EMANUEL COUNTY SCHOOLS
COMMUNITY • PRIDE • INNOVATION

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February 12, 2025

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I want to take a moment to share important information about electronic cigarettes (vaping) and their potential health risks. Like many schools across the country, Emanuel County Schools has seen an increase in students using e-cigarettes and vaping devices. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), nearly 1 in 4 middle and high school students use vaping products. These devices often contain nicotine, flavorings, and caffeine, which can negatively impact brain development in adolescents. Some e-cigarettes can also be used to deliver marijuana and other very harmful substances.

To address concerns about the growing opioid crisis and prevent overdose-related deaths in schools, **Wesley's Law** went into effect in the state of Georgia on **July 1, 2024**. This law allows schools to have **naloxone**, a medication that can temporarily reverse opioid overdoses. As required by law, Emanuel County Schools maintains a supply of this life-saving medication on each of our campuses.

Currently, it is **illegal for anyone under 21 to use or possess tobacco products, including e-cigarettes**. Students are **not allowed** to use or carry these products at school, during school events, or on school transportation. If a student is found in possession of any tobacco or vaping product, parents/guardians will be contacted, and the student will face disciplinary consequences. If THC, synthetic THC, or other illegal substances are involved, the discipline will be a classified as a drug offense and appropriate discipline actions will apply.

What Parents Should Watch For:

Vaping devices are designed to be discreet, making them easy to hide. Here are some warning signs that your child may be using e-cigarettes:

- **Unusual smells** – Unlike traditional cigarettes, vapes often smell like fruit, candy, or mint, which may be mistaken for perfume or air fresheners.
- **Pen-like devices** – Some vaping devices look like pens, USB drives, or other everyday items. Look for unusual gadgets with buttons, lights, or parts that pull apart.
- **Dry mouth, dry skin, or frequent nosebleeds** – These can be side effects of vaping.
- **Possession of unfamiliar electronic devices or cartridges** – Many vaping products require charging and may have small pods or liquid containers.

Our goal is to work together—home and school—to keep our students safe and informed. We encourage you to talk with your child about the risks of vaping. Thank you for your support. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact a school counselor or administrator.

Sincerely,
Denise B. Warnock, Ed.D.
Superintendent