must be made prior to May 30th, with official notification sent to parents at that time.

Any student absent more than 20 days in the academic year, regardless of reason for absence, will be scheduled for a retention meeting with grade-level staff, parents and administration.

Psychotropic Drug Use

School personnel are prohibited from recommending the use of psychotropic drugs for any student enrolled within the school system. School nurses, nurse practitioners, district medical advisor, school psychologists, school social workers and school counselors, may recommend that a student be evaluated by an appropriate medical practitioner. Further, the District is prohibited from requiring a child to get a prescription before he/she may attend school, be evaluated to determine eligibility for special education or receive special education.

Recess

At Horace W. Porter School, recess is an extension of the classroom with opportunities for peer interaction and personal responsibility. The rules and logical consequences related to participation in recess interactions with peers mirror those relayed in the discipline section of this handbook. Rules are the proactive guidelines that are set up to help the students and staff achieve the goals for peer interaction and personal responsibility during recess. In order to maintain a positive recess experience, we expect students will:

- Treat others the way they want to be treated
- Keep everyone safe and healthy
- Take care of school/recess related materials
- Behave like respectful playmates

Logical consequences provide an opportunity for students to make amends for their actions. Logical consequence to inappropriate peer interactions or irresponsible behavior may lead to a time-out away from peers or a loss of privilege during the current or future recess period. As with all consequences, administration and staff will make every effort to be consistent and fair while remaining sensitive to situational and individual dimensions where appropriate.

The administration asks that toys, sports equipment and other personal items be kept at home as the school provides equipment for students to use during recess.

School Ceremonies and Observances

The school district recognizes the value of certain ceremonies and observances in promoting patriotism and good citizenship among the students. Therefore, activities in schools commemorating national holidays such as Memorial Day, Thanksgiving and President's Day are encouraged. Nutmeg reminds students, faculty and administration of the variety of religious beliefs, and all are urged to be conscious of and respect the sensitivities of others.

Activities related to a religious holiday or theme will be planned to ensure that the activity is not devotional, and that students of all faiths can join without feeling that they are betraying their own beliefs. Therefore,

1. school and class plays shall not be overly religious, and church-like scenery will be avoided;
2. religious music shall not entirely dominate the selection of music; and
3. program notes and illustrations shall not be religious or sectarian.

Students shall be given the option to be excused from participating in those parts of a program or curriculum involving a religious theme which conflicts with their own religious beliefs. If a parent or student has any questions regarding the use of religious music, artwork and/or symbols in a particular course/activity, the Building Principal should be contacted.

An opportunity will be provided, at the beginning of each school day, for students to observe an appropriate period of silent meditation and to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. Participation in these activities is voluntary. Non-participants are expected to maintain order and decorum appropriate to the school environment.

School Closings or Delays

In the event of school closings or delays, a notification via WTIC 1080 AM, 96.5 FM, WILI 1400 AM, 98.3 FM, WDRC 1360 AM, 102.9 FM, WFSB-TV 3, WTNH-TV 8 and WVIT-TV 30 will

broadcast “no school” announcements beginning at 6:00 A.M. The district will be identified as “Columbia”.

School Facilities

Students are not permitted to use the school facilities at any time (gym, playground, classrooms, library, etc.) unless a staff member is sponsoring and supervising said use.

Sexual Harassment

The Columbia Board of Education seeks to promote and maintain a healthy social and learning environment for all of its students, based on the principle that every individual's dignity must be respected. Sexual harassment will not be tolerated. Specific procedures for reporting sexual harassment are delineated in the Columbia Board of Education Policy & Procedures document (5145.5) available in the Office of the Superintendent or in the Horace W. Porter School Library Media Center.

Special Events

At Horace W. Porter School, special events (field trips, guest speakers, assemblies, etc.) are planned to facilitate opportunities for students to connect curriculum to real-world relevance and student interest. The rules and logical consequences related to participation in special events mirror those relayed in the discipline section of this handbook. Rules are the proactive guidelines that are set up in the school and classroom to help the students and staff achieve the goals for the special event. In order to maintain a positive special event experience, we expect students will:

- Treat others the way you want to be treated
- Keep everyone safe and healthy
- Take care of special event materials
- Behave like a respectful learner

Logical consequences provide an opportunity for students to make amends for their actions. Logical consequence to inappropriate behavior may lead to a loss of privilege during the current or future special event. As with all consequences, administration and staff will make every effort to be consistent and fair while remaining sensitive to situational and individual dimensions where appropriate.

