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Dear Parents and Guardians,

October 2018

Across the nation schools are seeing a dangerous new trend among students, and Vermont is no exception. A growing number of students are vaping - using electronic cigarette devices, aka e-cigs, vaporizers, or vapes. Our district has seen increased use of these devices among students and we are concerned that they are unaware of the legal and health risks associated with them.

Vaporizers are battery-powered devices that convert liquid into a vapor, which is inhaled. They deliver nicotine like a regular cigarette, but without the tobacco, burning, or carcinogen-laden smoke, which is why they are thought to be a safer alternative. In addition to tobacco, these devices can dispense crystallized marijuana and other drug-infused oils. Contrary to what manufactures report, there are several serious related health concerns. This letter will provide you with information on vaping, legal and school consequences, and associated health risks.

A popular vaporizer is called a "JUUL", pronounced "jewel". This device is marketed to new vape users as it is a simple and stealthy device. A starter kit, including the device and four juice pods known as JUULpods, can be purchased for about \$50. Reports indicate that the nicotine in one pod is equivalent to one pack of cigarettes. There is the danger of nicotine addiction, and of not knowing what is actually in the JUULpod. Teens have suffered seizures, blackouts, and respiratory distress from using JUULs. These devices pose a serious health hazard to our students, and unfortunately, can easily be purchased by underage youth through online sources.

The JUUL is small and very easy to conceal. At about the size of a pack of lead for a mechanical pencil or thumb/flash drive, JUULs are easily disguised to look like highlighters, markers and erasers. Unlike other e-cigarettes that produce a significant plume of vapor when used, the JUUL produces no discernable smoke or vapor when used. JUULpods come in kid-friendly flavors like mango, fruit, mint, and cool cucumber.

Vaping, or the possession of any tobacco substance or drug, is against the law for those under the age of 18. Additionally, school district policy prohibits the use of e-cigarettes, vapes, JUULs, or similar products by all students, employees, or visitors to the school. Students found to be in possession of these devices and/or products are subject to a tobacco or drug violation, depending on the contents for the vaporizer. In either case, there may be legal consequences.

The district's health curriculum addresses these topics in grades K-12 and we continue to educate our students in a developmentally appropriate manner regarding the legality of under-aged vaping and the potential long-term health risks. All schools in Maple Run Unified School District will further address this concern by talking with students about the dangers of vaping both formally and informally.

For the most impact, we need your help. Please take time to speak to your child about the dangers of using vaporizers and the associated products. To help facilitate this discussion we have included some information outlining the major health concerns on the back of this letter. These may be difficult or uncomfortable conversations, but I think we agree that the health and safety of our students comes before all else.

As always, we appreciate your support in maintaining a safe learning environment for all students and we thank you in advance for being a partner with us in your child's education and well-being.

Sincerely,

Kevin Dirth, Superintendent MRUSD
Chris Mosca, Principal, BFA
Angela Stebbins, Principal SATEC

Leeann Wright, Director, NWTC
Sean O'Dell, Principal, Fairfield

Joan Cavallo, Principal, SACS
David Kimel, Director Collins Perley

Link to CDC information: https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/about-e-cigarettes.html

TERMS TO KNOW:

- Vaping
- Electronic cigarette
- Juuling
- E-cigs
- Vaporizers
- Vapes

OTHER FACTS:

- Vaporizers are battery-powered devices that convert liquid into a vapor, which is inhaled.
- They deliver nicotine like a regular cigarette, but without the tobacco, burning, or carcinogen-laden smoke
- They are **mistakenly** thought to be a safer alternative
- These devices can dispense tobacco, crystallized marijuana and other drug-infused oils
- A popular device is the “JUUL”, pronounced “jewel”
 - Marketed to new vape users
 - simple and stealthy device
 - Nicotine in one pod is equivalent to one pack of cigarettes
 - There is the danger of nicotine addiction, and of not knowing what is actually in the JUULpod.
 - Teens have suffered seizures, blackouts, and respiratory distress from using JUULs.
 - Easily purchased by underage youth through online sources.
 - Small and easy to conceal. About the size of a pack of lead for a mechanical pencil or thumb/flash drive
 - JUULs are easily disguised to look like highlighters, markers and erasers.
 - JUUL produces no discernable smoke or vapor when used.
 - JUULpods come in kid-friendly flavors like mango, fruit, mint, and cool cucumber
 - Vaping or possession of any tobacco substance or drug, is against the law for those under the age of 18

School district policy prohibits e-cigarettes, vapes, JUULs, or similar products by all students, employees, or visitors

- Students found to be in possession of these devices and/or products are subject to a tobacco or drug violation
- There may be legal consequences.

Potential long-term health risks:

- Contains nicotine, an addictive substance that can negatively impact adolescent brain development.
- Increased heart rate
- Increased blood pressure
- Lung disease
- Chronic bronchitis
- Insulin resistance leading to type 2 diabetes

Studies have found toxic chemicals such as formaldehyde and an antifreeze ingredient in e-cigarettes