



STATE OF ALABAMA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Eric G. Mackey, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Education

September 16, 2025

MEMORANDUM

TO: City and County Superintendents of Education

FROM: Eric G. Mackey *EGM*
State Superintendent of Education

RE: Vape Awareness, Education, and Prevention

This year, the Alabama Legislature passed Act 2025-403 ("the Act"), codified at Ala. Code § 28-11-17.2 (1975), which required the Alabama State Board of Education (SBOE) to adopt a model policy for the establishment of a vaping awareness, education, and prevention program. As authorized, on August 14, 2025, the SBOE adopted and approved a model policy and model complaint form (attached) through a resolution. The purpose of the policy is to prohibit the possession and use of prohibited tobacco, tobacco products, electronic nicotine delivery systems, e-liquids, and alternative nicotine products in public K-12 schools. In accordance with the Act, on or before November 1, 2025, each local board of education shall adopt a policy that, at a minimum, contains the criteria established in the model policy adopted by the SBOE.

The model policy adopted by the SBOE establishes a comprehensive framework prohibiting the use of tobacco and alternative nicotine products on school grounds. It also includes *graduated consequences* for student violations, provides a standardized complaint form, and details procedures for conducting investigations, issuing responses upon confirmation of the possession of prohibited products, and promoting awareness of the policy. The graduated consequences are designed to escalate progressively, based on the nature and frequency of violations. The model complaint form may be used to report violations; however, local boards of education may adopt their own. Additionally, anonymous complaints cannot serve as the sole basis for disciplinary action.

Furthermore, in accordance with the Act, the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) has developed a vape awareness, education, and prevention class based on curriculum established by the Drug Education Council (attached). The content of the class was approved by the SBOE and is being made available to each local board of education through its local superintendent. Additionally, completion of this class is intended to be included as a graduated consequence for students who violate the policy.

If you have any questions concerning completion of the ALSDE model complaint form, please contact Ms. Tina Hammonds, ALSDE Director of Government Relations, at tina.hammonds@alsde.edu.

EGM:TH:RE

Attachments

cc: Mr. J. Jason Swann
Mrs. Angela Martin

FY25-1019

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RESOLUTION REGARDING THE VAPE AWARENESS, EDUCATION, AND PREVENTION PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the Alabama Legislature passed into law Act 2025-403, which requires the establishment of a vape awareness, education, and prevention program to prohibit the possession and use of prohibited tobacco, tobacco products, electronic nicotine delivery systems, e-liquids, and alternative nicotine products by students in public K-12 schools; and

WHEREAS, said Act requires the Alabama State Board of Education to adopt a Model Policy as part of the establishment of the awareness, education, and prevention program; and

WHEREAS, said Act also requires that, on or before November 1, 2025, each local board of education is to adopt a policy that, at a minimum, contains the criteria established in the Model Policy adopted by the Alabama State Board of Education; and

WHEREAS, the Alabama State Department of Education has coordinated with the Drug Education Council to develop a vaping awareness, education, and prevention class based on curriculum established by the Drug Education Council:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education does hereby adopt and approve a Model Policy and the content of a class as referenced herein to accompany the establishment of a vape awareness, education, and prevention program in Alabama's K-12 public schools.

Done this 14th day of August 2025

ALABAMA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION VAPE AWARENESS, EDUCATION, AND PREVENTION MODEL POLICY

Alabama Act 2025-403 requires the Alabama State Department of Education to adopt a model policy relating to vaping, tobacco products, and alternative nicotine products. The purpose of this policy is to establish a vape awareness, education, and prevention program to prohibit the possession and use of prohibited tobacco, tobacco products, electronic nicotine delivery systems, e-liquids, and alternative nicotine products by students in public K-12 schools.

- A. **Prohibition:** The possession or use of tobacco, tobacco products, electronic nicotine delivery systems, e-liquids, and alternative nicotine products is prohibited by any student at a public K-12 school, on a school bus, or at any school sponsored function.
- B. **Violation:** Any student who violates the prohibition contained within this policy shall be subject to graduated consequences which may include:
 - a. Notification of the student's parent or legal guardian shall be made regarding the violation.
 - b. Required participation in the Alabama State Board of Education approved vaping awareness, education, and prevention class.
 - c. In-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or placement in an alternative school.
 - d. Referral of the matter to the juvenile court for disposition.
 - e. Or, any combination of the foregoing.
- C. **Complaint procedure:** When a complaint is lodged against a student for violating the prohibition, the complaint must be memorialized using the model complaint form (attached). An anonymous report may not be used as the sole basis for imposition of formal disciplinary action. Once a complaint is made against a student for a violation, the complaint form is then to be forwarded to the principal, assistant principal, or school resource officer for investigation. The complaint form must include all of the following information:
 - a. Name of student who has violated the policy.
 - b. Date, time, and location of violation.
 - c. Description of conduct that violates the policy.
 - d. Name(s) of witness(es) to violation of the policy.
 - e. Any other pertinent information.

