

THE SENECA VALLEY SCHOOL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE EXPANSION OF ELECTRONIC CIGARETTE REGULATIONS FOR THE HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE OF THE SENECA VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT STUDENTS AND COMMUNITY

WHEREAS, Electronic cigarettes, or e-cigarettes, including “vapes”, hookah pens, or JUULs, are battery-powered devices that heat liquid to produce an aerosol that is inhaled;

WHEREAS, on December 18, 2018, U.S. Surgeon General issued an advisory entitled “[Advisory on E-cigarette Use Among Youth](#),” declaring that e-cigarette use is an epidemic among our nation’s young people and stressing the importance of protecting children from a lifetime of nicotine addiction and associated health risks by immediately addressing the epidemic of youth e-cigarette use;

WHEREAS, the 2016 U.S. Surgeon General’s report entitled, “[E-Cigarette Use Among Youth and Young Adults](#),” written in conjunction with the United States Department of Health and Human Services (“DHHS”) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, found that e-cigarette use poses a significant – and avoidable – health risk to young people;

WHEREAS, e-cigarettes entered the U.S. marketplace around 2007, and since 2014, they have been the most commonly used tobacco product among U.S. youth. E-cigarette use among U.S. middle and high school students increased 900% during 2011-2015, before declining for the first time during 2015-2017. However, current e-cigarette use increased 78% among high school students from 11.7% in 2017 to 20.8% in 2018. In 2018, more than 3.6 million U.S. youth, including 1 in 5 high school students and 1 in 20 middle school students, used e-cigarettes;

WHEREAS, most e-cigarettes contain nicotine – the addictive drug in regular cigarettes, cigars, and other tobacco products. Nicotine exposure during adolescence can harm the developing brain – which continues to develop until about age 25. The effects include addiction, priming for use of other addictive substances, reduced impulse control, deficits in attention and cognition, and mood disorders. Using nicotine in adolescence can also increase risk for future addiction to other drugs;

WHEREAS, in addition to nicotine, the aerosol that users inhale and exhale from e-cigarettes can potentially expose both themselves and bystanders to other harmful substances, including heavy metals, volatile organic compounds, and ultrafine particles that can be inhaled deeply into the lungs;

WHEREAS, like exposure to secondhand smoke, exposure to these aerosols from e-cigarette use has been associated with increased risk of developing pulmonary diseases, such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (“[COPD](#)”) or emphysema later in life and an increased risk of [asthma](#) exacerbations in children;

WHEREAS, no e-cigarette has been found to be safe and effective to help people quit smoking. To the contrary, a [2018 National Academy of Medicine](#) report found that there was moderate

evidence that e-cigarette use increases the frequency and amount of cigarette smoking in the future;

WHEREAS, many e-cigarettes also come in kid-friendly flavors. In addition to making e-cigarettes more appealing to young people, some of the chemicals used to make certain flavors may also have health risks;

WHEREAS, e-cigarettes can also be used to deliver other drugs, including marijuana. In 2016, one-third of U.S. middle and high school students who ever used e-cigarettes had used marijuana in e-cigarettes;

WHEREAS, e-cigarettes are a rapidly changing product class, and are known by many different names, including “e-cigs,” “ehookahs,” “mods,” and “vape pens.” Recently, a new type of e-cigarette has become increasingly popular among our nation’s youth due to its minimal exhaled aerosol, reduced odor, and small size, making it easy to conceal. Many of these new e-cigarettes look like a USB flash drive, among other shapes. One of the most commonly sold USB flash drive shaped e-cigarettes is JUUL, which experienced a 600% surge in sales during 2016-2017, giving it the greatest market share of any e-cigarette in the U.S. by the end of 2017. Other companies are now also starting to sell e-cigarettes that look like USB flash drives;

WHEREAS, all JUUL e-cigarettes have a high level of nicotine. A typical JUUL cartridge, or “pod,” contains about as much nicotine as a pack of 20 regular cigarettes. However, despite these risks, approximately two-thirds of JUUL users aged 15-24 do not know that JUUL always contains nicotine;

WHEREAS, approximately 70% of Seneca Valley School District seniors are 18 years of age or older and can legally purchase e-cigarettes in Pennsylvania;

WHEREAS, e-cigarettes can, in some instances, be purchased online by children under the age of 18 from sellers that do not implement heightened age-verification restrictions;

WHEREAS, the Food and Drug Administration (“FDA”), an agency of the DHHS, is authorized to regulate e-cigarettes;

WHEREAS, FDA regulation of e-cigarettes can be complemented with state and local regulation, such as comprehensive smokefree laws at the state and local levels, pricing and taxation strategies, raising the minimum age of sales to minors to 21, and high-impact counter-marketing campaigns;

WHEREAS, the Surgeon General has concluded mass media counter-marketing campaigns, comprehensive community programs, comprehensive statewide tobacco control programs, and school-based programs have shown effectiveness and can produce at least short-term effects and reduce the prevalence of tobacco use among school-aged youth;

WHEREAS, the Seneca Valley School District Board of Directors has enacted Policy 222 (“Tobacco Use”) that prohibits use and possession of e-cigarettes by students at any time in a school building and on any property, buses, vans and vehicles that are owned, leased or

controlled by the school district or at school sponsored activities that are held off school property.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Seneca Valley School Board of Directors that:

1. The Board of Directors supports the expansion of legislation, regulations and/or other national, state and local measures concerning e-cigarettes: to address the manufacturing of and ingredients in e-cigarettes; to prohibit the advertising, marketing and sale of e-cigarettes to youth; to encourage mass media counter-marketing campaigns, comprehensive community programs and comprehensive statewide tobacco control programs designed to eliminate the use of tobacco among youth; to raising the minimum age of sales to minors to 21; and to prohibit the use of e-cigarettes in public places and on school property;
2. The Board of Directors urges the Pennsylvania Secretary of Education and/or the Pennsylvania Secretary of Health to research and establish a multi-year annual fund in the amount of \$1,000,000 to assist public schools in the Commonwealth in creating or obtaining curriculum materials and/or securing other legitimate teaching resources to support anti-smoking education;
3. The Board of Directors shall continue to educate youth, parents, District faculty and staff, and local officials on the various shapes and types of e-cigarettes and the dangers of e-cigarettes and other tobacco products;
4. The Board of Directors shall continue to develop, implement, and enforce tobacco-free school policies and prevention programs that are free from tobacco industry influence, and that address all types of tobacco products, including e-cigarettes.

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED, that this resolution be spread upon the official minutes of the Seneca Valley School Board of Directors for March 11, 2019 and that a copy be presented to Dr. Tracy Vitale for distribution to staff members of the Seneca Valley School District, other members of the Seneca Valley School District community and local, state and federal governmental representatives.

James Nickel, President
Seneca Valley School Board of Directors

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