

Appendix – Examples Provided by CA Members¹

Examples of Bullying and Intimidation

- One parent shared: “On the very first day of school, my freshman child was told by his English teacher that, if any students are supporters of President Trump, then he prefers not to know or else he does not believe he will be able to speak with those students.” My child feels as though he has been “scared” to prevent him from engaging in open and well-intended discourse in class, based on this teachers’ open adoption of political extremism, intolerance, and disenfranchisement of students with different views.
- Many of our young children have expressed worry and trepidation. One parent shared, “My 7 year old is afraid to share her thoughts. She understands at first grade she cannot speak up without ridicule.” This became a realization when a previous associate teacher in first grade at CA had the children stand in a circle to declare who they were voting for in the Presidential election.
- Another parent shared: “My child used to be excited for school, with a learner’s mindset. The recent overarching political tone has left my child feeling depressed, frustrated, overwhelmed and silenced. My child asked for a psychologist for help, and is currently seeing one.”
- Middle and Upper school students have shared that they often feel compelled to write papers or complete assignments contrary to their beliefs in order to receive a good grade or avoid being labeled and excluded.
- Another parent shared: “My student has learned not to share their opinion. When they have shared it, it has resulted in strong negative reaction, rather than calm discussion. They do not like conflict, and end up shutting down for fear of retaliation.”
- Another parent shared: “I believe that physical safety related to keeping the school safe from intruders is high. However, I believe there is opportunity to expand the emotional safety for all students, to include those that agree with teachers’ political perspective, and those who do not.”

These experiences have been collected and shared by various CA community 1 members. These CA community members span across Republicans, Democrats,

Libertarians, Independents, and other political viewpoints. The statements reflected herein describe circumstances as recollected by CA community members, as well as sentiments from these CA community members. Not everyone signing or endorsing the Open Letter agrees with all of the sentiments shared in this Appendix, although everyone endorsing this Open Letter supports an open and transparent community that respects and values other members and their political views.

- On October 20, 2020, the Upper School Dean of Students sent a survey to the students. The questions ranged from asking if the students felt the school was highly, somewhat, or not at all biased towards the Democratic and Republican parties. Pressured by their peer group to support a particular political candidate, to whether they felt the teachers, parents, or adults in their lives influenced their opinions on politics. A number of students acknowledged, “they did not answer honestly,” and even texted home to let their parents know “they answered how they should,” some saying, “if I get kicked out of school, you will know why.” I think it should be alarming to CA leadership to hear the number of students who reacted in this manner based on their authoritarian views of CA leadership.
- Students have felt intimidated into silence and unable to freely express themselves. On numerous occasions, parent concerns and children’s negative experiences were brought to the Assistant Head of School, the Director of Diversity and Community Life, and various Board members. While in good faith pursuing the appropriate channels to address concerns, it appears in most cases, those concerns have been dismissed and discussed in small sessions thus avoiding awareness by the Board in totality.

Civil Disobedience Walkout

On January 15, 2021, the Upper School Dean of Students and Special Assistant to the Head of School for Student Outreach and the Director of Diversity and Community Life participated in a “civil disobedience” walk out. The exercise resulted in students being called racist because, “I did not get to the gym fast enough.” Other students explained they were called a racist because they “did not go to the gym after the first video interruption.” One student texted parents that the school was experiencing “civil unrest” and didn’t know what was going on. Other students reported they felt bullied and intimidated and ended up participating because they didn’t want to receive the same negative treatment being experienced by others. Many students reported being called “a racist” with faculty present and nothing was said or done about it.

The exercise was represented as an MLK tribute. However, with faculty present, students in the field house reported that other students yelled at their peers, “Malcom X,” “Black Empowerment,” “You are racist,” and “Silence is Violence.”

One parent commented, “Interestingly, he was actually pushed by his teacher to comply with the request to walk out versus staying and working on his academics. As he explained the exercise to me, it seemed he was actually practicing Obedience to comply with the request, rather than Disobedience, which I found ironic.”

Some parents shared it was unacceptable for CA faculty, whom we pay to teach our children, to stand by watching the situation escalate and allowing other students to exhibit behaviors completely contrary to the norms set forth by the schools own Diversity Department, the schools Mission Statement, and the school’s student handbook.

