THE VILLAGE CHARTER SCHOOL
101 Sullivan Way, Trenton, NJ 08628
Phone: (609) 695-0110 | Fax: (609) 695-1880

MEMORANDUM

TO: Village Charter School Parents and Guardians

FROM: Dr. Dana T. Bedden, CAA
Chief Executive and Administrative Officer

DATE: Monday, March 2, 2026

SUBJECT: Important Health and Safety Update Regarding Vaping

At Village Charter School (VCS), the health, safety, and well-being of our students are our highest priorities. We are writing to you today to address a serious health trend affecting school districts across Mercer County, throughout the state of New Jersey, and recently at VCS: the alarming increase in the use of electronic cigarettes and vaping pens among youth.

The Scope of the Issue

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the FDA, nearly **27.5% of high school students** and **10.5% of middle school students** reported using e-cigarettes recently. The U.S. Surgeon General has officially labeled this a national epidemic. Consistent with these statewide trends, we have observed similar concerns within our own middle community.

Our Proactive Response

To ensure a safe learning environment, The Village Charter School is taking several proactive initiatives. We want to ensure that all families have a clear understanding of the health risks and the strict policies in place to address this matter.

1. Health Awareness

Vaping is not "just flavored water." These devices deliver nicotine and other chemicals that release toxic vapors, which can cause long-term damage to developing brains and lungs. We have attached a **Fact Sheet** adapted from the CDC to help you discuss these risks with your child.

2. Strict Policy Enforcement

In accordance with New Jersey Administrative Code **6A:16** and our school's safety protocols, please be advised of the following definitions and procedures:

- **Definitions:** "Smoking" includes the inhaling of vapor from any electronic smoking device. "Drugs" include all chemicals that release toxic vapors as defined by N.J.S.A. 2C:35-10.4.
- **Medical Screening:** Any student caught vaping or in possession of any vaping-related paraphernalia will be immediately screened by the School Nurse and **must be sent out for an immediate medical examination and drug screening.**
- **School Consequences/Disciplinary Action:** Students found in violation will also face disciplinary consequences consistent with the Board Policy and our Student Code of Conduct, which include suspension and possible recommendation for long-term suspension or expulsion.

How You Can Help

We ask for your partnership in keeping our school a healthy environment. Please take a moment to speak with your child about the dangers of vaping and the serious school and legal consequences of possessing these devices on campus.

Our goal is to support our students in making healthy choices that protect their futures. If you have questions regarding these policies or need resources for smoking/vaping cessation, please contact the School Nurse or our Counseling Department.

Thank you for your continued support and cooperation.

Resource Links: Include links to CDC.gov/tobacco or the Truth Initiative for parents seeking more information.