

Media Release

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NEWS RELEASE — FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, October 12, 2020

Lexington District One takes a stand against vaping epidemic

LEXINGTON, S.C. — Lexington County School District One joined the legal fight to stop JUUL Labs, the largest manufacturer, distributor and seller of electronic cigarettes, from targeting our youth in what the district believes is a vaping epidemic.

Over the last two years, the district worked with the Lexington One Community Coalition, the Courage Center, LRADAC, law enforcement, South Carolina MADD and others to present information about the dangers of vaping in public events.

In February of 2020, the Board of Trustees passed a resolution opposing the use and sale of electronic nicotine delivery systems.

This summer, the board authorized legal counsel to join dozens of other school districts across the country in litigation against JUUL Labs, Inc.

Legal counsel then filed suit on October 2, 2020, against JUUL in the federal court in California, where a class action against JUUL on behalf of dozens of school districts across the country is pending. No taxpayers' funds will be used as part of this litigation.

Lexington District One has seen a dramatic increase in the use of electronic nicotine delivery systems by children and teens.

Federal data shows that e-cigarette use among middle and high school students more than doubled from 2017 to 2019. More than five million youths reportedly used e-cigarettes and vaping products in 2019.

(MORE)

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's state data shows that 21.6% of South Carolina high school youth currently use tobacco products. The most used product among all students is electronic smoking devices and flavored products.

Just this past year, the surge in e-cigarette use by youth nationwide increased from 11.7% to 20.8%, an alarming 78% increase.

The 2019 South Carolina Youth Tobacco Survey revealed that 39.5% of high schoolers in South Carolina had used an e-cigarette, and 22% reported using e-cigarettes in the past 30 days.

High schoolers reported using JUUL more than any other e-cigarette.

All these numbers are self-reported, and many public health officials believe they probably under-report the actual prevalence of youth e-cigarette use.

Lexington District One's discipline and suspensions related to incidents of e-cigarette use in district schools have increased at alarming rates. For example, the number of discipline referrals due to vaping increased from 147 in the 2017–2018 school year to 358 in 2018–2019.

This rise requires staff to spend increased time addressing discipline problems related to student e-cigarette use. School administrators and teachers must address these issues during school hours, which interferes with the delivery of instruction and minimizes teaching time.

Lexington District One administrators and board felt it necessary to join this effort as the district continues to address this health risk to our students and work to end the vaping epidemic.

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