



***2017 – 2018 Student Handbook***

## **Vision Statement**

The Columbia School District is a community of learners providing rigorous programs to ensure that each student can excel as an individual.

## **Mission Statement**

Columbia School District is a highly regarded district which provides a safe environment where a commitment to innovation, creativity and academic excellence ensures that learning comes first. To that end:

- Students master comprehensive skills and apply what they learn
- Students are empowered to lead and demonstrate civic responsibility
- Students prepare for a lifetime of learning and engage in positive personal development
- Parents are active participants in their student's education
- The district seeks out and retains the most highly qualified administrators, teachers and staff.
- Students, staff and leadership recognize the value of their individual contributions and commit to excellence
- The district values self discipline, respect and integrity as essential to creating an effective learning environment
- The district honors the community by developing partnerships which support the educational process and build life-long relationships

The Columbia School District will provide opportunities for all students to meet their potential by developing and implementing programs which will make our schools highly competitive and our graduates exceptional.

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

## Table of Contents

Administration .....	6
Board of Education .....	6
District Information.....	7
Contact Information.....	7
Hours of Operation (Regular Schedule):.....	7
Hours of Operation (Early Dismissal Schedule): .....	7
Hours of Operation (Delayed Opening Schedule):.....	7
Equal Opportunity.....	8
Admission/Placement .....	8
Code of Conduct .....	9
Attendance.....	12
Bathroom/Locker Room Expectations .....	14
Dress Code .....	15
Entering & Exiting Building Expectations .....	16
Hallway Expectations .....	17
Hall Pass .....	17
Lunch Expectations and Consequences:.....	17
Discipline .....	18
Bullying.....	21
Child Abuse .....	22
Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).....	23
Gradebooks.....	23
Grading.....	23
Progress Reports .....	24
Weights .....	24
Homework.....	24
Work Habits .....	25
Work Recovery Policy for Middle School Students.....	25
Make-Up Work.....	25
Middle School Elective courses.....	26
Academic Excellent/Academic Achievement.....	26
Interscholastic Athletics.....	26
Eligibility for Middle School Extra-Curricular Activities .....	28

Graduation .....	28
Cell Phones.....	29
Advertising .....	29
Agenda Books.....	29
Morning Announcements .....	29
Asbestos .....	29
Assemblies .....	29
Classroom Assignments .....	29
Compensation for Late/Overdue/Damaged/Lost Materials and Accounts .....	30
Counseling Services.....	30
Cubbies and Lockers .....	31
Fire Alarm Procedure .....	31
Stay-Put & Lockdown Procedures.....	31
Evacuation Procedure .....	32
Health and First Aid.....	32
Health Records.....	33
Library Media Center .....	33
Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Students .....	34
Lost and Found.....	34
Lunch.....	34
Medication Policy.....	35
Messages.....	35
Migrant Students .....	36
National Junior Honor Society .....	36
Newsletter.....	36
Non-Discrimination Notice .....	36
Parent Involvement/Communications.....	37
Parent Portal .....	37
Parent-Teacher Conferences .....	37
Personal Property .....	37
Pesticide Application.....	37
Physical Education Exemption Policy.....	38
Procedures for Addressing General Concerns .....	38
Promotion and Retention Policy.....	38

Psychotropic Drug Use.....	39
Recess.....	39
School Ceremonies and Observances.....	40
School Closings or Delays.....	40
School Facilities.....	40
Sexual Harassment.....	40
Special Events .....	41
Student Records.....	41
Student Services.....	41
Suspension and Expulsion.....	42
Teacher and Paraprofessional Qualifications .....	42
Telecommunications/Internet Use .....	42
Telephones.....	44
Title I Comparability of Services.....	44
Title I Parental Involvement.....	44
Transportation .....	44
Transportation Safety Complaints/Procedures .....	48
Visitors .....	48
Volunteers.....	49