Student Contract

Any Grade 7-8 student exhibiting behavior warranting an office referral or a failing grade on a Report Card will enter into a contract with their parents, teachers and administrator to improve.

Student Records

Horace W. Porter School shall maintain school records for the purpose of instruction, guidance and research.

Student Services

Students can be referred to the Planning and Placement Team (PPT) to determine their eligibility for special education services by their parents or a member of the staff. Typically, students are first referred to the SRBI Team to review the appropriateness of alternative/non-special education accommodations or modifications in the classroom, or to determine if the child should be referred to PPT. When difficulties persist and learning is impacted, the student is referred to PPT; this necessitates parent involvement and representation from a variety of school personnel. The PPT makes the determination regarding the need for testing and, if testing is recommended, the team reviews testing results and makes a recommendation for eligibility for special education services as appropriate.

Horace W. Porter School maintains a strong commitment to providing a functional education in the regular class environment while providing education and support out of the classroom as necessary.

Student Services can include any or all of the following:

- Preschool screening of 3 and 4 year olds;
- Assessment of cognitive skills, academic levels, learning styles and behaviors;
- PALS Program: preschool program for children identified as eligible for special education and/or related services (e.g. Speech therapy) in addition to children chosen through a community lottery system;
- Next Step Program: middle school program that typically focuses on the behaviors associated with attention deficit disorder (ADD/ADHD) and for students whose behaviors require a specific and more systematic focus;
- Specialized instruction/support within regular education classrooms across all grades;
- Individual and/or small group strategy instruction across grades K-8;
- Team teaching (special education and regular education);
- Modified instructional materials and assistive technology aids to learning and communication;
- Direct instruction with Occupational, Physical and/or Speech and Language Therapists in the classroom and resource room milieus;
- Instruction/consultation with specialists (psychologist, social worker, guidance counselor, nurse, speech and language pathologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist and educational consultants.

Suspension and Expulsion

The Columbia Board of Education outlines its suspension and expulsion policies in BOE policy 5114 (a-h). Students may be suspended or expelled if their conduct endangers persons or property, is seriously disruptive of the educational process, or which violates a published policy of the BOE. This policy (5114 (a-h)) and its procedures are fully delineated in the Columbia Board of Education Policy document available in the Office of the Superintendent and in the Horace W. Porter School Library Media Center.

Teacher and Paraprofessional Qualifications

Parents have the right to request information about the professional qualifications of their child's teacher(s). The response will indicate whether the teacher is certified for the subject matter and grade taught; the teacher's undergraduate major and any graduate degrees or certifications a teacher may have. Parents will also be advised, if requested as to whether the child is provided service by paraprofessionals and their qualifications.

Telecommunications/Internet Use

The Columbia Board of Education believes in the educational value of communications, the Internet, and electronic information services, and recognizes their potential to support its educational program, the curriculum and student learning. Resource sharing, communications, and innovation capabilities for both students and teachers have been increased with access to telecommunications and to the Internet. The district will make every effort to protect students and teachers from any misuses or abuses as a result of experience with an electronic information service. It is therefore imperative that members of the school community conduct themselves in a responsible, decent, ethical, and polite manner while using any network. Further, they must abide by all local, state and federal laws.

Guidelines for General Use: It is important to recognize that with increased access to computers and people all over the world also comes the availability of controversial material that may not be considered of educational value in the context of the school setting. Further, the school district recognizes the importance of each individual's judgment regarding appropriate conduct in maintaining a quality resource system. While this policy does not attempt to articulate all required or proscribed behavior, it does seek to assist in such judgment by providing the following guidelines:

- All use of the Internet, electronic services or any telecommunications network must be in support of educational objectives or research.
- All electronic mail accounts shall be used only by the authorized owner of the account. Account owners are ultimately responsible for all activity under their account.
- All communications and information accessible via a school network may be monitored by the district.
- Any use of the district's computing resources or networks for illegal or inappropriate purposes, accessing materials that are objectionable in a public school environment, or supporting such activities is prohibited. Language that is deemed to be vulgar is also prohibited. Illegal activities shall be defined as a violation of the intended use of the service or network. Inappropriate use shall be defined as a violation of the intended use of the service or network. Objectionable is defined as materials that are identified as such by the rules and policies of the Columbia Board of Education.
- Any use of telecommunication opportunities for commercial purposes, financial gain, product advertisement, political lobbying, or attempt to disrupt the use of the services by others, is prohibited.