A video was shown to the entire Upper School, portraying their “civil disobedience” as a spontaneous and an organic event. To the contrary, it was a scripted, edited, and a scheduled event.

Some parents feel the faculty’s actions were a disservice to the Upper School student community. The students on the video are passionate and intelligent students who wanted to make a statement and deserved to be heard. Unfortunately, we feel they were misled by a contrived set of circumstances.

The students watching the video appear to be the only ones who were unaware of the scheduled event. The video shows the Upper School Dean of Students and Special Assistant to the Head of School for Student Outreach being “interrupted” with students stating, “watching a video is easy, making change is not, progress is uncomfortable, now we are going to ask you to do something that will make you uncomfortable. If you want to learn about real civil disobedience, stand up and leave your classroom, do not look to your teacher for an answer, make your own decision, if you prefer to stay where you are, remain seated and the video will continue, teachers feel free to pause the video while the students decide. Don’t worry about the video you will be able to watch it later, this is a community activity, on your way down we suggest you think about why you didn’t come after our first interruption.” (This quote was taken directly from a video sent out via Instagram by the Upper School Dean of Students. Interestingly, the Instagram video was taken down two days after the walk out).

Some parents feel that CA leadership continues to avoid transparency on this event, and that the faculty had an obligation to ensure the students informed the entire Columbus Academy community involved. Notification being sent home encouraging parents and students to engage in dialogue could have better positioned the students for a successful outcome. Confused students in an unexpected circumstance, didn’t feel they had a choice. If they stayed, they stated they were afraid to be, “harassed, pressured, and bullied” like some of the other kids.

The faculty present during the walk out permitted children to be placed in an uncomfortable situation. Specifically, in an Executive PACA meeting, the Assistant Head of School for Development/External Relations was told by a PACA parent that their child felt, “pressured to walk out.” The Assistant Head of School indignantly responded, “I was in the field house, it wasn’t that bad.” Was this the original intention of the Director of Diversity and Community Life to make students feel “uncomfortable” as stated by one of the students in the video? Did

the Director of Diversity and Community Life and/or the Upper School Dean of Students and Special Assistant to the Head of School for Student Outreach, in any way, craft, edit, or help to develop the student script, and was it reviewed by faculty before it was presented? Is the school willing to release all video footage from the field house security cameras for the entire day of January 15, 2021?

Why was the health and safety of our students ignored during this event? For the past year, we have all attempted to navigate the strange and changing circumstances of the COVID pandemic. As a school, we and the COVID Response Team have been vigilant and set forth strict policies addressing the pandemic, including maintaining a strict policy of one parent per student for all sporting events at Columbus Academy. Why were our Upper School students allowed and actually encouraged to violate COVID protocols and congregate in the Field House (not socially distancing at the required 6 feet)?

Examples of Lack of Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion

- One CA community member is deeply concerned about the gross underrepresentation of Hispanics/Latinos as students at CA and in positions of power and leadership at CA. Some feel that this seems to be a problem perpetuated by the Head of School. For example, the concerned CA member shared that Hispanics/Latinos are the largest minority population in the United States of America accounting for 18.5% of the population, while Columbus Academy’s Hispanic/Latino population is roughly 2%. Meanwhile, an email from the Head of School (titled “United Against Racism”) failed to address many minority races apart of our community, including the grossly underrepresented group of Hispanics and Latinos. Who made that decision and is pushing non inclusive agendas?
- Parents have reported speech in our school on this topic is being silenced and/or censored. For example, during Hispanic Heritage Month, two parents created a video explaining the history of salsa dancing. They credited the dance, an important part of their culture, to the slave rhythms that were brought from Africa. (They found this analogous to Mosaic’s guest, Eric Dozier, who spoke of slave Gospel hymns and slave songs during his visit to Columbus Academy for Black History Month.) Yet, the Assistant Director of Diversity and Community Life censored the video and removed the word “slave” when it was part of a Hispanic cultural video. The parents

challenged the reasonableness of the censorship in a discussion with the Head of Lower School, and the Assistant Director of Diversity and Community Life was supposed to follow up with the parents. To date, there has been no follow up from the Director of Diversity and Community Life.

