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[Versión en Español](#)

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Schools nationwide, including NOMMA, have seen an increase in the student use of electronic cigarettes and vaping devices. In fact, in 2021, 25.5% of Louisiana high school youth reported currently using any tobacco product, including e-cigarettes. E-cigarettes are sometimes called “e-cigs,” “vapes,” “vape pens,” and “electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS).” Some e-cigarettes look like regular cigarettes, cigars, or pipes. Some look like USB flash drives, pens, and other everyday items. Common additives used in electronic cigarettes include nicotine, flavorings, and caffeine can make them especially attractive to teens. However, the substances found in e-cigarettes can negatively affect adolescent brain development. Additionally, e-cigarettes are devices that can be used as a delivery system for cannabinoids (such as marijuana) and potentially other illicit drugs.

In Louisiana, the use and possession of all tobacco products is illegal for those under the age of 21. Additionally, regardless of age, students are **not permitted to use or possess** tobacco products, electronic smoking devices, or their components (including lighters) at school, at school-sanctioned events, or on any school transportation. The [NOMMA Cadet-Parent Handbook](#) clearly states that “***Cadets do not smoke, vape, or use drugs.***” and further identifies that “*Possession of electronic cigarettes, tobacco, lighters, or other smoking paraphernalia*” is a disciplinary infraction with attendant consequences. Parents/Guardians will be called immediately, and the student will be subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, OSS and possible expulsion.

We strongly encourage you to talk with your cadet about the dangers of e-cigarettes and vaping. A list of resources is included at the bottom of this letter. Please feel free to contact your cadet's grade-level school counselor with any questions or concerns you may have. Here are some signs to look for to detect the use of e-cigarettes:

- E-cigarettes and vape pens may not smell bad like the smoke from burning tobacco. However, most have flavors in them that usually smell like fruit, candy, or mints which can be appealing to adolescents. The smell can be confused with a light perfume. If you catch a sudden aroma, this may be a red flag.
- "Pens" that aren't pens, "USB" devices that aren't USB storage devices, "Highlighters" that aren't highlighters. These electronic devices need to be charged. The devices may look like a fancy fountain pen and may have a very elegant and discreet look that can be carried anywhere. The entire assembly is designed to look like a pen, marker, or other gadget. Look for buttons, lights, charging ports, or parts that pull apart and have cartridges that may contain the fluids to be burned. [Check out the CDC's Visual Dictionary for descriptions and images of e-cigarettes and vapes.](#)
- A vape can be mistaken for a USB device. It can be accessed easily. The vaporizer goes easily undetected as the smoke and smell linger for only seconds. The pods contain many different flavors which can be appealing to adolescents. The smell can be confused with a light perfume. There are many brands of these devices, and can be easily hidden in plain sight.
- Excessive dry mouth/dry skin and/or increasing nose bleeds.
- Possession of pen-like devices or other objects that may need to be charged.

It is our hope that through the efforts of home and school, our students will refrain from using tobacco and devices such as e-cigarettes. NOMMA will continue to enforce the law, assign consequences, and conduct random searches to enforce the cadet code of conduct and the law. Your support in this matter is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Long

Additional Resources for Families regarding vaping and e-cigarette use:

- [Know the Risks](#)
- [E-Cigarette Or Vaping Visual Dictionary](#)
- [VIDEO: Students are Hiding Vapes in Plain Sight: What parents need to know about hidden devices- The Today Show](#)
- [Quit with Us, Louisiana!](#)
- [Get the facts on Nicotine](#)
- [How to Tell if Your Child is Vaping Talk with Your Kids About Vaping](#)
- [Facts for Parents About E-Cigarettes & Vaping](#)
- [Talk with Your Teen About E-Cigarettes: A Tip Sheet for Parents](#)
- [Lung Illnesses Associated with Use of Vaping Products](#)
- [Tobacco Use Among Louisiana Youth](#)
- [VIDEO: Vape manufacturers make it so easy: How to hide a vape](#)