## Administration

Laurence Fearon, Superintendent

Barbara Wilson, Director of Student Services

Alyssa Gwinnell, Principal

Jennifer Hill, Assistant Principal / Data Coordinator

## 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 Monday of each month at 7:30 P.M. in the Horace W. Porter School cafetorium. 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:**

Christopher Lent, Chairperson

Kathy Tolsdorf, Vice Chairperson

David Crim

James Chakulski

Linette Dooley

Lisa Napolitano

Karin Vertefeuille

## District Information

### Horace W. Porter School

3 Schoolhouse Road • Columbia, CT • 06237 • 860-228-9493

[www.hwporter.org](http://www.hwporter.org)

## Contact Information

Assistant Principal:	860-228-9493, x167
Attendance:	860-228-9493, x176
Health Office:	860-228-9493, x171
Library Media Center:	860-228-9493, x483
Main Office:	860-228-9493
Main Office Fax:	860-228-8592
Principal:	860-228-9493 x162
Student Services:	860-228-9493 x 175
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:	7:45 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.
Health Office:	8:00 A.M. - 3:30 P.M.
Student Services Office:	8:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.
Superintendent's Office:	8:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.
Before School Care:	7:30 A.M. - 8:15 A.M.
Students in Grades K-8:	8:15 A.M. - 3:15 P.M.
Morning Preschool:	8:15 A.M. - 11:15 A.M.
Afternoon Preschool:	12:15 P.M. - 3:15 P.M.

## Hours of Operation (Early Dismissal Schedule):

Main Office:	7:45 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.
Health Office:	8:00 A.M. - 1:30 P.M.
Student Services Office:	8:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.
Superintendent's Office:	8:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.
Before School Care:	7:30 A.M. - 8:15 A.M.
Students in Grades K-8:	8:15 A.M. - 1:15 P.M.
Students in Grades A.M.Pre-K-8(Inclment Weather):	8:15 A.M.-12:30 P.M.

## Hours of Operation (Delayed Opening Schedule):

Main Office:	9:15 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.
Health Office:	9:30 A.M. - 3:30 P.M.
Student Services Office:	9:30 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.
Superintendent's Office:	9:30 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.
Before School Care:	9:00 A.M. - 9:45 A.M.
Students in Grade K-8:	9:50 A.M. - 3:15 P.M.
Morning Preschool:	9:50 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.
Afternoon Preschool:	1:00 P.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. Barbara Wilson (Titles VI and IX) and Jennifer Hill (Section 504) are the designated district compliance officers, who will coordinate compliance with the nondiscrimination requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 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/children 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.

## Code of Conduct

At Horace W. Porter School, students will be **respectful** of everyone they meet, **responsible** for everything they say and do, and **safe** with their body and their words. 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 the 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 is 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.

## 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/children 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 x116 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 Board believes a student should not be absent from school without the parents' knowledge and consent, therefore verification of an absence should be in writing by parent or guardian.

For absences one through nine, an absence shall be considered "excused" when a child does not attend school and appropriate documentation is provided by the student's parent/guardian approving the absence, due to:

- A. Illness or injury,
- B. Death in the immediate family,
- C. Religious obligation,
- D. Court appearance,
- E. School sponsored activity,
- F. Lack of transportation that is normally provided by a district other than the one the students attends, (This reason does not require documentation.)
- G. An emergency, or
- H. Other exceptional circumstances and extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by a District administrator and in accordance with SDE guidelines. Written excuse for such absences should be submitted to school officials by the child's parent or guardian. All other absences with or without written explanation shall be considered unexcused.

For the tenth absence and all others thereafter, the same reasons cited above shall constitute "unexcused" absence, even if the parent excuses the absence. Documentation is required for the tenth absence and all others thereafter, including documentation by a medical professional is required for illness, regardless of the length of the absence in order for the absence to be considered excused.