- The Columbia Board of Education has no control of the information on the Internet. Other sites accessible via the Internet may contain material that is illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, or potentially offensive to some people.
- Violations of the provisions stated in this policy may result in suspension or revocation of access privileges to the Internet, electronic services or district networks.

The Superintendent shall identify one administrator as the "District Internet Administrator" who will have responsibility for implementing this policy, establishing procedures, and supervising access privileges.

Guidelines for Student Use: Student use of electronic services is considered to be a privilege. Students may use telecommunications or the Internet only when supervised by a teacher or paraprofessional. Guidelines for the use of these electronic services will be developed by the District Internet Administrator for approval by the School Principal and Superintendent.

Students in Kindergarten through Grade 8 who wish to use electronic services and networks that are available to them may do so provided that they:

- Read and agree to the Acceptable Use Policy
- Sign the "Telecommunications/Internet Acceptable Use Policy"
- Obtain parent/guardian signature on the contract
- Submit the completed contract to the Main Office staff

Any parent or student who wishes to appeal any decision relative to Columbia's Acceptable Use Policy should contact the District Internet Administrator Marian Lowry.

Telephones

In the event a student needs to make a telephone call during school, he/she may use ONLY the telephone located in the Main Office after arriving at the office with a pass and receiving permission from a member of the office staff. The use or possession of cellular phones by a student during school hours is prohibited. If seen/heard, cell phones will be confiscated and turned into the Main Office where they are retrievable only by a parent/guardian.

Thursday Papers

In an effort to communicate with parents in a timely and streamlined manner, H.W. Porter publishes Thursday Papers. All information, announcements, and forms will be sent via electronic mail which parents can expect weekly. If requested, a hard copy of can be sent home. All requests for hard copies must be sent to the main office.

Title I Comparability of Services

All district schools, regardless of whether they receive Federal Title I funds, provide services that, taken as a whole, are substantially comparable. Staff, curriculum materials and instructional supplies are provided in a manner to ensure equivalency among district schools.

Title I Parental Involvement

Parents of a child in a Title 1 funded program will receive a copy of the district's parental involvement policy, including provisions of an annual meeting and involvement of parents in the planning, review and implementation of Title 1 programs.

Transportation

Transportation Change Request: The Board of Education is legally responsible for providing transportation to or from a student's residence only (CGS 10-220). Due to the number of requests received to accommodate child care/babysitting arrangements, the Board of Education establishes the following guidelines and procedures to ensure the safety of all students and the reasonableness of its transportation operation. If a parent wishes to request that a student be picked up or dropped off at a location other than his/her home to accommodate child care/babysitting needs, such a request will be considered if submitted in writing to the office of the Superintendent by July 15th of the coming school year for children in grades K-8. The Board of Education will only accept requests for consistent long-term (three (3) or more months) transportation schedules for a student. Requests for changes will be honored with the following stipulations:

1. There is space available on the bus to which the student would be assigned.
2. While the A.M. pickup may be different from the P.M. drop off, the location of the A.M. pickup must be the same Monday through Friday and the P.M. drop off may have one alternate site.
3. Any requested change in transportation during the school year will be honored only if conditions 1 and 2 are met. This change must be in effect for a minimum of three months. Any such requests must be submitted to the Superintendent's Office at least one week in advance. Forms are available in the Main Office.

Parents will be notified by appropriate communication of this policy by June 1 of each year.

Bus Rules and Consequences: Bus transportation is an extension of the classroom with opportunities for personal responsibility. The safety of our students while riding the bus is paramount and requires that all students actively exercise personal responsibility. The rules and consequences related to the use of bus transportation mirror those relayed in

the discipline section of this handbook, and are proactive guidelines that are set up to help the students and staff achieve the goal of personal responsibility and safety during transportation.

A Safe Bus Pick Up, Ride and Drop-Off is ensured when each student:

- Is present at the assigned stop, five minutes before pick-up time.
- Stands safely away from the road but within view while waiting for the bus.
- Walks carefully to the bus and stays in line when boarding.
- Boards only the assigned bus at the assigned time and stop.
- Remains properly seated (facing front, feet on/down toward floor).
- Speaks quietly to only those sharing the same bus seat.
- Does not eat, drink, chew gum, smoke, swear or use obscene language.
- Does not throw objects in, at or out of the bus.
- Keeps body (head, hands, arms, etc.) and objects inside the bus at all times; Keeps aisle clear.
- Opens windows only with bus driver permission.
- Swiftly obeys all bus driver instructions.
- Disembarks at the assigned stop.
- Stays in line when disembarking and walks carefully away from bus; does not walk around or behind bus.
- Provides the Main Office with a completed "A Note To School" Form signifying change in bus number/stop.