- Parents and kids have reported The Head of School and various faculty members openly discussing, “privileged kids in their private planes, going to see Biden”; “privileged parents walking around talking about Aspen”; “speaking about diversity and equity in her Gucci sneakers with Starbucks”; and that kids should not mention “going on vacation with other kids, as it makes others feel bad.” These reports cause some parents to question how the CA leadership and faculty view and feel about many of the members of our community.
- In August, as the pandemic was at the forefront of public health concerns, a parent from the Chinese Parents Association expressed the disquietude of the group to The Director of Diversity and Community Life. With the start of school, the parent wished to discuss how the community might react to what some called the “China virus” and how the Asian student population and community may become affected by this negative discourse. There was no follow up from the Director of Diversity and Community Life and no communication from the school on the topic.
- As recent as January 29, 2021, the Director of Admissions and Tuition Assistance stated Black students are very worried at CA. There are ongoing reports of kids being called the N word, being asked for an “N pass,” and CA athletes being called the N word. What are the disciplinary practices surrounding these types of incidents? How does CA leadership address these injustices?

One parent shared this example: In 2020, two of our female students were called the N word. Neither of the parents were notified at the time and the action resulted in a 1-day suspension. More than a year later and after the summer field gathering this year, one parent was contacted asking if they would like to discuss it. These incidents and disciplinary action taken, fall squarely on the shoulders of the Head of School. The fact our children did not even come home and tell their parents about these incidents in some cases is an indication they did not feel supported at school.

- Many parents expressed a concern for students with learning disorders and the lack of any resources or focus whatsoever on this subpopulation within CA. One parent shares:

In the 1990’s, the term “Neurodiversity” was defined as an understanding that neurological differences are to be honored and respected just like any other human variation, including diversity in race, ethnicity, gender identity, religion, sexual orientation, and so on. (Definition from Educational Leadership, April 2017, Volume 7, Neurodiversity; The Future of Special Education). Since 1990,

neurodiversity has emerged into international prominence through university programs such as the College of William & Mary Neurodiversity Initiative and the London School of Economic's Dyslexia and Neurodiversity program. Neurodiversity has also been recognized by Forbes Magazine, Harvard College and many other elite universities across the country. Neurodiverse students include those, for example, with ADD/ADHD, auditory processing disorder and Dyslexia to name a few.

One might be under the false perception a private school has no obligation to serve a diverse learning population. Nevertheless, the school-age population IS diverse in terms of learning regardless of what community you are in.

Understanding neurodiversity helps to create an environment helpful to ALL students.

Neurodiversity has been recognized for over 30 years, why is it not being discussed at Columbus Academy? How much money has been spent to help support or learn about Neurodiversity? How much time, over the past five years, has the school spent on training its faculty on the concepts of Neurodiversity and Learning Differences? How much money, over the past 5 years, has been spent on training to help teachers and faculty recognize learning differences in the classroom? Over the past 5 years, how much training has been given to the faculty to help them teach lessons in multiple ways in order to reach all types of learners? Why does there appear to be no interest in the diversity of learning that exists in our students and the different ways in which they learn?

• Another parent shares:

Title I and Title III of the Americans With Disabilities Act (“ADA”) apply to Independent Schools, regardless of whether the independent school receives federal funding. For example, a diagnosis of ADD/ADHD and Dyslexia qualify as a disability under the ADA. Thus, the school is required to provide “reasonable accommodations” to those students. Ohio has one of highest diagnoses of ADD/ADHD in the United States. (CDC report 2011). Moreover, it has been estimated that 1 in 4 children has a learning disability of some type. It is important to note that it is illegal for independent schools to screen out children diagnosed with, for example, ADD/ADHD or Dyslexia, and it is also illegal to attempt to weed those students out later. The Columbus Academy currently has students in its population with learning disabilities.

According to the Americans with Disabilities Act and Independent Schools 2011, “NAIS feels that it is important for schools to be aware of the legal obligations schools owe to individuals with disabilities and encourage its schools to reach beyond the basic obligations and reach out to disabled students. NAIS has an institutional commitment to diversity and believes that the diversity opportunities presented by disabled students and employees are boundless. Teachers have an obligation to maintain awareness about the responsibilities imposed by the

ADA and should be mindful of the issues facing their students with special needs.” NAISADA publication, 2011.

