

Dear Norwalk High Families,

It's been called to my attention this week that parents and students are concerned about limited bathroom availability during the school day. As I know there is some information circulating via social media, I wanted to clarify some facts, and also let you know about some of the solutions the school's administrative team is putting in place.

Norwalk High has had several fire alarms this year that are believed to be a result of vaping in the bathrooms. Each time, the school is evacuated and the fire department is deployed.

The layout of many high schools, NHS included, can present a challenge with monitoring bathrooms. High schools both in Connecticut and across the country have historically restricted restroom usage for temporary periods of time when tobacco usage becomes problematic. This continues to hold true in an era when vaping has replaced traditional tobacco as the popular product among adolescents. Unfortunately, there have been restroom restrictions at NHS this year that likely have gone on for longer than we would have preferred.

There are currently eight bathrooms available during the day, four per gender, with an additional bathroom per gender open near the cafeteria during lunch waves. The Nurse's Office and Health Center also have bathrooms that are available to students with a pass. Additional hall duties will be added to provide more coverage near NECA, allowing an additional set of bathrooms to be opened. Male and female security guards will also be rotating through bathrooms throughout the day.

In addition, the district is investing in wireless vaping detectors which are designed to text message administration upon detection. They are expected to be installed this month. Cameras will also be added in a couple of locations where school administrators have seen a pattern of activity.

Perhaps most important is the need to educate students about the health risks caused by vaping. Please continue to reinforce with your child the dangers of vaping, as well as the disciplinary consequences that can come with disrupting the school day. Information on vaping can be found on the website for the [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#), or in the attached flyer.

Arlene Gottesman  
Acting Principal