***Please review the entire attendance policy found on our website under School Information***

[http://www.hwporter.org/important\\_documents/index.php#revize\\_document\\_center\\_rz119](http://www.hwporter.org/important_documents/index.php#revize_document_center_rz119)

**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. All vacations are to be approved by the principal in order to be considered excused. *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 8:25 A.M. on regular and early dismissal days and after 10 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(c):  
When the student has four (4) unexcused absences in a month or ten (10) unexcused absences in any school year, a referral will be made to the appropriate staff. The appropriate staff will arrange a meeting with the parent or other person having control of the student to review and evaluate the reason for the student being a truant. This meeting shall be held not later than ten (10) days after the child is identified as a truant. If the parent or other such person declines to attend the meeting, that fact shall be documented and the meeting will be held. The appropriate staff will develop a plan to help improve the student's attendance

## Bathroom/Locker Room Expectations

When students are using the bathroom and locker rooms it is important they follow the expectations of being respectful, responsible, and safe. All students will:

### **Be Respectful**

- Respect other's privacy
- Use indoor voices

### **Be Responsible**

- Keep water in the sink
- Flush, then wash hands
- Use 1-2 pumps of soap
- Put trash in the garbage can
- Go to class right away
- Report any problems

### **Be Safe**

- Enter and exit carefully
- Keep hands, feet and objects to self
- Keep lights on at all times

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. 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.

## 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 guidelines aid in creating a non-distracting, educational environment for all students and are thus 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)
- Off-the-shoulder tops regardless of layering
- Clothing that is see-through or does not cover the entire area below the armpit
- Clothing with spaghetti-style straps or tank tops, halter tops, or belly shirts
- Clothing exposing skin between the top and bottom pieces
- Clothing that falls shorter than mid-thigh length on all sides.
- 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 built-in/removable wheels (for example, Heelys or similar wheeled shoes)
- Students MAY wear shoes that expose the toes and/or heels as long as they are secure on the feet (no flip-flips), AND such shoes DO NOT have a sole/heel higher than one inch.
  - However, closed toed and/or heeled shoes may be required for participation in classes such as Art, Science, and PE depending on the activity. Shoes that do not follow the expectation as stated by the teacher may result in loss of participation and/or may affect a student's grade.

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.

## Entering & Exiting Building Expectations

In order to maintain a safe and respectful learning environment, we expect students to follow the rules stated below when entering and exiting the building. Students will:

### **Be Respectful**

- Remove hats upon entering the building
- Use appropriate and positive language

### **Be Responsible**

- Use appropriate voice level

### **Be Safe**

- Walk at all times
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to self
- Stay to the right side when going up and down the halls/stairs
- Hold all personal property securely
- 

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. 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.



If a student receives permission by their teacher to go outside when there is no adult supervision to get a personal item (jacket, lunchbox, etc.), they must always go with a buddy. The teacher will notify the front desk. There is a doorbell near the library door for students to press in order to get back into the building. Teachers and staff show all students this doorbell at the beginning of the year so everyone is aware of it.

## Hallway Expectations

When students are walking in the hallway it is important they follow the expectations of being respectful, responsible, and safe in order to maintain a productive learning environment. All students will:

### **Be Respectful**

- Walk on the right side of the hall
- Walk silently or use soft voices
- Use appropriate language at all times

### **Be Responsible**

- Go directly to your destination
- Keep hands by your side

### **Be Safe**

- Stay with your class
- Keep your eyes forward
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to self
- Walk no more than 2 wide

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 hallway passing times. 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.

## 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.

**Lunch Expectations 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. When students are eating in the cafeteria it is important they follow the expectations of being respectful, responsible, and safe. All students will:

### **Be Safe**

- Follow directions
- Use kind, indoor voices
- Use eating utensils/materials correctly

### **Be Responsible**

- Get materials before sitting
- Keep table and floor area clean
- Raise your hand if you need something
- Empty trash in the correct bins

### **Be Safe**

- Walk
- Stop and listen when staff is talking
- Remain seated in the same area
- Keep hands, feet and objects to self

### **All students will:**

- Have the chance to buy snack 15 minutes before the end of the lunch wave. This will occur by table which is determined by lunch duty staff member.
- Recycle/trash out by table which is determined by lunch duty staff member. This occurs 5 minutes before dismissal.
- Only be lined up if the table has been cleared and all trash around the table has been picked up
- Be lined up by table to be dismissed. Once the students enter the hallway they must follow hallway expectations.