Despite the fact Columbus Academy has students in its population with a qualifying disability under the ADA, and every year the number of children in the United States diagnosed with a qualifying disability rises, Columbus Academy is not addressing the needs of our diverse learning population. For example, during the 2019-2020 school year, there were 5 Lower School Learning

Specialists giving students extra help and attention with reading, writing, speech, and math. Currently, there are no Learning Specialists in the Lower School. All Learning Specialists have been transitioned to full time teaching.

What criteria is used to determine who qualifies as a Learning Specialists, and what educational requirements are determined to be essential in order to qualify for the position? Why are there currently no Learning Specialists in the Lower School? How much money is spent in total to provide reasonable accommodations across all school divisions? By division, how much money is spent on providing resources for students with learning disabilities?

Is the percentage of money spent on addressing racism, including training, curriculum, training materials, speakers and salaries, versus money spent to support students with a qualified learning disability or medical condition equitable? In light of all of the questions above regarding finances, please provide a forensic audit of the schools finances, including all donations made to PACA, from 2015 to the present.

In the Upper School and Middle School, Reading Specialists are provided as the resource for students with a learning disability. What criteria is used to determine who qualifies as a Reading Specialist, and what educational requirements are determined to be essential in order to qualify for the position? Is there any research-based evidence demonstrating a Reading Specialist can effectively remediate learning disabilities such as Dyslexia, Executive Function Disorder, Auditory Processing Disorder and or ADD/ADHD?

Failure to Focus on Academic Excellence

- One parent questions: What percentage of time is spent in faculty meetings discussing racism? What about current political topics? What percentage of time is spent in faculty meetings discussing or addressing academic excellence?
- Another parent shares, “My Upper School child has seen very little progress academically this year with the hybrid model. So much time has been focused on non-academic issues that academics are falling by the wayside.”

- One parent, in looking at CA's history of academic excellence, reported that in 2010, on average, 28.4% of the last five graduating classes received recognition in the National Merit and National Achievement Scholarship competitions. What is the current percentage of National Merit scholars? Please provide percentages for the National Merit competitions for 2010 to present.
- Additionally, the Class of 2010 took 431 Advanced Placement Exams, for an average of 4.68 per student. Please provide Advanced Placement information for 2010 to the present.
- Another parent asks: Has there been any leadership evaluation of the academic "costs" (and other potential costs) to our students resulting from the changes to education brought about by the past year? Has there been any discussion of what it would take to return to normal? If so, I haven't heard a thing about it and those seem like very fundamental questions.
- Another parent says: Currently our Lower School children, due to the high number of homeroom classes, are receiving 33% less of their science and lab experiments, Spanish, technology, art, and music classes. What is available support-wise for missed curriculum and the strategic plan to ensure academic excellence for our students?

Lack of Diversity at the Board Level

- Many parents question whether there is any diversity at the board level, and whether this may be a symptom of a structural problem. How is the Board of Directors selected? How is the President of the Board of Directors selected? How much input does the Head of School have in selecting the members of the Board of Directors and the President of the Board? What measures are taken to ensure diversity of representation amongst the Board of Directors? Are all decisions made by the Board or any member thereof, always recorded in the Meeting Minutes in order for all to read?
- Parents report attempting to take concerns before the Board and/or to various Board members, only to be told their concerns will not be heard because that is not the correct protocol. What exactly is the protocol for bringing concerns before the Board. Are there written protocols outlining how the Board operates? Who are the Board members permitted to speak with? There appears to be a disconnect between the Board and the school community at large. Who determines the protocols for the Board and how it interfaces with the school community?
- If CA leadership believes that there is diversity at the Board Level across the various groups of our community, why are so many members of the CA community expressing sentiments of exclusion?
- One parent questions how donated funds to PACA are being dispersed. Is the school willing to provide an audit of its finances, including donations to PACA?

