

Dear CJMS, SMS and BHS Families,

Like districts across the nation, Bozeman schools are seeing a significant increase in incidents involving student vaping or use of e-cigarettes, specifically in grades 6-12. The 2017 [MT Youth Risk Behavior Survey](#) data showed that 43% of BHS students have tried vaping at least one time.

Health Risks Related To Vaping

The United States Food & Drug Administration now categorizes teen vaping as an [epidemic among US high schoolers](#). The [Surgeon General](#) reports that nicotine is addictive and can harm brain development, which continues until about age 25. Common additives used in electronic cigarettes include nicotine, flavorings and caffeine. In high doses, these substances may have negative effects on adolescent brain development. Recently, students are also using these devices to vape marijuana. In addition to being illegal, cannabis vaping can have significant, dangerous health consequences. According to the BHS School Resource Officers, vaping nicotine can increase a student's heartbeat to 160-200 beats per minute, high use is triggering dormant mental health issues, and chronic use leads to health issues. ([CDC Quick Facts on the Risks of E-cigarettes for Kids, Teens, and Young Adults](#); [E-cigarettes don't need nicotine to be toxic.](#))

Signs Your Student Is Vaping

- **Odor** (not always present): The liquids that are vaporized come in many different flavors and might even smell fruity.
- **Pens** Devices may look like pens or markers. Look for buttons, lights or parts that pull apart.
- **Vape devices** Devices may look like a flashdrive. The devices are very small and can easily be hidden on a person in seams, sleeves, or waistbands of sweatshirts, jackets, pants, or shoes; or blend in with normal backpack items.

School Response to Vaping

Given the uncertainty of what substances are contained in these odorless electronic smoking devices and the documented prevalence of using electronic smoking devices to vape dangerous concentrations of marijuana and other illicit substances, ***students who are discovered in possession of or using an electronic smoking device in the school building and/or on school grounds will be immediately referred to administration or other designated school official in accordance with Policy #3310 and 3310P2 (middle school) and 3310P3 (high school). Students will also be referred to a School Resource Officer in accordance with Policy #3310. Due to our concerns about vaping devices possibly containing chemicals other than nicotine, a referral to the school nurse or a healthcare professional may also occur.*** We encourage you to review Policy [#3310](#), which is available on the District's website and student handbooks.

How To Talk With Your Kids About Vaping

Students have been educated in school on the dangers of vaping and related consequences. We are asking that you help us by having a conversation with your child(ren) regarding this epidemic, and also that you help us remind your student *that possession and/or the use of e-cigarettes and/or vaping devices are prohibited on school property, and is subject to disciplinary action.* Our goal is to attack this issue from all angles and prevent 'vaping' and e-cigarette use in our schools. In working together with you, we believe we will have a better chance at achieving this. ([Talk with Your Teen About E-cigarettes: A Tip Sheet for Parents](#) from the Surgeon General)