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.

## 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:

- Be **respectful** of everyone we meet
- Be **responsible** for everything we say and do
- Be **safe** with our body and our words

In order to create an environment conducive to learning we must remember that discipline procedures are not the answer to problematic behavior –it is the positive relationships we build as a learning community between students, families and staff. The Horace W. Porter staff strives to create a positive environment by making connections with our students and families. Children learn best in the context of positive relationships and a safe, comfortable atmosphere. Our staff will explain appropriate behavior and procedures throughout the year. They detail why it is important and encourage all students to be respectful, responsible, and safe. By teaching students the necessary social skills for future success we set out students on a course to be lifelong learners and successful citizens.

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.

### **Main Office Disciplinary Consequences due to Referrals to the Office**

**Disciplinary Actions:** The following disciplinary actions can be expected for students who are referred to the office given the appropriate teacher consequences and strategies have been implemented and documented in PowerSchool.

**Disciplinary Guidelines:** Below is a list of **possible** violations and **potential** consequences. Specific consequences will be determined based on the severity of the offense and prior history. Depending on the severity or the number of infractions, parents will be contacted regarding their child's behavior after consequences have been given. Contact may be by phone, email and/or mail depending on the circumstances.

LD- office lunch detention D – office detention LP/R–loss of privileges/removal IS – in-school suspension RST – financial restitution ES – external suspension EXP – expulsion	
<b>Offense</b>	<b>Range of Possible Consequences</b>
Abuse, verbal/unreasonable action to staff member	1D to 10 ES
Assault	1 to 10 ES, EXP
Bus infraction	1LD to 1D, LP/R, RST
Cafeteria misconduct	Cafeteria consequence, 1LD to 1 IS
Causing injury	1 IS to 10 ES, EXP

Cheating	1D to 2 IS
Computer/iPad misuse ( <i>See Specific Policy</i> )	1 D to 3 IS, LP, RST
Cutting class/leaving w/o permission/excessive tardiness to class	1 D to 2 IS
Dangerous objects, possession of (knives, sharp objects, laser pointers, etc)	1 to 10 ES to EXP PLUS Confiscation
Destruction of school property/personal property	1 D to 3 IS to 10 ES, RST
Detention, failure to attend teacher detention after second attempt	1 D
Detention, failure to attend office issued	2 D to 2 IS to 5 ES
Disrespect/Defiance	1 LD to 2 IS
Disruption	1 LD to IS/R to 10 ES, EXP
Disruption of detention	1 to 3 IS to ES
Disruption of internal suspension	1 to 3 ES
Dress code violation	1 LD to 2 IS
Drugs/alcohol-possession/use	5 to 10 ES, EXP, PLUS Confiscation
Fighting	1 D to 10 ES, RST
Forgery	1 D to 3 IS
Inappropriate language/materials/gestures/behavior	1 D to 3 IS, ES
Leaving school grounds w/o permission	1 IS to 5 ES
Lying/Dishonesty	1 D to 10 ES
Matches/lighter-possession/use	1 to 3 IS to 10 ES PLUS Confiscation
Name calling	1 LD to 5 IS
Pass violation	LP 1 to 3 wks, 1LD to 1D
Plagiarism	1 D to 5 IS
Projecting any object, endangering others	1 D to 3 IS to 10 ES
Referral from substitute teacher	1 LD to 1 IS
Refusal to obey a staff member	1 LD to 3 IS to 10 ES, EXP
Selling /trading of food, materials, tickets, etc	1 D to 3 IS, RST

