LVJUSD Board of Education Adopts Resolution for Healthy Students and Community

February 26, 2019 - Livermore, CA - On Tuesday, February 19, 2019, the Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District (LVJUSD) School Board unanimously passed Resolution 033-18/19 Student Health Initiative: In Support of Tobacco-free and Vaping-free Schools and Communities. During the regularly scheduled meeting, the Board of Trustees heard from students, staff, and community members speaking out about the surge of vaping devices and flavors flooding the community. In response to the evidence presented, acknowledging its responsibility to the physical and social emotional health of students and the Livermore community, the Board took a united stance against the proliferation of tobacco and vaping products.

The widespread sale and consumption of electronic nicotine devices, such as e-cigarettes, has been steadily rising as devices become more discreet and as the variety of flavors continues to grow. The marketing of these devices and flavors – which include cotton candy, gummy bear, and chocolate chip cookie – has been inordinately targeted toward youth, and vaping among teenagers in middle and high school has been spreading rapidly as a result.

Granada High School peer health educators – students representing the Alameda County Tobacco Use and Prevention Education (TUPE) program – presented the facts of vaping to the Board from the perspective of well-informed, savvy students who have seen the use and effect of vaping firsthand. These students, and members of the community who commented after the presentation, urged the Board to adopt the Resolution as a step toward their goal of adding Livermore to the list of California cities and counties that have banned flavored vape products in local retail stores.

The presentation by the students gave various examples of how vaping devices and flavors are easily obtainable, how the use of devices is concealed from adults, and how their availability and popularity are circulated through social media and embedded in teenage culture. “It’s worse than we want to think,” said the presenters. “People are attracted to these devices because they’re new. They aren’t associating vaping with the health consequences that smoking has been associated with.”

Because of the relative novelty of vaping devices and flavors, the perception that inhaling nicotine vapor is not as dangerous as smoking cigarettes persists – but ingesting nicotine, particularly at an early age, undoubtedly influences adolescent brain development and makes it more likely that youth will become addicted. These devices and the marketing attached to them take advantage of the youth culture already in place, with young people essentially advertising the product themselves. The devices are designed to look like everyday objects – flash
drives, phone chargers, jewelry, clothing, water bottles – and teenagers often share with peers online the newest way to vape, doing so even in the classroom or restrooms at school.

The ease by which young and vulnerable people can be exposed to and acquire vaping products led those in the community to organize support to address the problem. The Board heard from Livermore parent groups and representatives of tobacco control groups looking to curb the normalization of vaping for the good of the community – an action that requires a coordinated community effort to address. The LVJUSD Board of Trustees each voiced their support for the Resolution and especially commended the TUPE students, recognizing those from Granada as well as those from middle schools such as Joe Michell K-8 and East Avenue.

Board President Craig Bueno read the Resolution in its entirety, which reinforced the District’s commitment to health education and its partnership with public agencies, acknowledged the harmful effects of nicotine to the brain and body, and committed to ensuring the health of LVJUSD students and the Livermore community by supporting legislative efforts to combat vaping.

Read Resolution 033-18/19 on the LVJUSD Electronic Board website.

Photos courtesy of LVJUSD

Photo 1: Middle and high school TUPE members
Photo 2: Granada High TUPE presentation to LVJUSD Board of Education
Photo 3: TUPE presenter shakes hands with Board Clerk Chuck Rogge after presentation

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**ABOUT LIVERMORE VALLEY JOINT UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**
LVJUSD is an award-winning district that serves more than 13,900 students in transitional kindergarten through 12th grade at nine elementary campuses, two K-8 schools, three middle schools, two comprehensive high schools, and two alternative schools. The LVJUSD features International Baccalaureate Programmes and a STEM pathway, TK-12. The mission of the Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District is to ensure each student will graduate with the skills needed to contribute and thrive in a changing world. For more information about the Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District, please visit [www.livermoreschools.org](http://www.livermoreschools.org)

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