- D. Investigation Procedure:** Once a principal, assistant principal, or school resource officer receives a complaint of a serious violation, they must then promptly investigate the violation. The principal, assistant principal, or school resource officer must be the individual responsible for the investigation.
- E. Response Procedure:** If the student has violated the prohibition, the student shall immediately, and without delay, be subject to the graduated consequences. Any and all consequences shall conform with applicable disability, antidiscrimination, education laws, and school discipline policies. Additionally, a copy of the complaint form and the disposition shall be placed in the student's permanent record.
- F. Notice Requirement:** The policy adopted by a local school board shall be included in the code of conduct policy of the local board of education and included in the student handbook so as to give adequate notice to students and parents of prohibited behaviors occurring on school property, school buses, and at school sponsored events and the punishments attached thereto.
- G. Applicability to Employees:** The use of tobacco, tobacco products, electronic nicotine delivery systems, e-liquids, and alternative nicotine products by any teacher, administrator, or other school employee on the campus of any public K-12 school is prohibited.

Nothing in this policy shall be construed to infringe on any right provided to a student pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, provided that student information related to this policy shall be included as necessary into any and all Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), behavioral intervention plans, and other similar documents.

Generated pursuant to Act 2025-403.

The Dangers of Vaping: An Educational Guide for Alabama Students

*Understanding Vaping
Risks*



HB8 - Vaping Bill

The State Department of Education shall coordinate with the Drug Education council to develop vaping resources based on curriculum established by the Drug Education council.

The department shall make the curriculum available to each local board of education through the local superintendent of education.

Vaping Curriculum

Provided by the Alabama Drug Education Council

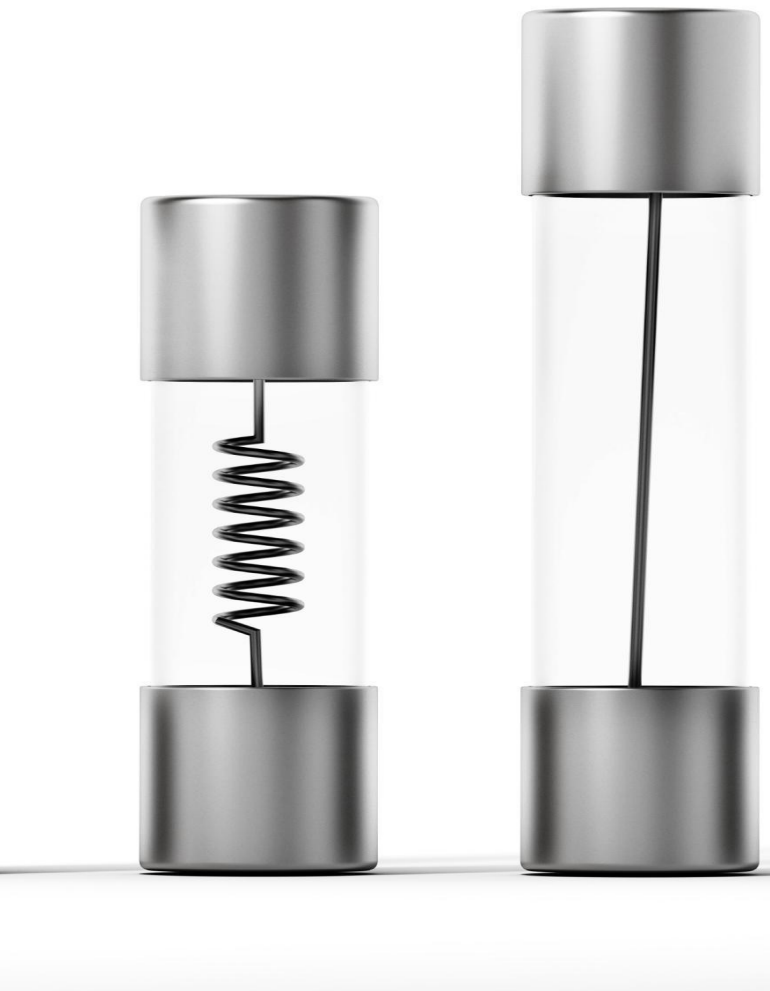
- **Understanding Vaping:** Provide an age-appropriate explanation of what vaping entails, including the history and evolution of vaping devices and how they differ from traditional cigarettes.
- **Health Consequences:** Discuss both short-term and long-term health consequences of vaping, such as potential impacts on brain development, respiratory health concerns, and the broader implications for overall well-being.
- **Nicotine and Addiction:** Explore how nicotine works in the brain and body, the nature of addiction, and the physiological and psychological challenges that come with quitting.
- **Misconceptions:** Address and analyze common misconceptions about vaping, specifically the beliefs that it is a harmless activity or a relatively safe alternative to smoking traditional tobacco products.
- **Influences on Youth:** Discuss how peer pressure, social media, and targeted marketing tactics contribute to the normalization and promotion of vaping among teens.
- **Legal Aspects:** Provide an overview of the laws and regulations that govern vaping products, including age restrictions, the responsibilities of vendors, and the implications for schools concerning student health and safety.
- **Resisting Peer Pressure:** Equip students with practical skills to resist peer pressure and make informed choices regarding vaping and substance use.
- **Cessation Resources:** Inform students about available cessation programs, counseling services, and community support options for those who wish to quit vaping, empowering them to take positive steps towards a healthier lifestyle.
- **Support Networks:** Explain the supportive roles that parents, teachers, and other adults play in educating students about the dangers of vaping and providing them with access to reliable resources and guidance.



