



Richmond January 22, 2020

To whom it may concern,

On behalf of the School District 93, we would like to thank the Ministry of Health for giving us the opportunity to comment on the proposed regulations as outlined in the *Vapour products: intentions paper* document.

Vaping is a serious and concerning issue for our youths and we are aware of all its harmful effects. It is even more so for us as we thrive to help our students grow and provide them with a healthy and safe environment to learn in. After carefully reading the proposed regulations, we noticed a few issues that we would like to raise. We are hoping it is just a misunderstanding that can easily, if not already, be solved.

Firstly, the introduction of the document on page 2 states that “on November 14, 2019, the Ministry of Health and the Government of B.C. introduced a 10-point action plan to protect young people from the harms of vaping and vapour products”. We have observed that out of these ten points, only six were fully described in your proposed action plan. Our board is wondering if the other four points were completely excluded from the proposal or if they were not described further because they were self-explicatory.

We find it important to ask this question because the four undescribed or left out points are in our opinion the most important to us as they relate directly to both the voice of youths and their education about vaping and vapour products. The four points we refer to are the following:

1. Create a youth advisory committee to support and advise on youth vaping.
2. Distribute the B.C. Lung association vaping prevention toolkit to all schools for students, parents and educators.
3. Launch a ‘stop vaping’ youth social awareness and marketing campaign.
4. Enhanced Quit Now resources for youth wanting to quit vaping.

We would like to ensure that these points remain part of the complete proposal. We suggest the deployment of more efforts towards youth education programs with regards to risks and insidious marketing strategies used by the tobacco industry to target youth and create a new generation of tobacco consumers providing more sustainable profits for them. This could be achieved more easily by putting in place initiatives curated by them rather than by adults.

Secondly, we noted that the intention paper does not provide any information regarding the French translation of any of the proposed tools by the legislation (i.e. the B.C. Lung association toolkit, the marketing campaign, and the enhanced Quit Now resources).

The francophone students of BC are also involved in vaping and the current proposal does not take them into account. We fear that by doing so, francophone students may be left out from accessing the great resources proposed to help anglophone students.

Thirdly, we are concerned with the way the Ministry of Health intends to support schools in their efforts to comply and enforce the “No vaping on school properties (K-12)” as part of the proposed regulation. We suggest that the intention paper should include a detailed proposal of what this support will look like and how schools will be able to rely on the Ministry to better support the students without interfering with their education.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to share our ideas on this critical subject. The last decade saw an important and encouraging decrease in young people smoking tobacco. Vaping was only introduced recently and has gained popularity very rapidly with our youth. We, as parents and educators, feel like it is our responsibility to protect the next generation against harmful products. We know so little about the long-term side effects of vaping. We need to work together, share knowledge and involve the ones whose health and future are at stake.