

OCDSB Letter to parents

Dear parents,

Studies show that use of e-cigarettes and vapes continues to rise among teens, many of whom are attracted to the novelty, flavours, and perceived low-risk of vaping. Despite efforts to educate our students about the dangers of vaping and the prohibitions on their use on school premises, Principals are reporting that students continue to use vaping materials in schools. We are asking for your support through conversations with your child(ren) about the risks related to teen vaping and the rules that prohibit use of vapes anywhere on school premises, as well as on school buses, on field trips and/or during off-site school events.

Please know that the health and safety of our students is paramount at the OCDSB, and while we continue to work with students to educate them about vaping, we want to ensure that parents/guardians know that **smoking, vaping, the use of any e-cigarette (or type), along with the use of any tobacco product, is strictly prohibited on school property.** Policy P.033.SCO Smoking and Vaping on Board Premises has been updated to reflect the changes in the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017, and students found or reported vaping on school property will face disciplinary measures that may include suspension and/or reporting to Tobacco Bylaw Enforcement (which can result in a fine of \$305).

We want to ensure that this important message is clear and understood by your children. We appreciate every effort on your part to have these conversations with your child(ren). Please, also review the attached fact sheet from the Ottawa Health Department that provides updated and recent information regarding the concerns of vaping among students. Here are a few of the important facts:

- It is illegal to sell, buy, supply e-cigarettes or vaporizers under the age of 19.
- e-liquid contains nicotine even when it claims to be nicotine free.
- Nicotine can alter brain development and can affect memory and concentration.
- e-cigarette use has been shown to increase the risk of smoking cigarettes among youth and young adults.

Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact a member of your school's administrative team.