

BELLS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT  
1550 OLE AMBROSE RD  
BELLS TEXAS 75414  
(903) 965-3601  
(903) 965-3602  
(903) 965-3603

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Dear Parent / Guardian,

The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) is investigating suspected cases of pulmonary disease among individuals who report vaping. Vaping is defined as the use of an electronic device (electronic cigarette, e-cigarette, vaporizer, vape(s), vape pen, dab pen, or other device) to inhale substances (nicotine, marijuana, THC, THC concentrations, CBD, synthetic cannabinoids, flavorings, or other substances).

In 2018, over 330,000 middle and high school students reported vaping. This represents 13% of all Texas students in grades 6-12. Overall, youth use of vaping has more than quadrupled from 3% in 2012 to 13% in 2018 (Texas Youth Tobacco Survey, 2018).

On August 14, 2019, DSHS was notified of a potential case of vaping-associated respiratory illness in an adolescent who initially had complaints of shortness of breath, nausea, and vomiting. As of the December 2019, 289 possible cases have been reported in Texas.

This letter serves as notification that DSHS has revised the [Update on Investigation of Vaping-Related Pulmonary Illness](#) document on the following websites:

- <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/>
- <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/vaping/>
- <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/news/updates.shtm#vaping>

The websites and documents will be updated as information and resources continue to become available. We encourage you to share this information. For questions, please contact the DSHS Environmental Surveillance and Toxicology Branch at [epitox@dshs.texas.gov](mailto:epitox@dshs.texas.gov).

Deborah Bennett Williams, LVN  
Bells ISD School Nurse