Dear Three Village Central School District Families,

As you are aware, the vaping epidemic is rampant across our nation, and the effects of this destructive behavior continue to create profound health concerns as well as significant disruptions to our school environment. Vaping devices are easy to hide and use, making them convenient to transport onto campus and use in the schools.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, over the past couple of years, the rate of vaping among teenagers has risen dramatically, while cigarette usage has plummeted. In fact, in 2018, it was reported that nearly one in five high school students had used electronic cigarettes in the past 30 days. This September, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration issued a warning letter about this matter to one of the top producers of these devices, JUUL, for illegally marketing its product as a safer alternative to smoking and for targeting teens with flavored vaping options. However, misconceptions surrounding the use and safety of the product still remain.

This epidemic, while a national one, has had a direct and grave impact on our local school community. As a district, we have needed to divert resources and deploy new ones to combat the problem of teen vaping. These have included, but are not limited to, installing devices that detect vaping, creating prevention programs, adjusting health curricula to focus on the dangers of vaping, creating a new student assistant counselor position to focus on prevention and treatment, and embracing new disciplinary actions and a districtwide zero-tolerance policy on vaping.

The exponential rise in vaping is one we fear will not cease unless we stand up as a nation to defend the health and safety of our students. Without such a stand, our district and many others will continue on the current trajectory of allocating funds and resources into initiatives to combat this widespread issue, potentially to no avail.

It is for these reasons that Three Village has become the first school district in New York State to join a national lawsuit against the e-cigarette manufacturer JUUL. As educators, it is our duty to protect the health and safety of our students, and we believe this company is compromising those efforts while simultaneously disrupting the educational process by marketing to teens.

Please understand that by joining this suit, the district is not investing taxpayer money in legal fees, as those will be covered by the firms representing the parties in the suit. However, it does symbolize our joint call for action to do right by our students, community and the nation’s future generations.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Pedisich
Superintendent of Schools

William F. Connors, Jr.
Board of Education President

Cheryl Pedisich, Superintendent of Schools
Jeffrey Carlson, Deputy Superintendent
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