Parents will be informed of inappropriate student bus behavior and associated consequences. Typical responses to inappropriate recurring inappropriate bus behavior are:

- Three (3) Bus Incident Reports may result in loss of bus transportation for a designated length of time.
- Four (4) or more Bus Incident Reports may result in loss of bus transportation for an extended time period and a meeting of parents/guardians, an administrator, the bus driver and the bus company manager held prior to any bus use reinstatement.

As with all consequences, administration and staff will make every effort to be consistent and fair while remaining sensitive to situational and individual dimensions where appropriate.

Damage to Bus Company Property: Parents of students who damage or deface any bus company property will be held liable for such damage.

Bus Routes and Stop Times: School bus routes and stop times are posted in *The Chronicle* in late August, online at www.hwporter.org/bus_routes and in the Main Office throughout the academic year.

Route 66 and Route 87 Stops: Students with stops on Routes 66 or 87 are not permitted to cross the street for pick-up or drop-off.

Special Bus Drop-Off Procedure for Students in Kindergarten – Grade 4: K – 4 students require a parent/guardian, older sibling or school-approved designee to be dropped off

at a bus stop (regardless of weather or dismissal schedule). Any K – 4 students reaching their drop-off point with no visible designee will be driven back to Horace W. Porter School after all remaining students are dropped off; the parent/guardian will be contacted upon return with immediate pick-up expected. *Note: Chronic absence of the parent/guardian or designee from the bus stop at drop-off time may result in a meeting between parents and the administration or a report of neglect by the administration to the Department of Children and Families.*

"A Note To School" Form: If a student requires the use of a different bus than that assigned to his/her residence for one day, a completed "A Note To School" Form must be provided to the Main Office by 8:45 A.M. on the day of the change in transportation. The form must include the student's name, bus number, bus stop and parent/guardian signature. Faxed notes cannot be accepted.

Parent Transportation: In an effort to promote an orderly arrival/dismissal and to provide peace of mind to our families, parents/guardians are asked to follow the expectations for drop-off and pick-up delineated below. No parent/guardian will be permitted to move beyond the main entrance (or cafetorium at dismissal) when dropping off or picking up a student.

Student Drop-Off: Student supervision is available between 7:30 A.M.- 8:15 A.M. on Regular Schedule days. THERE IS NO BEFORE CARE SUPERVISION AVAILABLE on Delayed Opening days. Students arriving prior to 8:15 A.M. on regular schedule days or prior to 9:45 A.M. on delayed opening days must enter the school building through the main entrance under the clock tower and report to the cafetorium. Students may not enter the school building before supervision is available. Students may also enter the school using the rear entrance near Yeoman's Hall from 8:15 A.M.- 8:25A.M. on regular schedule days or from 9:45 A.M.-9:50 A.M. on delayed opening days. If arriving late, the student must enter through the main entrance and secure a Tardy Pass from the Receptionist.

Drop-Off Expectations at Start of School Day				
Transportation	Schedule			Entrance
	Regular	Delayed Opening	Early Dismissal	
Car/Family Vehicle	8:00-8:15 A.M.	9:45-10:00 A.M.	8:00-8:15 A.M.	Main (clock tower)
	8:00-8:15 A.M.	9:45-10:10 A.M.	8:00-8:15 A.M.	Rear (Yeoman's Hall)
Walking/Bicycle	8:00-8:15 A.M.	9:45-10:00 A.M.	8:00-8:30 A.M.	Main (clock tower)
	8:00-8:15 A.M.	9:45-10:10 A.M.	8:00-8:15 A.M.	Rear (Yeoman's Hall)

Student Pick-Up: Students having a note indicating an end-of-the-day "pick-up" will be dismissed to the cafetorium. Parents/guardians picking up students at dismissal will "sign-out" the student in the Main Office and wait in the cafetorium unless otherwise directed. Student pick-up prior to dismissal requires the parent/guardian to "sign-out" the student with the Receptionist, waiting at the main entrance for the student.

Preschool and Kindergarten students will be escorted to and from the classroom by a staff member at arrival and dismissal. Faxed notes cannot be accepted.

