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Dr. Carlton Wilson
Superintendent

Tony Young
Assistant Superintendent

September 7, 2018

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We, the Pickens County School District, need your help. Our school system has experienced an increased use of "Vaping" since the start of school. The use of e-cigarettes (or Vape) is a violation of our student code of conduct. Providing a fellow student with a vape device or its contents may be a criminal act. Five students have needed medical attention after vaping, with two being transported to a nearby hospital.

Vape devices come in different styles and may look like common items such as an ink pen, a computer flash drive, or a computer mouse. They are battery-operated devices with a cartridge that holds a liquid solution. When a person puffs, the e-cigarette vaporizes the liquid and the user inhales the vapor. Students are not just using nicotine or non-nicotine flavored solutions; they are adding THC oil. Vaping marijuana (THC oil) can be more dangerous than smoking the drug. This is because people often vape a higher concentration of THC which, in turn, intensifies the high and can increase the "likelihood of addiction and adverse medical consequences," according to Dr. Nora D. Volkow.

Beyond marijuana, the rise in popularity of synthetic drugs and vaping among youth add up to a perfect storm. According to a report by CNN, "Water-soluble synthetics are easily converted into liquid concentrate that can go into the device cartridges and be vaped just like nicotine and other legal substances. It makes it nearly impossible to tell what is inside someone's vape. It could be nicotine, marijuana concentrate, or fruit-flavored nicotine-free 'e-liquid,' popular among kids. Or worst of all, it could be a deadly concoction of chemicals, known as synthetic drugs." The vaping students can't be sure they're actually inhaling what they think they are. They may be inhaling meth, kratom, LSD, or other illegal chemicals.

The Office of the Sheriff, the District Attorney, and our school district will be hosting several meetings on Monday, September 24th. Presentations will be held for our students at Pickens High School and Pickens Junior High School at student assemblies, and a meeting for parents will be held that evening. This informational parent meeting will be part of the Chat with the Superintendent which will be held at Pickens High School at 6:00 p.m.

Sincerely,

Dr. Carlton Wilson, Superintendent



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