

Department of Education of the City of New York  
**PORT RICHMOND HIGH SCHOOL**



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**Timothy M. Gannon, Principal**

October, 2013

Dear Parents:

I want to share with you a major concern of mine that impacts our students as well as students in all schools across our country.

Parents, I need you to focus on what I am about to share. Cyber-bullying and issues pertaining to the internet are causing a major disruption to the education of too many of our students. Parents, I want you and I need you to be informed. We are a month into a new school year and I am finding that my Deans Staff are spending hours each day following up on the issue of what students are writing on the internet.

Twenty years ago bullying attacks were a very local issue, but the internet has caused great harm when it comes to the impact of bullying on the lives of teenagers. Bullying is much more hurtful now when the attacks are spread globally across a larger group of people and strangers. We hear new reports of coaches suspending their entire team because of this nonsense or parents moving to other states as a result of the impact of this nonsense on their children.

Parents, you are the first line of defense for your child by knowing **what** they are writing on Facebook, Instagram and other social media. You cannot assume that everything is okay and that your child is safe, including safe from predators who have no relationship to our great school. You also need to know **what** your child is reading on the internet.

I want to remind parents and students that cyber-bullying is specifically addressed with strong responses in the Discipline Code. If parents or students bring printed evidence to school of cyber-bullying that can be positive attributed to a specific student or a group of students, the school response will be strong. When indicated, I also encourage families to bring the matter to the police to ensure the safety of each child. **The best way for all of our students to avoid the distractions of the internet is for parents to be very active in monitoring what their child is doing on the internet.**

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Like you, I am a caretaker of your child's education. These are not examples of *boys will be boys* or *girls just being girls*. This cyber-bullying is wrong, and we adults must be united in condemning it. There are times like this when students are not happy with the advice I give their parents. I would much rather have my students safe and mad at me, than be their "friend" and have them at risk of physical or emotional harm. I strongly urge you parents to remain strong and vigilant in making sure that you regularly monitor your child's online writing.

Please visit the school website to read a letter from me which also contains links that will give parents ideas and resources on how best to handle this important matter. Thank you for the wonderful support you provide your child each and every day.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Timothy M. Gannon".

Timothy M. Gannon  
Principal

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