Dangers of Synthetic Drugs

To: Parents and Guardians of Students in the Jefferson Elementary School District

From: David S. Viss, Superintendent

Subject: Dangers of Synthetic Drugs

The purpose of this memorandum is to inform and to remind parents and legal guardians of all students in the Jefferson Elementary School District of the dangers of the illicit use and abuse of synthetic drugs.

The illicit use and abuse of synthetic drugs represent an emerging and ongoing public health threat in California. The fentanyl crisis specifically has impacted communities across the state, leading to a sharp increase in fentanyl poisonings and deaths in recent years.

This notice aims to address the crisis with a preventative approach, ensuring students and families are educated on the deadly consequences of recreational drug use.

A synthetic drug is a drug with properties and effects similar to a known hallucinogen or narcotic but having a slightly altered chemical structure, especially such a drug created to evade existing restrictions against illegal substances.

Synthetic drugs include but are not limited to synthetic cannabinoids ("synthetic marijuana," "spice," "K2"), methamphetamines, bath salts, and fentanyl.

The California Department of Public Health ("CDPH") has expounded on the extreme danger of drugs laced with fentanyl. Illicit fentanyl can be added to other drugs to make them cheaper, more powerful, and more addictive. Illicit fentanyl has been found in many drugs, including heroin, methamphetamine, counterfeit pills, and cocaine. Fentanyl mixed with any drug increases the likelihood of a fatal overdose. Furthermore, it is nearly impossible to tell if drugs have been laced with fentanyl without additional testing because fentanyl cannot be seen, smelled, or tasted when used as a lacing agent.

There is a high risk that social media platforms are being used as a way to market and sell synthetic drugs, including fentanyl.

Additional information regarding fentanyl from the CDPH's Substance and Addiction Prevention Branch can be found here: https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CCDPHP/sapb/Pages/Fentanyl.aspx?gclid=CjwKCAjwlJimBhAsEiwA1hrp5qv344HMapv0xRus9jfqlLGf6Byb4dMmm_Kr_t0S4GCQ8bzXm6IBxBoClxkQAvD_BwE&utm_campaign=dc_ope__mc_en&utm_content=na&utm_medium=paidsearch&utm_source=dc_gs&utm_erm=na_na.

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NOTE: This information must also be posted on the District's website, as well as the website of each individual school that maintains a website.