Curriculum Topics

- Understanding Vaping
- Health Consequences
- Nicotine and Addiction
- Common Misconceptions
- Influences on Youth
- Legal Aspects
- Resisting Peer Pressure
- Resources to Quit
- Support Networks

Understanding Vaping



History and Evolution of Vaping

Introduction of E-Cigarettes

E-cigarettes were introduced in the early 2000s as an alternative to traditional smoking, aimed at reducing tobacco use.

Rising Popularity

Vaping gained significant popularity, particularly among youth, leading to a rapid increase in various vaping products.

Health Concerns and Regulation

The rise of vaping has prompted health concerns and regulatory responses from governments to address its impact on public health.



Explanation of Vaping and Vaping Devices

What is Vaping?

Vaping is the act of inhaling vapor produced by heating a liquid that typically contains nicotine and flavorings.

Types of Vaping Devices

Vaping devices include a variety of forms, such as reusable and disposable e-cigarettes, each differing in design and functionality.

Ingredients in Vape Liquids

Vape liquids often contain nicotine, flavorings, and other chemicals, which contribute to the overall vaping experience.



Differences Between Vaping and Traditional Cigarettes

Chemical Composition

Vaping lacks tar and many harmful chemicals found in traditional cigarette smoke, making it a less harmful alternative.

Health Risks

Both vaping and smoking pose significant health risks, particularly for young users who may be more vulnerable.

Target Audience

Vaping is often marketed to younger audiences, which raises concerns about increased usage among adolescents.

Nicotine and Addiction

How Nicotine Affects the Brain and Body

Activation of Reward System

Nicotine stimulates the brain's reward pathways, creating pleasurable sensations and reinforcing addictive behaviors.

Cycle of Addiction

The pleasurable effects of nicotine can lead to a cycle of addiction, making cessation difficult for users.





