

Friday, January 10, 2020

Honourable Christine Elliott, M.P.P.
Minister of Health and Long-Term Care
Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
80 Grosvenor Street
Toronto, ON
M7A 2C4

Dear Minister Elliott:

I am writing on behalf of the trustees, staff and 65000 students of the Waterloo Region District School Board, to highlight the most serious health issue facing our school communities.

Minister, there is unanimous agreement within our Board, that Vaping and the consumption of Vaped products, has quickly become the number one threat to student health and well-being.

We are deeply concerned about the rapidly increasing rate at which our youth are experimenting with vaping products, and are hoping to work with you and your government on a strategy to protect young Ontarians from the harms and risks associated with vaping use.

As you may have seen, in our community, University of Waterloo Professor David Hammond has published research showing that between 2017 and 2018 vaping increased by 74 percent among Canadian teens between the ages of 16 and 19.

We are pleased with your recent remarks to the CBC, (December 5, 2019) confirming your government's understanding that this is a serious issue, and that "there is more to be done." Further, the recent decision to ban the promotion of vaping products in convenience stores and gas stations as of January 1, 2020 is a welcome start to this New Year.

Although an important step, it is one of many, which need to be made in order to address this issue, and we are urging you to follow the example of other jurisdictions and increase the minimum age of 21 for the sale of tobacco and vaping products and prohibit the sale of flavoured vaping products.

These regulatory changes are supported by our school board and public health partners across the Province and across Canada, as they are proven to help deter students from



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engaging in vaping and the negative-and often unexpected-health consequences associated with these products.

Minister, we share a mutual goal which is to protect young Ontarians from the risks and harms of vaping, and to work to reverse this concerning trend. We are committed to working with you and all stakeholders to reduce the promotion and appeal of these products and look forward to hearing from you on our recommendations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Herring', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jayne Herring
Chair of the Board of Trustees
Waterloo Region District School Board

Cc: Premier Doug Ford
Education Minister Stephen Lecce
Region of Waterloo Public Health
OPSBA
Chairs of Ontario English Public School Boards