Pick-Up Expectations at End of School Day				
Schedule			Entrance	Procedure
Regular	Delayed Opening	Early Dismissal		
3:15 P.M.	3:15 P.M.	1:15 P.M.	Main (clock tower)	"Sign-Out" Student (parent/guardian remains in cafeteria until student arrives)

Early Pick Up or Change in Pick-Up: All requests for early pick-up or a change in pick-up procedure must be submitted in writing prior to 8:45 A.M. on the day of the early pick-up. Horace W. Porter School provides parents/guardians with "A Note To School" Forms to expedite the pick-up. If a student needs to be picked up before the designated dismissal time, the Parent/Guardian is expected to enter the school building through the main entrance under the clock tower and to report to the Receptionist who will confirm the early pick-up, call for the student, and ask the parent to sign the Student Sign-Out Log. The Parent/Guardian is expected to wait for the student(s) at the Receptionist's desk.

Pick-Up and Drop-Off Expectations at times other than Arrival or Dismissal		
Occurrence	Procedure	Entrance
Late Drop-Off	"Sign-In" Student; secure Tardy Pass from Receptionist (parent/guardian does not walk student to class)	Main (clock tower)
Early Pick-Up	"Sign-Out" Student; Receptionist calls for student (parent/guardian remains at main entrance until student arrives)	

Transportation Safety Complaints/Procedures

All complaints concerning school transportation safety are to be made to the Transportation Coordinator. A written record of all complaints will be maintained and an investigation of the allegations will take place.

Visitors

At Horace W. Porter School we work diligently to maintain routines and to minimize distractions to student learning. To this end we ask the members of our community to notify the school before planning a visit.

All visitors are expected to enter the school building through the main entrance under the clock tower and to report to the Receptionist. Visitors are asked to record their visit location and time-in upon arrival. Once the scheduled visit is confirmed by the Receptionist, each visitor will receive a gold visitor's badge. At the end of the visit, each visitor will be asked to record their time-out and return the gold visitor's badge.

Lunchroom and Classroom Visits: To maintain routines and to minimize distractions to student learning, all visitors must request permission from the Main Office before scheduling a lunch-time or classroom visit; this allows staff the opportunity to plan for the visit.

Recess Visits: To support our community's social expectations for students, recess is planned as a time for interaction with peers within the boundaries set by our recess staff. Further, in an effort to eliminate interruption of supervision, visitors are not permitted to interact with our students or staff on duty during recess periods.

Building Tours: Community members wishing to tour the H. W. Porter School facility may do so by scheduling a tour with an administrator. Prospective students preparing for enrollment at Horace W. Porter School will be scheduled for a tour upon registration.

Guest Teachers, Student Teachers, and Interns: To ensure the safety of our Guest Teachers, Student Teachers and Interns, it is important that each sign (in and out) in the Main Office each day. It is important that we know who is in our school and where they can be found in case of an emergency, evacuation, or fire drill.

Volunteers

We know one of the most effective ways to make classroom learning meaningful is by illustrating a connection between the curriculum and real-life. Having parents and other guests share stories and experiences with our students helps to make that connection.

At Horace W. Porter School we see our community members as rich sources of skills, talents and experiences. If you are interested in volunteering, please indicate your interest to the Main Office staff so that we can showcase your talents while providing real-life connections for our students.

Volunteers in Porter (VIPs): The Volunteers in Porter (VIPs) program was created for parents/guardians wishing to supply frequent support to Horace W. Porter School. VIPs complete tasks requested by staff and administration which include copying, collating, laminating, and other lesson-related tasks. While most VIPs tasks are completed in the school building, some VIPs assist from home. Volunteers interested in becoming a VIP are asked to contact the administration. To ensure the safety of our regular volunteers, VIPs must sign (in and out) the Visitor Log Book at the Receptionist's desk. It is important that we know who is in our school and where they can be found in case of an emergency, evacuation, or fire drill.

School Gardens: Volunteers who enjoy gardening are encouraged to sponsor a garden plot on our school grounds to plant, grow and maintain a decorative garden. Garden plots can be maintained before, during or after school hours and even on weekends.

Information related to sponsoring a garden plot on the grounds of Horace W. Porter School is available in the Main Office.

Visitors during Planned Events: To expedite the process of entering the school facility during planned events (classroom or grade-level showcases, Special Person Day, Veterans' Day Ceremony, etc.), invited guests will receive an event ticket from the sponsoring group. This event ticket is to be given to the Receptionist in exchange for an event-specific visitor badge.