The Nature of Addiction

Rapid Development of Addiction

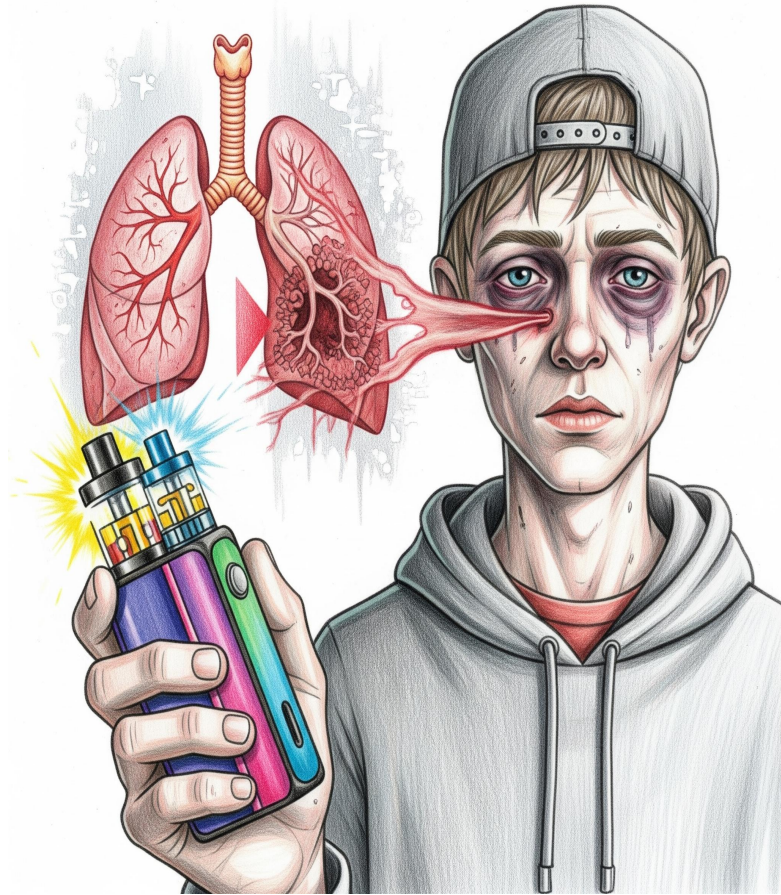
Nicotine addiction can develop rapidly, often within just a few uses, making it particularly challenging to overcome.

Struggles of Quitting

Understanding addiction is vital to addressing the struggles individuals face when trying to quit vaping.

Nature of Addiction

Addiction is complex, involving physical and psychological aspects that contribute to its persistence and difficulty in quitting.



Challenges of Quitting Vaping

Withdrawal Symptoms

Individuals often experience withdrawal symptoms such as anxiety, irritability, and cravings, making quitting difficult.

Triggers Associated with Vaping

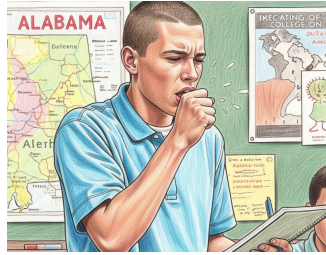
Triggers related to daily habits can reinforce the urge to vape, complicating the quitting process.

Need for Support

Many individuals find it hard to quit vaping without a robust support system in place, such as friends or counseling.

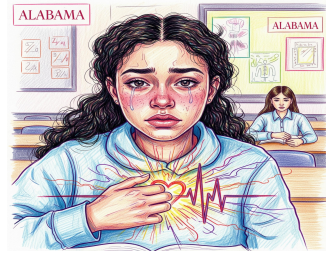
*Health
Consequences*

Short-Term Health Effects



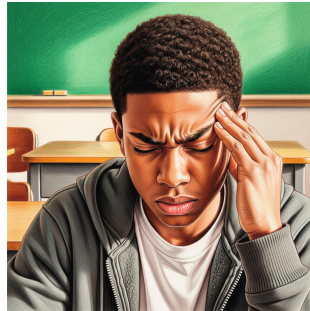
Coughing and Throat Irritation

Vaping can lead to coughing and throat irritation, indicating irritation to the respiratory system.



Increased Heart Rate

Users may experience an increased heart rate shortly after vaping, which can be a sign of cardiovascular stress.



Dizziness and Headaches

Young individuals might experience dizziness and headaches, highlighting potential neurological impacts from vaping.

Impact on Brain Development and Respiratory Health

Hindered Brain Development

Vaping can significantly hinder brain development in adolescents, impacting memory and cognitive functions essential for learning.

Memory and Learning Effects

Adolescents who vape may experience difficulties with memory retention and learning abilities due to their compromised brain health.

Respiratory Health Risks

Inhaling vapors can compromise respiratory health, leading to chronic issues and long-term consequences for users.



Common Misconceptions

Vaping as a 'Harmless' Activity

Misconception of Harmlessness

Many people mistakenly believe that vaping is a harmless alternative to smoking, which is not supported by research.

Health Risks of Vaping

Research indicates that vaping carries significant health risks, including respiratory issues and potential addiction.

Impact on Young Users

Young users are particularly vulnerable to the dangers of vaping, making awareness and education essential.