Skippping School	1 IS to 5 IS
Stealing	1 IS to 10 ES, RST
Texting/emailing/posting without permission during the school day	1 D to 5 IS
Threatening comments/behavior	1 D to 10 ES
Tobacco – possession/use	1 IS to 5 ES, PLUS Confiscation
Toys/electronics-possession/use (Non-Approved)	1 LD to 1 IS, PLUS Confiscation
Vandalism	1 D to 10 ES, RST

### 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.

## 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.

## 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.

## Gradebooks

Are to be kept through PowerSchool and are to be updated at least weekly.

If an assignment needs additional time to assess, teachers will record whether the assignment was collected or not using that feature in PowerSchool gradebook in order to communicate with parents that the assignment was received. However, please use this information to assist students in learning to become self-advocates. Note the comments teachers leave regarding assignments and encourage your child to meet with the teacher to find out more information if there is a question about a grade.

## 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.

Grades K-4 Report Card Codes

E = Exceeds Expectations	N= Near Expectations
M = Meets Expectations	B = Below Expectations
N/A = Not Assessed	

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

## Grades 5-8 Grading Scale

A+ = 100-97	B+ = 89-87	C+ = 79-77	D+ = 69-67	F = 59 or below
A = 96-93	B = 86-83	C = 76-73	D = 66-63	
A- = 92-90	B- = 82-80	C- = 72-70	D- = 62-60	

### Progress Reports

Progress reports will be online and a message will be sent to parents to check the online progress reports. For students who are in danger of receiving a D or F must receive a paper copy and have it signed by a parent.

If the report is not returned within 3 school days, the teacher will notify the parents with a telephone call or mail a duplicate copy home with a request to be called to confirm receipt.

A student will not receive a final grade of a D or F without prior communication with the parents.

While progress reports are shared at mid-term, there are exceptional circumstances which would merit an immediate report to parents This can simply be a progress report sent home highlighting the area of concern or the teacher may email/call home:

- 5 or more missed homework assignments
- Failing test grade
- Decline in the students' performance since the last report card or progress report which will affect his/her final grade more than one letter grade

### Weights

Homework will not be more than 10% of grade. Other percentage weights need to be posted for students and parents on webpage and distributed at Open House; a copy also needs to be given to the curriculum team leader.

### 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 K-8 Recommended Study Time Per Day**

Kindergarten, average of 15 minutes

Grade 1, average of 20 minutes

Grade 5, average of 65 minutes

Grade 2, average of 20 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

### Work Habits

There will be a Work Habits section that will be added to the report card in order to indicate student performance in: Responsibility, Respect and Perseverance. These are not new expectations, but rather they are being identified individually to give more specific feedback. Explanations of what is expected at each grade level and for each class will be shared with students at the start of the year. Throughout the year teachers will be meeting as both grade level and vertical level teams to discuss progress in these areas. These grades will only be given on the report card.

### Work Recovery Policy for Middle School Students

Students will not receive an automatic retake. Students are expected to prepare for the assessment through working in class, asking questions when unsure of content, seeking help when needed and completing assessment preparation materials. The grade a student receives on the assessment is the grade in which the student receives. If there is a pattern of 3 or more poor or missing assessments, an intervention will occur which may include grade adjustments. If an intervention were to be put into place, the student will be called in for a team meeting and the family would be notified of the intervention being put into place. This process could be data for Tier II intervention if it is unsuccessful.

### 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: Class and homework assignments will not 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.

### Middle School Elective courses

Students in grades 4-8 may elect to take band for the year. All middle school students will engage in a comprehensive program of Music/Chorus, Technology, Life Skills, and Art. Students in grades 6-8 will also take quarterly courses in STEM, Geography/Civics, Language Lab and Math Lab in addition to the regular courses of study which includes Spanish.

