

LVISD School Health Advisory Committee Minutes for 3/31/22

Members Present: Suzy Lofton-Bullis, Regina Carmichael, Karie Rowland, Angela Smith, Anne Badger, Julie Wesselman, Katy Baugh, Cynthia Gumbert, Nicole Pabst, Melanie Alanis, Emily Strmiska, Kara Trissel

Guests: David Hilsenteger LVHS Assistant Principal & Kim Bentley LVMS Assistant Principal

Vaping: E-cigarette use is on the rise and students have returned to campus after many months being home unsupervised during Covid. Schools are concerned about students' health and safety for both those vaping as well as those exposed to it. Most students and some parents feel that vaping is a safer choice over regular cigarettes. Parents are not always surprised when their child has been found with vaping devices. Vape pen cartridges can contain a wide variety of substances including high levels of nicotine or even marijuana. The vapors do have some odor but are much milder and linger for less time and so are more difficult to be alerted to.

Mr Hilsenteger and Ms Bentley spoke about the prevalence on each campus with the high school being the highest concentration. Random offenders are more common at middle school while high school has more repeat behaviors. There was discussion about whether or not students are fully aware of the repercussions of being found vaping at school.

Interventions & Strategies:

- Restrooms offer the most challenging location to monitor and is the most common location. There are sensors in HS restrooms but they are not always as helpful to identify vaping students when there are multiple students in at a time.
- Staff members try to stay close to the restroom area during class change time to help discourage students
- Students are often reluctant to report other students but have the option to report anonymously using the Alert System. It has been in place a long time and may need to be reintroduced to students and reinforced. Non-vaping students would be better able to influence their school climate with its use.
- Teen Truth student-driven group at the high school meets to work out solutions
- Guest speakers for assemblies JC Pohl author on improving school culture arranged by HS Counselor Ms Clark
- Health class in 7th grade addresses vaping/tobacco
- Random drug testing program for students in UIL events does not currently test for nicotine but maybe could in the future

Discipline review:

- Students found with vaping pens are assigned to ISS for a limited time on the first offense and more days in subsequent offenses.
- Coach Garcia in the HS ISS/DAEP has them work through the Catch My Breath program while in ISS/DAEP to help educate and inspire students to not repeat. He uses Coaching to Change Lives in his approach.

Smoking cessation:

- Dr Lofton spoke about the possibility of our older students having true nicotine addictions and having barriers to cessation options like nicotine gum or patches while quitting. Policy limits students ability to carry medications and the potential for students possibly sharing with others poses potential problems to be looked at more closely.
- Gina Carmichael spoke about a phone app cessation aid called This is Quitting that we sent to all HS students via their ipads 3-4 years ago and maybe it is time to send it again.

Parent feedback:

- Parents felt that student-led efforts would have the greatest impact on their peers. A recent gathering for 8th grade girls sponsored by PALS' Katy Baugh and MS Counselor April Woodburn and supported by the LV Women's Club was recently a big success and plans to find a way to do something similar for the boys was discussed for the future.
- In the past, there had been good connections made with HS Pals going to elementary 4th and 5th graders to talk about tobacco and that it would be a good thing to reinstitute.
- Classes in 7th grade Health class are good but need reinforcement again in 8th grade before they move to the high school campus.
- Dr Lofton invited parents to email any other thoughts or ideas to be added to the discussion

Recommendations:

- Add anti-vaping classes at 8th grade mixed in with science class
- Consider sending out Cessation Aid app to HS students
- Review policy on cessation aiding medications on campus
- Consider adding nicotine to random drug testing program
- Re-emphasize Stay Alert system of anonymous reporting

Minutes presented by Co-Chair Regina Carmichael, RN