

CONCORDIA R-2 SCHOOL DISTRICT

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February 25, 2021

Dear Parents/Guardians,

I am reaching out to share information about electronic cigarettes/vaping and their associated potential health effects. School districts throughout the nation, including Concordia R-2, have seen an increase in the student use of electronic cigarettes and vaping pens. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, nearly 1 out of every 4 middle and high school students use electronic vaping products. Common additives used in electronic cigarettes include nicotine, flavorings and caffeine. In high doses, these substances may have negative effects on 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.

Currently, the use and possession of all tobacco products is illegal for those under the age of 21. Students are not permitted to use or possess tobacco products, electronic smoking devices or their components (including lighters) at school or school sanctioned events or transportation. Parents/Guardians will be called immediately and the student will be subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to OSS, and any confiscated items will be turned over to the Concordia Police Department. Upon return to school, the student will meet with either the principal or the counselor to candidly discuss the dangers of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco products.

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 for a light perfume. If you catch a sudden aroma, this may be a red flag.

- "Pens" that aren't pens: These electronic devices need to be charged. The atomizers are a vital part of e- cigarettes as they turn the juice/fluids into vapor; they usually hold around 1.8 ml of e-Liquid. Together, with a pen style battery, they make the ensemble look like a fancy fountain pen and may have a very elegant and discreet look which can be carried anywhere. The entire assembly is designed to look like a pen, marker or other gadget. Look for buttons, lights or parts that pull apart and have cartridges that may contain the fluids to be burned.
- 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 such as crème brulee, fruit medley, and cool mint which can be appealing to adolescents. The smell can be confused for a light perfume. There are many other brands of these devices.
- 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 such devices. We strongly encourage you to have a conversation with your child about the dangers of e-cigarettes. A list of resources is included at the bottom of this letter.

Thank you for your anticipated cooperation. Please feel free to contact our school counselor, Brianne Bredehoeft, or me with any questions or concerns you may have.

Sincerely,

Dr. Deanna Jurkowski
CHS Principal

Additional Resources

- Stop The Vape - Missouri <https://stopthevapemissouri.org/>
- Youth Vaping Prevention Resources
<https://www.montcopa.org/3271/Youth-Vaping-Prevention-Resources>
- How to Talk with Your Kids About Vaping
<https://drugfree.org/article/how-to-talk-with-your-kids-about-vaping/>
- Facts for Parents About E-Cigarettes & Vaping
<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/tobacco/Pages/Facts-For-Parents-About-E-Cigarettes-Electronic-Nicotine-Delivery-Systems.aspx>
- Number of Teens Vaping Hits 'Record' High
<https://www.safetyandhealthmagazine.com/articles/print/17921-number-of-teens-vaping-hits-record-high-survey-shows>
- Talk with Your Teen About E-Cigarettes: A Tip Sheet for Parents
https://e-cigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov/documents/SGR_ECig_ParentTipsheet_508.pdf
- Juul, Under Heavy Fire, Pulls Fruit-Flavored Pods from US
<https://www.wired.com/story/juul-pulls-fruit-flavored-pods-us/>
- Lung Illnesses Associated with Use of Vaping Products
<https://www.fda.gov/news-events/public-health-focus/lung-illnesses-associated-use-vaping-products>