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NEWS – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Vacaville Schools Host E-Cigarette and Vaping Presentations for Students and Parents

On Wednesday, February 6, at 6:00 PM in the Vacaville High School Library, Solano County Office of Education (SCOE) Youth Development Services staff and members of the Solano Youth Coalition and will lead a one-hour informational session on current trends in tobacco products such as vape pens and e-cigarettes, the health effects, how students access the products, what the products look like, and current laws pertaining to tobacco products. This is a will a free educational presentation for parents, students, and community members on the growing epidemic of youth vaping; attendees will receive resources on how to talk with youth about vaping, and school staff will be onsite to answer questions about school policy and consequences.

Kimberly Forrest, Assistant Superintendent of Student Services/Special Education for Vacaville Unified School District notes, "While e-cigarette makers say their products are designed to help adults quit smoking, vaping is increasing among our teenage students in Vacaville. The devices are appealing to them, and not just because companies like JUUL make them easily concealed and with flavors that taste like candy, they also lack the horrible smell of a regular cigarette. Many teenagers perceive them to be harmless and don't think about the long-term health risks."

SCOE staff will be at Country High School on February 5 to facilitate educational presentations for students on e-cigarettes and vaping. Results from the 2017-18 California Healthy Kids Survey shows that e-cigarette use among high school students across Solano County has risen dramatically over the past 4 years, which has become a major concern for public health experts and local schools. Solano County Superintendent of Schools Lisette Estrella-Henderson says, "The tobacco industry is creating products that are appealing to young people. It is crucial that we provide support to our districts with information and education about this troubling trend in the industry, so that students and their families are aware of the consequences associated with the use of these products. I am proud that the Solano Youth Coalition who received and is using a grant from the California Friday Night Live Partnership to support our young people's work on this issue."

According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC) most e-cigarettes contain nicotine, which is addictive and toxic to developing fetuses. Nicotine exposure can also harm adolescent brain development, which continues into the early to mid-20s. Tarra Khanna, a member of the Solano Youth Coalition and Vacaville resident who helped develop the vape presentations says, "As a youth myself, I have experienced firsthand how tobacco products have influenced the lives of my peers. I want to be able to make a change with the tobacco problem in any way possible and getting to speak and educate my community allows me to be part of the change and make a difference towards the greater good."

The presentations are made possible through funding from California Friday Night Live for youth tobacco prevention work and Tobacco Tax resources provided through California Department of Education for Tobacco Use Prevention Education grants.

For more information on Solano Youth Coalition or Tobacco Use Prevention Education please contact Johanna Nowak at jnowak@solanocoe.net.

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