Vaping as a Safer Alternative to Smoking

Marketing of Vaping

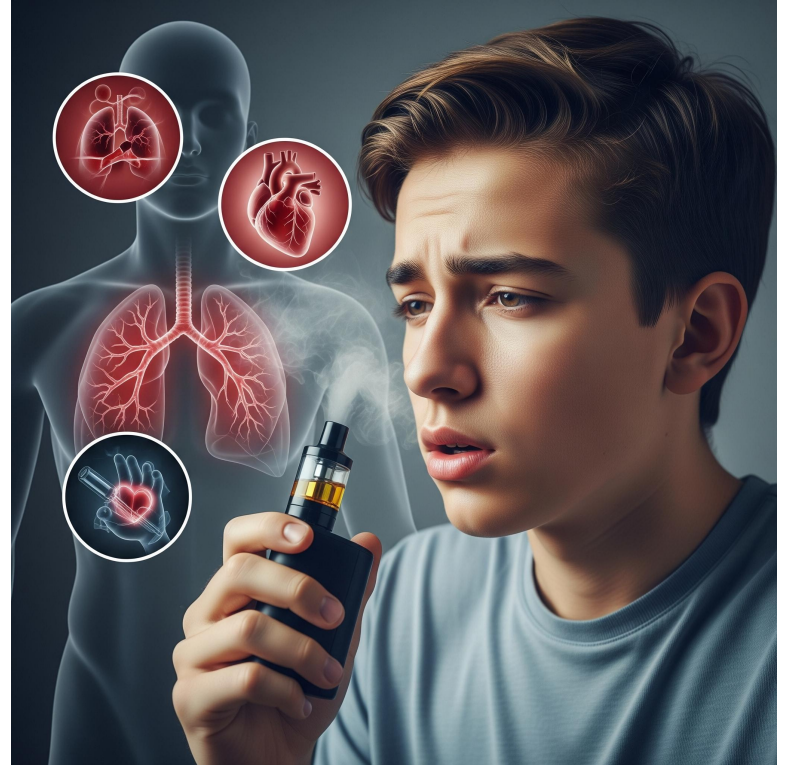
Vaping is marketed as a safer alternative, but this can mislead consumers about the potential health risks involved.

Youth Usage Concerns

Misleading claims about vaping can lead to increased usage among youth, raising health concerns for this vulnerable population.

Health Risks of Vaping

Despite being seen as safer, vaping poses its own health risks, and users should be aware of these dangers.



Analyzing and Debunking Myths

Understanding Vaping Myths

It is crucial to understand the myths surrounding vaping to make informed decisions and encourage critical thinking among students.

Fact vs Fiction

Distinguishing fact from fiction helps clarify misconceptions about vaping and promotes a healthier perspective.

Reducing Vaping Allure

Debunking myths about vaping plays a vital role in reducing its appeal among students and promoting healthier choices.



Influences on Youth



Role of Peer Pressure

Impact of Peer Pressure

Peer pressure significantly influences youth behavior, including the decision to vape or avoid it. Awareness is key to healthier choices.

Resisting Peer Pressure

Learning strategies to resist peer pressure is crucial for students. This empowers them to make informed, healthier decisions.



Impact of Social Media

Shaping Perceptions

Social media significantly influences public perceptions of vaping, often glamorizing it among young audiences.

Influencer Impact

Influencers often promote vaping, making it seem trendy and socially acceptable, especially to younger users.

Youth Engagement

The portrayal of vaping on social media can lead to increased usage among youth, which raises concern.





Targeted Marketing Tactics

Appeal to Younger Audiences

Vaping companies strategically design their marketing to attract younger demographics through relatable messaging and visuals.

Social Media Utilization

Social media platforms are extensively used by vaping companies to reach younger audiences and create engaging content.

Attractive Packaging

Vaping products often feature colorful and trendy packaging to catch the eye of potential users and encourage purchases.

Legal Aspects

Laws and Regulations on Vaping

Youth Protection Regulations

Regulations focus on protecting youth from the potential dangers associated with vaping products and their misuse.

Responsible Marketing

Laws ensure that marketing practices for vaping products are responsible and do not target minors.

Product Safety Standards

Regulations are in place to ensure the safety and quality of vaping products available in the market.



Age Restrictions and Vendor Responsibilities

Age Restrictions Overview

Jurisdictions impose age restrictions to prevent the sale of vaping products to minors, promoting public health.

Vendor Responsibilities

Vendors must ensure they do not sell vaping products to minors, adhering to legal requirements.

Compliance Importance

Compliance with age restrictions is crucial for protecting youth from potential harms of vaping products.



Implications for School Environments

Vaping Challenges in Schools

Vaping among students poses significant challenges for school environments, affecting student health and school culture.

Policy Implications

Schools need to develop clear policies addressing vaping to create a safe and supportive learning environment.

Educational Programs

Implementing educational programs on vaping is crucial for raising awareness and promoting healthy choices among students.



