



# Harvey High School

*"Striving for Excellence"*

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Greetings Hornet Families,

We are fighting an uphill battle against student vaping at HHS. In recent weeks there have been multiple reports of vaping activity and devices found in the school. Such activity is nearly impossible to detect and stop. New device styles make it easy for students to hide vape activity during the school day. Vaping can be done so discreetly that students can even vape in class. Some schools are reporting student "challenges" encouraging this behavior.

When a careless student does get caught, consequences have little if any impact, aside from teaching the culprit to be more discrete. As long as they believe vaping is safe and cool, students will not stop vaping because it is against school rules or because they get caught and receive a consequence. That's where you, the parents, come in. Your students are much more likely to listen to you than they are to listen to the school about the dangers of vaping.

Please don't believe this message is meant for other parents and does not apply to your student(s). The problem is widespread and likely even more prevalent than we know. In the spring of 2021, our high school students at HHS self reported the following numbers:

- 44.5% of students reported to have tried vaping.
- 23% reported that they were currently an active vape user.
- 13% reported they had vaped on 20 or more of the past 30 days.
- 9% reported vaping daily.

As noted, these are self reported numbers from the State of North Dakota's Youth Risk Behavior survey. In my opinion, it is safe to assume the student 'self reporting' is significantly understated. It is also safe to assume that since this data is going on two years old, vape use has increased, likely significantly, since then.

*Vision: All students will be personally and academically successful.*

Just this week custodians found a vape device stashed in a feminine hygiene disposal container. Is a student that would do that a casual user? If a student is willing to do that, is he/she likely to be an anomaly? Is a student willing to do that indicative of a much larger issue?

Your answers and my answers to those questions may not necessarily match, but sitting where I am sitting, being tasked with the responsibility to maintain the safety and wellness of your student(s), I assure you that I am concerned, and I believe that we at HHS are not immune to the the widespread use of vaping devices among students.

The school is doing all we can to educate our students on the dangers of vaping. However, the bottom line is this: parents, the school cannot adequately address this issue without your support. In fact, in my humble opinion, it should be the *school supporting you in your* efforts to address the problem.

Please, educate yourself about teen vaping, and talk to your Hornet(s) about your expectations of him/her. Did you know that *one* JUUL pod is the nicotine equivalent of one pack of cigarettes and in some instances kids are going through 2+ a day. These devices are highly addictive and have toxic levels of Nicotine which can lead to “Nic Sick” which involves vomiting, diarrhea, and nausea due to the high levels of nicotine toxicity in the body. These devices aerosolize chemicals that then coat the inside of the lungs. This causes the alveoli in the lungs to burst and become irreparable. The alveoli are where the lungs and the blood exchange oxygen and carbon dioxide during the process of breathing in and breathing out which in turn once they are burst disallow for youth to breathe easily.

There is no safe vaping device. These devices are not FDA approved nor are a majority of their chemical components. These devices are marketed to teens as being tobacco/nicotine free which is **not** true.

Our Wells County District Health Unit, along with our PACT group, has educational resources available to assist you with this. If that is something you would like to access, contact the school office.

My Life My Quit is the free and confidential way to quit smoking and vaping. Teens can text “Start My Quit” to 36072 or click to chat with a Coach. They are here for kids every step of the way.

In closing, thank you to those parents who have already educated themselves and their children, and to those who have reached out in support of our efforts here at HHS.

Let's all be united in sending a very clear message to the students of HHS:  
Hornets Don't Vape!

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Where else would you rather be, than right here, right now?