### Academic Excellent/Academic Achievement

In lieu of traditional honor roll, there will be Academic Excellence and Academic Achievement awards distributed with report cards.

Academic Excellence includes all A's (of any type) all graded subject areas for grades 6th-8th.

Academic Achievement includes all A's, B's (of any type) all graded subject areas for grades 6th-8th.

### 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 annually by parent/guardian and athlete and submitted to the Health Office. A Health Update to the history must be completed for the second and subsequent sport participation within the same school year. 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 (including practices) 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.

**Character Expectations:** Coaches will clearly state character expectations and the possibility of consequences at the beginning of each sports season. If a student athlete violates the character expectations during an athletic practice or game and it is brought to the attention of school administration, administration can/will provide a consequence and coaches will take no further action. If administration does not provide a consequence and the coach feels that the student athlete did not obey his/her character expectations, the coach has the right to give a consequence to the student athlete.

## Eligibility for Middle School Extra-Curricular Activities

Participation in school-sponsored drama, sports, and cheerleading requires a passing grade (60 and above) in all subjects. Failure to maintain a passing grade on a Report Card or at the time when grades are checked (approximately every four weeks of the quarter) will result in either a remediation plan for students with one F and an automatic loss of eligibility to participate in extra-curricular activities with two or more Fs in any class except for an elective. In addition, students who have earned an in school or out of school suspension are not eligible to participate in extra-curricular activities on the day they are suspended as well as during the suspension period.

**Remediation Plan/Probation Contract:** For students who wish to continue to participate in extra-curricular activities, yet have a failing grade in one graded subject area are required to complete a remediation plan with the guidance counselor. Plans will be signed by the student, parent/guardian, classroom teacher, and an administrator. Remediation plans will be written based on the needs of each student at two week intervals.

Students who have two or more grades that fall below 60% in any class except for an elective at the time of Report Cards or at the times when grades are checked are automatically suspended from extracurricular activities until the next grade check occurs (approx. 2 weeks) and shows a passing grade. Students will complete an action plan with the guidance counselor in order to bring up their grades. Plans will be signed by the student, parent/guardian, classroom teachers, and an administrator. Action plans will be written based on the needs of each student at two week intervals.

**Spectators:** Students in grades 5-8 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 the event that 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.

## 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.

## Cell Phones

Cell phone use is prohibited during school hours unless supervised by a staff member. If cell phones are heard/seen they will be given to the Main Office and returned to the student at the end of the day. Administration will also speak to the student about their phone confiscation and parents will be notified as soon as possible. Students may still be subject to a consequence depending on what occurred. Cell phones may be used during school dances and after-school activities to contact parents if students are in the foyer and under supervision of staff.

## 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.

## Morning Announcements

Announcements created by students each morning and can be viewed from our website at [http://www.hwporter.org/morning\\_announcements/index.php](http://www.hwporter.org/morning_announcements/index.php)

## 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 may be held with grades PK-4 and 5-8 respectively.

## 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 Statutes § 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, technology 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.

## 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 4) and lockers (Grades 5 – 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 4 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 5 – 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.

## 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.

## Stay-Put & Lockdown Procedures

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. A Stay-Put is a type of lockdown procedure which follows the same expectations as a lockdown with the exception that the teacher may continue to teach.

## 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.

## 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 if your child develops any medical condition, or if there are any changes in your child's medical condition or medication. **Students are not allowed to make phone calls or send any other message types from personal cell phones, etc. without permission.**

**Screenings:** Vision screening and hearing screens will be done annually in grades: K, 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup>. A student who has a suspected vision, hearing or health problem can be referred to the Health Office Staff at any time. Female students in grades 5 and 7, and Male students in grade 8 will be 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. 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. All health and permission forms must be completed and returned to the school during the first week of school each year.