Examples of Extreme and Divisive Partisan Political Indoctrination Adopted or Displayed by CA Leadership

- In August of 2020, the faculty were asked to return to school for 2 weeks of training. During this time the Director of Diversity and Community Life sent an email to the faculty regarding defunding the police, along with a link to a page asking for donations to defund the police. Does Columbus Academy support defunding the police? Was the Director of Diversity and Community Life reprimanded for sending a highly inappropriate email on a divisive partisan issue to other faculty? Who approved this email to be sent in a workplace? Is this not an example of creating a hostile work environment for those of differing political opinions?
- Another parent shared: “My child came home and asked about her Grandfather, who is a retired police officer. My child asked if he did bad things to black people.”
- On July 30, 2020, during a video call with affinity group parents discussing Columbus Academy, the Director of Diversity and Community Life stated, “what we are dealing with here is 110 years of white supremacy.” Do you agree with and does this mean that the Director of Diversity and Community life believes that the Columbus Academy students, alumni, and faculty who graciously donate efforts and substantial resources to benefit and positively impact our community at large represent 110 years of white supremacy?
- In August of 2020, the school provided training to the faculty along with materials by Dr. Ibram X. Kendi. Some members of our community believe that Dr. Kendi’s teachings are radical and include tactics of intimidation and overt political extremism. For example, Dr. Kendi’s teachings redefine term such as “racism” in a manner to describe virtually every conservative policy and idea as racist. Dr. Kendi’s book also labels every conservative it mentions—Barry Goldwater, President Reagan, Justice Clarence Thomas, and former HUD Secretary Dr. Ben Carson—and their supporters as inherently racists. Indeed, according to Dr. Kendi, it is racist to disagree with his liberal positions on public policy matters, like climate change, the role of organized labor, tax policy, funding the military, and the Affordable Care Act. Additionally, Dr. Kendi goes so far as to claim those who “love capitalism end up loving racism.” Ironically, Dr. Kendi’s lecture fees range from \$25,000 to \$35,000 per engagement.

Does CA leadership agree with Dr. Kendi that all people are racist? Or that Capitalism is racism? It appears that many initiatives being shared with our faculty, parents, and students involve principles of Critical Race Theory. Does the school adopt and support the teachings of Critical Race Theory?
- While discussing censorship of speech with CA leadership, it was revealed the Assistant Director of Diversity and Community Life was reviewing books in the Lower School in order to remove books unilaterally determined to be “racist” or no

longer allowed. When questioned how many books in the Lower School could possibly need to be removed, CA leadership failed to provide a specific answer. A reply was given that 1 hour per week had been allotted for the Assistant Director of Diversity and Community Life to review/remove books. Which books were actually removed? Why would one person be responsible for deciding what is acceptable and what is not? What is the directive and function of the Director of Diversity and Community Life, and which publications are targeted or have been removed or made unavailable and why?

Some parents are interested in the scope of the censorship/cancellation criteria and who is responsible for establishing and approving these processes and procedures. There are rumors that Beethoven and other Classical music pieces are targeted for removal and cancellation because others feel they are works by elitists and white supremacists. Some parents heard that *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain, and many other works of literature are possibly on the timeline for removal by the Director of Diversity and Community Life. Are these reports founded?

- One parent reported that the Director of Diversity and Community Life took down artwork at the school displaying the Caravel ship. What is the current location of Columbus Academy's artwork and why did the Director of Diversity and Community Life take it into her personal possession?

On August 6, 2020, the Director of Diversity and Community Life sent an email to the Columbus Academy Community indicating that, upon consultation with the Board, the Caravel ship was, "used to transport enslaved African peoples and by colonists responsible for great violence against the indigenous peoples in the Americas." Many within the CA community disagree as a factual matter with this premise. What evidence did the Director of Diversity and Community Life rely upon in making the above statement and determination?

One parent contacted the #1 maritime museum in the world, the National Maritime Museum in England, as well as the Museum Maritime de Barcelona in Spain, and the National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington DC. With access to the museum archives, and based on a compilation of known slave ships (in conversation with the Curators of Historic Photographs and Ship Plans), the parent found no evidence whatsoever that the Caravel ship could be accurately represented as a slave ship used to transport enslaved African peoples.

Who approved the email sent from the Director of Diversity and Community Life? Did the Board vote to cancel the Caravel? How much money was spent in total on the recent marketing campaign, communications, and recreational equipment displaying the Caravel or referencing The Ship only then for it to be canceled by the Director of Diversity and Community Life?

