

2020 Leshar Awards honor high school journalism

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CC Spin

March 2020 News & Views from Contra Costa County High Schools Volume 13 Issue 2

Vaping solution: monitoring the school bathrooms

By Peyton Smith and Matthew Carrington
Miramonte High School

The Academics Union High School District has the highest e-cigarette usage rates in Contra Costa County, according to the 2017-18 California Healthy High Survey, doubling between 2013 and 2015 and doubling again between 2015 and 2017. Data from the survey shows that 15 percent of students in the district admitted to recent use of e-cigarettes. Recent medical findings about vaping and a stalled federal grant request by the Academics Union High School District highlight an important truth: While Miramonte is doing a lot already to combat the issue on campus, student awareness and increased surveillance of the girls bathroom is crucial to countering the epidemic. Looking around campus, it's not hard to see, during lunch, lunch, and even passing periods, students crowd into bathroom stalls to vape. To decrease vaping in its schools, the district applied for a \$1 million federal grant to the Department of Justice to purchase and install vape detectors and other measures to help students addicted to nicotine. However, the grant application was unsuccessful. The grant would have distributed money to detect students vaping at school and help students dealing with addiction. The district hoped to install e-cigarette detectors inside bathrooms and cameras outside to monitor student activity. An additional school nurse and counselor were going to be added to the staff among the four district high schools to help students struggling with addiction. The district also asked for nicotine specialists in the grant proposal to serve as resources for the Human and Social Re-engagement class as well as parent information sessions. Recent peer-reviewed studies conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) linked vaping with lung illness, chemical exposure and fat buildup in the lungs, and hemoptysis (coughing up blood). Within the last few months, 33 deaths across the United States have been connected to vaping, according to the CDC. Additionally, the CDC linked BMS (Bronchitis) as a side effect of vaping. "While we know [vaping] was about to get a variety of reasons, we are now beginning to understand the scope of the damage vaping can cause," District Superintendent John Rickerson said. Regardless of the health issues, the fact that vaping prevents students from using the bathroom at a public school is appalling. Using the restroom is a basic human bodily function, and students should be able to do so whenever they need. "It's annoying when you go to the bathroom during lunch. See VAPING Page 7

Northgate 'senators' convene in 'Congress'

Teens practice legislative skills

By Cassidy Baumann and David Allen
Northgate High School

In a week marked by a U.S. Justice Department report on foreign interference



San Ramon Valley schools test vaping detectors in restrooms

By Ronnie Cogoli and Liann Bivell
California High School

San Ramon Valley Unified School Administrators are fighting back to prevent vaping in campus bathrooms. In early November, new vape detectors were installed in three campus bathrooms as part of a pilot program being tested by California

More than 70 students representing 11 Contra Costa County high school journalism programs won honors in the 2020 Leshar Awards competition.

The competition is open to Contra Costa high schools as part of the CC Spin newspaper program and is judged by professional Bay Area journalists, the California Scholastic Journalism Initiative [announced last week](#).

“Students worked hard at journalism and we wanted to make sure they received their well-earned honors by presenting their work online and to a larger audience,” CSJI Director Steve O’Donoghue said. “Their awards will be mailed out to them.”

Elsewhere: [Attend the JEANC Awards remotely May 28](#) (Journalism Education Association of Northern California)

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