**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.

**When can a student return to school after and illness:** Children must be fever-free for 24 hours off medication before they can return to school. For stomach issues such as vomiting and diarrhea common sense is encouraged. The child should be taking their regular diet, and be feeling well enough to participate. For guidelines regarding when to return after specific illnesses (flu, chicken pox, rashes, strep throat, pink eye,



pneumonia, head lice) please contact the school nurse **before** sending the child back to school.

**Physical Examinations:** Physical exams are required prior to entrance into pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and during the sixth grade year.

**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:** Connecticut General Statutes § 10-204a and the Connecticut Department of Public Health establish immunization requirements for all students enrolling or enrolled in Connecticut public schools. Students must meet immunization requirements before and while attending school within the Columbia School District. Questions regarding immunization requirements should be addressed to the school nurse.

## 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 when 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.

## Diabetic testing

A student with diabetes 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.

## 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.

## 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 at the end of each quarter 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. Therefore anyone sitting at this table must only eat their food in order to reduce possibility of an emergency.

**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.

## Medication Policy

In order for the nurse to administer prescription and over-the-counter medications to a student, Connecticut State Law and Regulations require a written order from an authorized prescriber and written authorization from the parent/guardian.

**Administration of Medication:** Subject to the above required authorization, medications may be administered to students during school hours or at school-sponsored activities by licensed nursing personnel or a trained designee.

Acetaminophen and Ibuprofen may be administered to students with written parental permission according to the medical standing orders.

**Carrying and Delivery of Medication:** Students are not allowed to carry medications (both prescription and over-the-counter) 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. See *Self-Medication Exception* below.

**Self-Medication Exception (Applies Only to Students in Grades 5-8):** Under the following conditions students may carry prescription (asthma) inhalers and auto-injectors for anaphylaxis ("EpiPen" or similar) and self administer as directed:

1. The medical professional prescriber and parent/guardian have authorized and given permission for the student to self-carry and self-administer.
2. The student has been assessed by the school nurse and demonstrated to the school nurse proficiency and safety in use of the medication.
3. The school procedure, and the direction of medical professional prescriber and the school nurse for self-administration is followed.

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, SRBI).

## 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 grades in every subject B+ (87) or higher for the last three consecutive marking periods (Q2, Q3 and Q4) in grades 6 and 7 are academically eligible to be considered for membership in the National Junior Honor Society for the following school year. 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.

Students who qualify academically will receive a letter and application within two weeks of the last day of school. Applications will be due the first day of the new school year. During the first month of school the NJHS Selection Committee will go over all applications and announce those students who have been selected.

Once a student becomes a member, they must maintain academic and character requirements to continue being a member of the Horace Porter School Chapter of the NJHS.

## Newsletter

A school newsletter is distributed in order to share news of note, upcoming school activities, and PTO and Saxton B. Little events. Electronic versions of the newsletter are distributed through SchoolMessenger every two weeks.

## 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 (disability):

Title IX and Title VI	Barbara Wilson	860-228-0585 ext.175
Section 504	Jennifer Hill	860-228-9493 ext.167

## 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 of the Parent Portal can be found on the Porter website at:

<http://porterschool.org/ParentPortalGuide.pdf>

If you have questions or need assistance with logging in, please contact the main office and speak with Tammy Nye (860-228-9493, x161).

## Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-Teacher Conferences are held twice (depending on grade level) 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 4) or lockers (Grade 5 – 8). Electronic games, cell phones, i-pods, disc players, radios, toys, or any other personal property considered disruptive to the educational process may be confiscated if misused. Students may use electronics on the bus per bus driver expectations. Cell phones need to remain off and in student lockers. Teachers may request that students bring electronics to class. In this case, students turn electronics off while not in use and return to lockers at earliest convenience. 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's/children'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. Assistant Principal
3. Principal
4. Superintendent
5. Board of Education