*Resisting Peer
Pressure*



Practical Skills for Resisting Peer Pressure

Assertiveness Training

Students can learn to communicate their feelings and needs confidently, which helps them stand firm against peer pressure.

Decision-Making Skills

Developing decision-making skills enables students to evaluate options and make choices aligned with their values.

Understanding Personal Values

Knowing personal values empowers students to resist peer pressure by making choices that reflect what they truly believe in.

Making Informed Choices

Importance of Informed Choices

Making informed choices is essential for youth to ensure their well-being and health.

Understanding Vaping Risks

Awareness of the risks associated with vaping can empower students to opt for healthier alternatives.

Empowering Healthier Options

Empowering students to make healthier choices can lead to better lifestyle decisions in the long run.





Building Self-Confidence

Resisting Peer Pressure

Building self-confidence equips students to resist negative peer pressure and make positive choices.

Positive Reinforcement

Encouragement from peers, parents, and educators plays a crucial role in fostering a positive self-image.

Building a Positive Self-Image

A strong self-image is key to personal growth and confidence, enabling students to succeed in various aspects of life.

Cessation (Quitting) Resources

Available Cessation Programs



Tailored Programs for Youth

Cessation programs specifically designed for young people focus on their unique challenges and motivations to quit vaping.



Support and Community

These programs provide a supportive community that encourages young individuals to share experiences and stay motivated in their quitting journey.



Educational Resources

Educational materials and resources equip young people with the knowledge and strategies necessary to overcome vaping addiction.



Counseling Services

Support for Nicotine Addiction

Counseling services offer vital support for individuals facing challenges with nicotine addiction, fostering recovery and well-being.

Guidance from Professionals

Professional counselors provide guidance and strategies tailored to help individuals quit nicotine use effectively.



Community Support Options

Local Support Groups

Local support groups provide a space for individuals to share experiences and encourage each other on their journey to quit vaping.

Online Forums

Online forums allow individuals to connect with others from different locations, sharing tips and motivation in a virtual environment.

Sense of Camaraderie

Community support fosters a sense of camaraderie, helping individuals feel less isolated in their efforts to quit vaping.

*Support
Networks*

Role of Parents in Education and Support

Educating about Vaping

Parents should educate their children about the risks and dangers associated with vaping to promote healthier choices.

Open Communication

Establishing open communication between parents and children encourages discussions about health choices and personal experiences.

Supportive Environment

Creating a supportive environment allows children to feel comfortable discussing their health choices and seeking guidance.



Teachers' And Schools' Responsibilities

Education on Vaping Dangers

Teachers are responsible for educating students about the risks and health consequences associated with vaping.

Program Implementation

Schools can implement specific programs and policies aimed at raising awareness of vaping among students.

Student Engagement

Engaging students in discussions and activities can significantly enhance their understanding of the dangers of vaping.





Access to Reliable Resources and Guidance

Importance of Reliable Resources

Reliable resources are essential for students and parents to gain a clear understanding of vaping and its effects.

Trustworthy Information

Identifying trustworthy information helps prevent misinformation regarding vaping among students and parents.

Guidance for Students and Parents

Providing guidance enhances the capability of students and parents to make informed decisions about vaping.

Conclusion

Dangers of Vaping

Understanding the dangers of vaping is crucial for youth to make informed health decisions that impact their future.

Importance of Education

Education plays a key role in empowering youth to resist peer pressure and make informed choices regarding vaping.

Resisting Peer Pressure

With the right knowledge, students can confidently resist peer pressure and advocate for healthier choices among their peers.

Vape, Tobacco, and Alternative Nicotine Product Violation Complaint Form

Pursuant to Alabama Act 2025-403

Alleged Student Information

Full Name: _____
First Middle Last

Date of Birth: _____
MM/DD/YYYY

Grade Level: _____
i.e., sophomore, junior, senior

Violation Information

Date of Possible Violation: _____

Time: _____

Location: _____

Witness(es): _____

Description of Possible Violation:

Other Pertinent Information (If Applicable):

Procedure

After completing this complaint form, the signor must forward the form to the principal, assistant principal, or school resource officer for investigation pursuant to local procedure. Please take all necessary steps to ensure that this form is forwarded expeditiously and without delay.

Verification

I hereby affirm that my answers to the questions on this form, and any explanations and documents that I have provided, are true and accurate to the best of my ability. I understand that any intentional falsification or dishonesty in my answers may be grounds for administrative action as provided by law.

Printed Name of Affiant

Signature

Date