



## Parsippany-Troy Hills Township Schools

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September 21, 2022

Dear Parents/Guardians and Students,

Given the increase in e-cigarette (vaping) and marijuana use nationwide, we believe it is critical to remind students and their families of the school district's regulations and consequences for smoking and possession of tobacco products and smoking devices.

Let's be clear. Smoking, whether it be from traditional cigarettes or inhaling vapor from an electronic smoking device, is a dangerous and potentially addictive habit. Both cigarettes and e-smoking devices serve the same unhealthy purpose, which is to introduce tobacco and other inhaled products into the body. *It is also important to note that the waxes and oils used in electronic smoking devices can be altered easily and then used to inhale illicit drugs, such as THC/marijuana and synthetic drugs that pose significant safety threats to those who inhale them.*

The Parsippany-Troy Hills Township Board of Education, Parsippany Police Department, and district administrators present a unified front on this matter. We need your help. Your children, our students, our township's youngest citizens need your intervention to prevent them from making risky choices. As per the CDC website ([https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic\\_information/e-cigarettes/Quick-Facts-on-the-Risks-of-E-cigarettes-for-Kids-Teens-and-Young-Adults.html](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/Quick-Facts-on-the-Risks-of-E-cigarettes-for-Kids-Teens-and-Young-Adults.html)):

- The use of e-cigarettes is unsafe for kids, teens, and young adults.
- Most e-cigarettes contain nicotine. Nicotine is highly addictive and can harm adolescent brain development, which continues into the early to mid-20s.
- E-cigarettes can be used to deliver marijuana and other drugs.
- Young people who use e-cigarettes may be more likely to smoke cigarettes in the future.

Smoking is prohibited on school grounds. District Regulation #5600 (Code of Conduct) states that students in possession of tobacco products, including electronic smoking devices or their cartridges/oils/waxes/components, and/or smoking/vaping while on school grounds **will be subject to a two (2) day in-school suspension** and, where permissible by statute, will have a complaint filed against them with the municipal court. Violators are subject to fines of not less than \$250 for a first offense, \$500 for a second offense, and \$1000 for each subsequent offense (N.J.S.A. 26:3D-62(b)).

Further, since the contents of an electronic smoking device cannot be determined through casual observation or easily tested, students in possession of electronic smoking devices/components will be considered under suspicion of being under the influence of drugs while at school as would any student in possession of anything that would constitute drug paraphernalia. Therefore, the school will contact a parent/guardian, **who must immediately take the student for a drug screen** and physician's clearance. A positive screen or verified possession of drugs/alcohol will result in four (4) days of out-of-school suspension for a first offense, ten (10) days for a second offense, and indefinite out-of-school suspension pending Superintendent's review upon a third offense. All offenses require a substance abuse evaluation by an accredited facility and adherence to their recommended counseling plan.

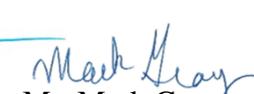
All offenses carry co-curricular activity and athletic suspensions. All positive drug screens must have a second drug screen showing lower levels prior to returning to school. Should a student test positive for a controlled dangerous substance or be in possession of verified drugs/paraphernalia, the suspension for that offense will be added to the suspension for a smoking violation, and a municipal complaint will be filed with the potential for escalation to criminal charges as a drug offense.

It is critical to understand how simple and discreet electronic smoking devices can be. Since they leave little odor, e-cigarettes are particularly easy to hide and use in public places, including school. JUUL, a popular vape device that comes in enticing flavors like mango and cucumber, looks like a flash drive and can be charged in a USB port, is especially concerning. JUUL delivers high levels of nicotine, making the product extremely addictive. The vapor made from e-cigarettes is **not** made of water. The vapor contains harmful chemicals and very fine particles that are inhaled into the lungs and exhaled into the environment. Why would we ever think this is appropriate for our children?

If you believe that your child is in need of assistance for smoking or substance abuse, please contact our Student Assistance Counselors for information about the supports available in school as well as resources available outside of school. For Parsippany High School students, please reach out to Ms. Aimee Doyle at [adoyle@pthsd.net](mailto:adoyle@pthsd.net) or x2312. For Parsippany Hills High School students, please contact Mr. Rafael Delgado at [rdelgado@pthsd.net](mailto:rdelgado@pthsd.net) or x2414. Ms. Doyle and Mr. Delgado are amazing student advocates and extremely well-versed in resources to help students and their families.

Please review this information with your child to ensure it is clearly understood that there is no tolerance for smoking of any kind on school grounds. Drugs, tobacco products, and electronic smoking devices are not permitted in school and students will face serious consequences for violating the district's Code of Conduct.

Sincerely,

 Dr. Matthew Thompson PHHS Principal	 Mrs. Melissa Carucci PHS Principal	 Ms. Carly Stout BMS Principal	 Mr. Mark Gray CMS Principal
 Dr. Barbara Sargent Superintendent of Schools	 Chief Richard Pantina Parsippany Police Department		