



## Update from the Superintendent

To: Parents and Guardians  
From: Mark McQueen, Superintendent  
Date: April 19, 2024

---

Today, I'm reaching out to you about a matter of grave concern that's been weighing heavily on the minds of our entire school community.

We've noticed a troubling trend lately: the increased presence of THC-laden devices on our campuses. This issue cannot be overlooked, and it requires immediate action. I don't want to incite panic, but I need you to understand the gravity of the situation. These devices are making their way to all of our schools, even our elementary schools, because our youngest students bring items belonging to their parents/guardians onto our campuses. It's a reality that's difficult for me to acknowledge, but we must confront it head-on. And to do so, I need your help.

The statistics surrounding teenage vaping are sobering. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 2.5 million students in both middle and high school openly admitted to vaping just last year (2022). Among them, 27.6% admitted to vaping daily, while 42.3% admitted to vaping on 20 or more days out of each 30-day period.

While vaping in itself is a concern, our alarm is particularly heightened by the increase in THC-laden devices. Weekly, we're faced with frightening situations where students require emergency medical attention due to adverse reactions from these substances. It's a terrifying scenario for all involved, and we must work together to intervene.

As a district, we've seen a sharp increase in the number of situations related to THC-laden devices. **So far this school year, we have registered more than 160 incidents involving drugs/THC-laden vapes.**

Our School Resource Deputies, administrators, and educators work tirelessly to keep our schools safe, but we cannot tackle this issue alone. We need your help, your voice, and your support. I urge you to have candid conversations with your children about the risks associated with THC-laden devices. Knowledge is power, and equipping them with the facts could be life-saving.

Furthermore, I implore you to be vigilant in monitoring your child's belongings for any signs of these harmful devices. One puff from a THC-laden vape can have catastrophic consequences, as evidenced by an incident a couple of years ago involving a high school student who collapsed after inhaling just once.

Quick intervention from a deputy and the heroic actions of a fellow student most likely saved a life. This is a stark reminder that this could happen to anyone, at any time.

As your Superintendent, I'm dedicated to ensuring the safety and well-being of every student in our district. But I cannot do it alone. We need your help, support, and commitment to engage in these tough conversations with your students. Please help us ensure your students understand the danger of these devices and that we're all working together for their well-being.

Vaping devices can be easily concealed and mistaken for everyday items like USB drives or pens. You can help prevent your child from engaging in risky behavior by staying vigilant and regularly searching his/her belongings. If you suspect that your child may be vaping or you need guidance regarding this issue, there are resources available to assist you.

**I recommend visiting the following websites for valuable information and support:**

- Truth Initiative: How to Help Your Child Quit Vaping (<https://truthinitiative.org/research-resources/quitting-smoking-vaping/how-help-your-child-quit-vaping>)
- Smokefree Teen: Quit Vaping (<https://teen.smokefree.gov/quit-vaping>)
- UT Southwestern Medical Center: How to Quit Vaping (Teen) (<https://utswmed.org/cancer/community-outreach/join-a-conversation/beating-nicotine-together/how-to-quit-vaping-teen/>)

Additionally, our school counselors and staff are here to support you and your child. Please don't hesitate to reach out to your child's school for guidance and assistance if needed. We are committed to working together to address this issue and ensure the well-being of all our students. Thank you for your attention and ongoing partnership in protecting our students and schools.