



# BY ALEXANDRIA CITY HIGH SCHOOL



Victoria Patrick & Kaela Berkey

## TOPIC

### Vaping in Alexandria City High School Bathrooms

## TOPIC DESCRIPTION

For years, staff have expressed their concerns regarding vaping in the school bathrooms. This issue has affected the Titan community all around. The school has implemented strict policies including only making the bathrooms available for use during certain times throughout the day and installing smoke detectors in the bathrooms. While these policies may seem fit, students are still being affected by this issue. Because the bathrooms are only open during specific times, students don't always have access to use the restroom when they need to and because students can't vape in the bathrooms, they are finding new locations to do so.

## RESULT

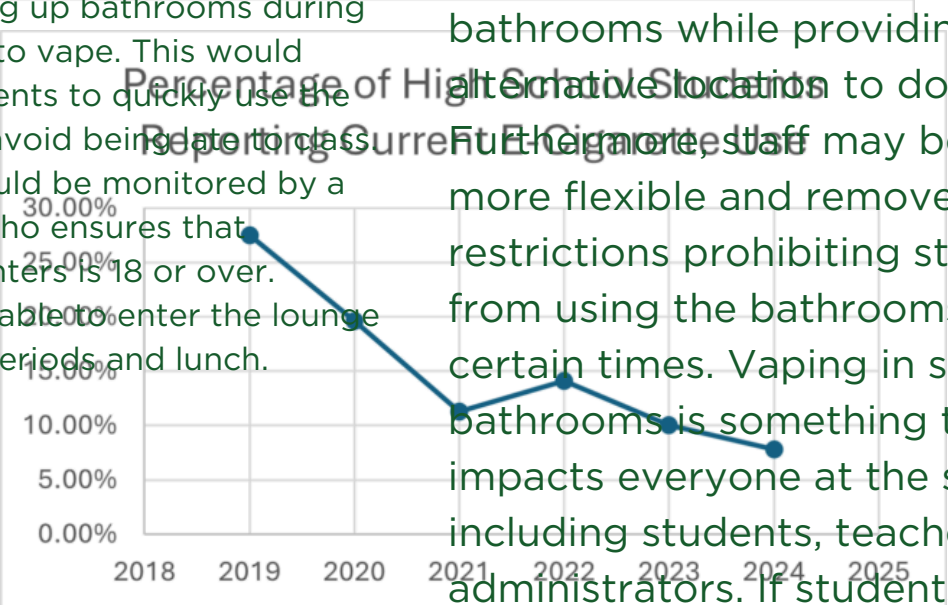
We hope that students who are legally allowed to vape may do so in a school regulated smoking lounge. This would significantly cut down on instances of students clogging up bathrooms during passing periods to vape. This would allow other students to quickly use the bathrooms and avoid being late to class. The lounges should be monitored by a security guard who ensures that everyone who enters is 18 or over. Students will be able to enter the lounge during passing periods and lunch.

## CYCP STRA

These results align with "All Children, Youth, and Families will be Physically Safe and Healthy" specifically wellness and prevention

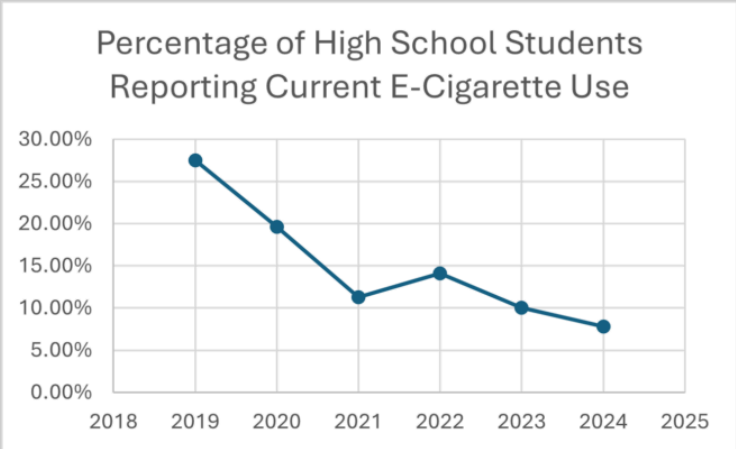
## SIGNIFICANCE

The result matters because it will significantly decrease the amount of vaping in the bathrooms while providing an alternative location to do so. Furthermore, staff may become more flexible and remove restrictions prohibiting students from using the bathrooms during certain times. Vaping in school bathrooms is something that impacts everyone at the school, including students, teachers, and administrators. If students are vaping in bathrooms, it can impact others attendance to class due to waiting for an open stall. This makes it a significant issue throughout Alexandria City High School.