- Various faculty and parents have indicated that the Director of Diversity and Community Life expresses that the Viking mascot needs to go because it represents white, males who raped and pillaged. In light of these comments, is CA planning to change the name of the school or the mascot from the Viking?
- This is from a CA teacher: As the Head of School, why do you think it is appropriate to insert your personal politics into how you manage and interact with the faculty? For example, on November 4, 2016, you as Head of School, asked a newly hired faculty member how they were doing with regard to the election results. The faculty member replied great. You then reportedly replied to the new hire, "you cannot be happy" and likened the day to another 09/11.
- Why is the Director of Diversity and Community Life permitted and encouraged to offer her unsolicited personal political views in meetings with parents? Some parents report that the Director of Diversity and Community Life derogatorily refers to some parents as "white girl" or to some foods as "white food."
 - One parent asks: Why are teachers in all divisions permitted to announce their political viewpoints, so much so, kids have reported asking to hear the "other side" of the issue, to which one teacher responded with disgust, "you find it then."
- On February 3, 2021, a teacher sent a survey to students asking for suggestions on course instruction. One student's written reply stated, "I think class needs to be focused on English, not politics. There have been quite a few classes when my teacher starts out class by talking about the latest political events or his own political opinion. I would like to learn about English, not be taught someone else's political opinion. It can be frustrating at times because I feel like I can't share my own opinion in fear that I will be "wrong" or disliked because my opinion differs from my teacher." Bravely, this student handed the written assessment back to their teacher.
- One parent complains of Bret Kavanaugh hearings played in the Upper School with faculty weighing in with personal political commentary.
- Another parent complains of politics being discussed in Science with a focus on "how to take Trump down." How does this culture create academic excellence or foster diversity of thought? How does this create critical thinkers who can formulate their own opinions and beliefs?
- Another parent wonders whether, in order to feel comfortable at Columbus Academy, does a student have to submit their own beliefs to the political will of their teacher or the administration? In order for the faculty to feel comfortable at Columbus Academy, do they have to submit their own beliefs to adhere to the political will of the school administration?

Lack of Transparency

- In the August 2020 United Against Racism letter, the school set forth student population percentages with very limited demographic information. Is CA willing to share more detailed student population percentages so that we can evaluate the school's diversity efforts?
- School leadership has stated that members of our Black community made 30 demands of the school. We came together this summer for discussions on this important topic, yet have not been included in hearing the 30 most meaningful issues for our Black community nor helping to address these concerns. Did CA meet the demands? If not, why not?
- On January 14, 2021, the 1619 Project was introduced to the Cultural Consciousness Committee with intent to present to the Board. Is CA adopting a history curriculum based on the 1619 Project?
- The Assistant Head of School for Development/External Relations has been asked for the specific teaching materials being used for every grade regarding racism. Despite the request, no information or curriculum has been provided. Many of our CA community members believe they should be informed of the specific materials, books, exercises, videos, speakers and/or other materials that are being used in any way to address racism.
- What curriculum changes have been made over the past 5 years? Who authorized the Director of Diversity and Community life to unilaterally make curriculum changes (e.g., cancellation of Columbus Day for "sanitizing his actions," Native American History, Family tree project, and gender)?
 - One parent expressed concern that our students are being taught in Health there are 80+ genders. For example, Lunagender, defined as a fluid gender identity that changes on a consistent, orderly cycle, much like a lunar cycle. When students asked if this was opinion or fact, the teacher replied fact. Students questioned gender versus respecting how an individual identifies themselves.
 - Many parents have reported in Health, their children are being given the names and addresses of free "child friendly" clinics where they can go and be tested without parental consent for STD's, get free condoms, etc. Additionally, the videos and lectures being shown in Health, state that if you contract an STD, not to worry, you can get free medication for STD's and your parent's will not know. One parent stated, "the videos definitely spend more time talking about having multiple sex partners starting at a very young age and really dismisses the idea of abstinence until marriage. As a person coming from a faith based point of view and strong biblical teachings — this all seems totally outrageous to me."
- Faculty members report the Director of Diversity and Community Life sends emails regarding awareness of all religious holidays - with the exception of all Christian holidays. Why does the Director of Diversity and Community Life think it is acceptable to exclude Christianity?