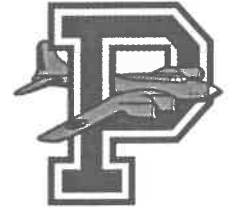


Phone: (610) 826-3155
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PALMERTON AREA HIGH SCHOOL
3525 Fireline Road
Palmerton, Pennsylvania 18071



Paula A. Husar
Principal

August 31, 2023

Dear Parents/Guardians,

The Palmerton Area Senior and Junior High Schools, just like other school districts across the country, have seen a continued spike in incidents involving students vaping. Both of our schools have made changes to address this issue as it is a serious health concern. The purpose of this letter is to update you on these changes and the repercussions that a student may face if they are vaping on school property. We take this issue very seriously because of the negative health effects vaping can have. In April, we had some vape sensors installed on a trial basis to check the reliability of these devices and to help us develop appropriate procedures before rolling them out for the 2023-2024 school year. For this school year, these devices will be installed in most of the bathrooms in both schools. The sensors will alert school staff immediately when there is a detectable anomaly in the air. This will allow us to respond and hopefully address the core of the vaping problem. Our goal is simply to decrease vaping at the Palmerton Area Senior and Junior High Schools and focus more on the education of our students.

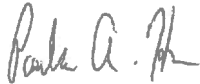
Student vaping may be due to an addiction to nicotine that students have developed. It could also simply be the result of peer pressure or just curiosity. Unfortunately, when the students are vaping, they are spending an excessive amount of time out of class. These actions also cause administrators to use valuable time to react appropriately. Student vaping generally correlates to lower grades and a lower understanding of class material. It also has administrators spending less time concentrating on the actual instruction that is going on in the classroom. Additionally, vaping on school grounds negatively impacts other students and staff members. People are exposed to harmful vapors and are also put in a very uncomfortable situation having to witness things. This has an overall negative impact on our school community.

The Surgeon General reports that nicotine is addictive and can harm brain development. We know that using nicotine may make it harder for school-related tasks such as learning, concentration, peer pressure and the implications on various societal norms such as being on time to class and school.

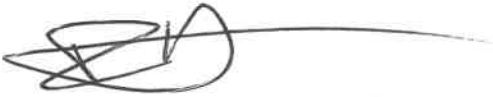
Vaping is prohibited by the Junior and Senior High School Student Handbooks/Code of Conduct. Parents also must sign off that they are in receipt of the Handbook and have reviewed the document carefully with their child. In most cases, we try to make it easy for you to identify these Handbook changes with the use of a "New" clip art image posted with the Handbook entry. While we have certainly tried to be as proactive as possible in educating students on the risks of vaping, there will be consequences for students possessing or using a vape on school district property. These consequences can include citations, police involvement, security guard involvement, suspensions, and parent contact. Our goal is to partner with parents to help support our students to make good decisions for themselves and their school community.

Some common vaping devices look like thick pens, a stylus for a computer device, a flash drive, or even a very small flask with what appears to be a small round chimney coming off the top. These devices are very small and can easily be hidden as they seem to blend in with normal backpack items. Similar to cigarettes, convenience stores cannot sell vaping devices to anyone under the age of 21. However, some stores are not as vigilant as others in this regard. Please consider having a conversation with your child today about this important issue. Together we can work towards a healthy future for our youth. Thank you for your continued support of our schools.

Sincerely,



Paula A. Husar – High School Principal



Rich DeSocio – Junior High School Principal



Dave Sodl – Secondary Assistant Principal

cc: Dr. Jodi Frankelli – Superintendent of Schools