### **Athletic Program**

1. Coach
2. Athletic Director
3. Assistant Principal
4. Principal
5. Superintendent
6. 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 15<sup>th</sup> regarding students in grades K-2 and by March 15<sup>th</sup> for students in grades 3 and above. Final decisions with regard to retention must be made prior to May 30<sup>th</sup>, 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, for grades PK-8<sup>th</sup> 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 it is important that students follow the expectations of being respectful, responsible, and safe. All students will:

### **Be Respectful**

- Share equipment and space
- Follow directions
- Allow others to join in and play
- Use appropriate language
- Enter building silently and orderly

### **Be Responsible**

- Take care of equipment and belongings
- Agree on and follow rules before playing

### **Be Safe**

- Solve problems with words
- Keep hands, feet and objects to self
- Use equipment as instructed

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:

### **Be Respectful**

- Treat others the way you want to be treated
- Eyes on speaker
- Sit and listen quietly
- Clap to show appreciation

### **Be Responsible**

- Take care of special event materials

### **Be Safe**

- Keep hands and feet to self

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 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 Technology Coordinator 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 Technology Coordinator 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 Technology Coordinator Thomas Doyle.

## 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 **unless supervised by a staff member**. If seen/heard, cell phones will be confiscated and turned into the Main Office. It will be returned to the student at the end of the day. Administration will also speak to the student about their phone confiscation and parents will be notified as soon as possible. Students may still be subject to a consequence depending on what occurred.

## 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 15<sup>th</sup> 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 at the end of each school year.

**Bus Expectations 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.

When students are riding the bus it is important they follow the expectations of being respectful, responsible, and safe. In order for a safe bus pick up, ride and drop-off all students will:

**Be Respectful**

- Talk quietly to the people sitting next to you
- Use appropriate language
- Obey all bus driver instructions

**Be Responsible**

- Be present at the assigned stop, five minutes before pick-up time
- Board only the assigned bus at the assigned time and stop
- Save food and drink for home
- Open windows only with bus driver permission

**Be Safe**

- Stand safely away from the road but within view while waiting for the bus
- Walk carefully to the bus and stay in line when boarding
- Remain properly seated (facing front, feet on/down toward floor)
- Keep body (heads, arms, hands, feet, etc.) and objects to self and inside bus at all times
- Keep aisles clear
- Disembark carefully

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.

**Device Use:** Students may have an electronic device to use on the bus. We are not responsible for lost or broken devices. Devices may not cause a disruption or distraction on the bus or they will be confiscated and turned into the main office. It is recommended that earbuds are used or volume is turned off. When disembarking, devices must be turned off and put away BEFORE entering the school.

**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 under Parent Resources on the Horace W. Porter webpage, 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 and from 9:00A.M.-9:50 A.M. on Delayed Opening days. Students arriving prior to 8:15 A.M. on regular schedule days or prior to 9:50 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. 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				
	Schedule			Entrance
	Regular	Delayed Opening	Early Dismissal	
	8:00-8:15 A.M.	9:50-10:05 A.M.	8:00-8:15 A.M.	Main (clock tower)

**Student Pick-Up for Preschool:** Teachers will walk students to the main lobby.

**Student Pick-Up for grades K-4:** Students having a note indicating an end-of-the-day “pick-up” will be dismissed to the band room. Parents/guardians picking up students at dismissal will “sign-out” the student in the band room and wait in the band room 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 <i>(parent/guardian remains in band room until student arrives)</i>

**Student Pick-Up for grades 5-8:** Students will walk out to the far parking lot to the Student Pick Up Area where parents will pick up their child. If parents wish to have their child wait in the band room that arrangement needs to be made between the child and the parent.

**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 <i>(parent/guardian does not walk student to class)</i>	Main (clock tower)
Early Pick-Up	"Sign-Out" Student; Receptionist calls for student <i>(parent/guardian remains at main entrance until student arrives)</i>	

**Transportation Safety Complaints/Procedures**

All complaints concerning school transportation safety are to be made to the Transportation Coordinator, Jennifer Hill. 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. For events during school hours, siblings will not be dismissed from class to attend.