## HOW ARE WE DOING?

In regards to vaping in school bathrooms, the amount of students who are found vaping in the school bathrooms has gone down. We know this because data collected over the past year has shown a noticeable decrease in vaping overall. More data regarding this issue can be found on the National Institutes of Health (NIH) website. Furthermore, Between 2022 and 2023, the percentage of high school students currently using any tobacco product dropped from 16.5% to 12.6%, and e-cigarette use declined from 14.1% to 10.0%, reports the CDC.



This chart displays high school student E-cigarette use over the past 8 years. The data clearly shows a significant decrease but professionals have shared they would like this number to continue to go down.

## IMPLEMENTATION

We plan to establish a smoking lounge where students can vape. These smoking lounges will be available during the passing periods and all lunches. Students with a government issued ID and who are 18+ will be allowed with a limit of how many kids are allowed in the lounge and the lounge will be monitored by a security guard at all times. According to the ACHS website, they have already taken steps to minimize vaping in school bathrooms by installing vape detectors in bathrooms around school. These will send an alert to administration along with the location of the bathroom, allowing them to handle the situation.

## PARTNERSHIPS

Students, parents, teachers, principals, and the superintendent all play a key role in solving the issue of students vaping in school bathrooms. Similarly, organizations like the Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition of Alexandria play a big role in de-influencing vaping and drug use. If all of these groups worked together to push for designated areas where only individuals who were over 18 could vape, it would be more likely to happen.



## PERFORMANCE EFFORT

With the recent implementation of vape detectors in ACHS bathrooms, administration and security guards have been able to quickly respond to alerts. This allows instances like this to be resolved quickly and efficiently without disrupting other bathrooms. The vape detectors have positively impacted issues with vaping and has allowed a more efficient use of the school bathrooms.

## PERFORMANCE EFFECT

### Negative

Freedom = responsibility: With freedom comes responsibility and students may not uphold to that standard and take advantage of this new found freedom

Not all vapes contain Nicotine and students might opt for vapes containing other narcotics instead

### Positive

More granted access to the bathrooms

Other students will be able to quickly use the bathroom since the stalls won't be used for vaping

Little to no vaping in the bathrooms

Freedom to legally vape during school hours

## RECOMMENDATIONS

According to the ACPS website, "The ACPS Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse regulations guidelines mandate that a student shall not possess, use, and/or distribute alcohol, tobacco, and/or tobacco products, or other drugs on school property, on school buses, or during school activities, on or off school property." ACPS also states on their website that "smoking is prohibited on all ACPS campuses and that vape cartridges are considered to be contraband, per ACPS Policy. Any student discovered to be smoking or vaping on school grounds will be subject to appropriate consequences per the Student Code of Conduct." In order for designated vaping areas to be created, both of these policies would need to change. We would recommend creating a policy that includes the previous notions about drug and alcohol use on campus but allows for students of age to vape during school while in designated areas. This keeps the initial values of the current policies but allows students to vape on campus.

## ONLINE

### **Virginia Vaping Awareness and Prevention Education Class**

Self-paced online course to educate individuals of the risks of vaping.

### **Addressing Vaping Exposure Risk for Teens - Eastern Virginia Medical School**

Developed by doctors to provide risk assessment and resources

## IN PERSON

### **ACPS Substance Abuse Prevention & Educational Training**

Provides substance abuse prevention programs in schools including presentations and assemblies.

### **Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition of Alexandria**

Unites youth, parents, schools, etc to reduce underage substance use.

## CITATIONS

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Dauray, Kevin. "Alexandria Launches Vaping Prevention Campaign to Encourage Youth to Stay Substance-Free." The Zebra--Good News in Alexandria, 11 Jan. 2021, [thezebra.org/2021/01/11/alexandria-launches-vaping-prevention-campaign-to-encourage-youth-to-stay-substance-free/](http://thezebra.org/2021/01/11/alexandria-launches-vaping-prevention-campaign-to-encourage-youth-to-stay-substance-free/). Accessed 6 May 2025.

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