Jamaica Gateway to the Sciences A Legacy of Excellence, One Dream at a Time

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*Caren Birchwood-Taylor, Principal Satanya McLaughlin, Assistant Principal*

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Dear Parents:

I wanted to take a moment to address some concerns that have been developing among the staff, myself, and an increasing number of local and national education and health leaders concerning teenagers and vaping. Vaping is the act of inhaling a vapor produced by an electronic vaporizer or e-cigarette. The vaporized liquids come in many different flavors that often have no odor, or they might smell fruity, or be laced with high concentrations of nicotine or illegal drugs. An increasing number of students have been found in possession of and/or are using these products which are highly addictive.

Vaporizers/e-cigarettes come in all different shapes and sizes. Some common styles may look like a thick pen, or a stylus for an iPad, or flash drive, or a small flask with a round chimney coming off the topic. The devices are small and can easily be hidden on a person or blend in with a normal backpack item. Like cigarettes, stores cannot sell vaping items to people under the age of 18. However, students have reported that they purchase the devices online or buy them from older siblings or friends.

**According to information regarding Juuling and vaping by young people, there is a heightened risk of nicotine-dependence and other health concerns.** There has been much recent news regarding Juuling / vaping in both the local and national news so you may be somewhat familiar with this topic.

However, it is important for us to share this information with you as we have encountered a few occurrences at school. The health and well-being of all our students are of great importance to us. By sharing this information with you, it is hoped that you can have meaningful conversations with your child(ren) about the effects of Juuling / vaping. We also provided a detailed presentation on this topic, along with relevant literature and display of samples, at our last PTA meeting held on December 19th 2018.

As far as our response at school, it is important for you to know this type of behavior is not allowed at school nor at school- sponsored activities. If a student is in possession of or caught JUULING / VAPING either on campus or at a school activity, the NYCDOE student code of conduct will be enforced.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Respectfully,

Caren Birchwood-Taylor

