



To: Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors

From: Suzanne Tavano, PhD,
Director of Behavioral Health

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Deputy Health Officer, Public Health Director

Re: Staff Report on the Implementation of the Cannabis School-Based Youth Education and Prevention Project to the Family and Human Services Committee

Date: July 13, 2026

Background

Following the passage of Proposition 64 in 2016, which legalized adult recreational cannabis use in California, the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors began developing local policies to regulate commercial cannabis activity while protecting public health, particularly youth. Between 2017 and 2019, the Board adopted multiple land use and health ordinances establishing permitting requirements, limiting retail storefronts, regulating cannabis manufacturing and delivery, and prohibiting flavored smoked cannabis products and cannabis vaping devices to reduce youth exposure and access.

These ordinances established a regulatory framework for commercial cannabis activity in unincorporated Contra Costa County, including health protections such as consumer warnings, transaction limits, age-verification requirements, and restrictions on products designed to appeal to youth. As of June 2026, three licensed cannabis storefront retailers were operating in unincorporated Contra Costa County.

In January 2023, Ordinance No. 2023-03 allowed the sale and delivery of non-flavored cannabis vaping products. At that time, Contra Costa Health was directed to develop a youth-focused education and prevention strategy to address the risks associated with cannabis vaping and reduce youth cannabis use.

Cannabis Awareness and Prevention Project (CAPP): Development and Funding

In response, Contra Costa Health presented recommendations for a youth cannabis prevention program to the Family and Human Services Committee in February 2023. After reviewing potential models, the Office of Education's Tobacco Use Prevention Education (TUPE) program was selected due to its strong school-based infrastructure, expertise, and ability to rapidly expand cannabis education services.



Initial funding of \$191,821 supported cannabis education in 56 schools. In August 2024, the Board of Supervisors approved continued funding through June 30, 2026, including \$98,419 in unspent funds and \$330,000 in new revenue. This investment strengthened the Contra Costa Cannabis Awareness and Prevention Project (CAPP), allowing expanded prevention, education, and youth engagement efforts countywide.

Since the two-year contract was approved, The Contra Costa County Office of Education (CCOE) significantly increased student engagement and district participation. Comprehensive programming now reaches approximately 65–70 schools, with 10 of Contra Costa County's 18 school districts actively participating in CAPP services.

Current Program Status

The Cannabis Awareness and Prevention Project have demonstrated strong success in advancing cannabis education, prevention, and youth development across Contra Costa County. In 2025, CAPP hosted its Youth Summit, which brought together young people to strengthen leadership, advocacy and peer education related to cannabis prevention. The program has also expanded Alternative to Suspension services, providing more students with restorative, educational interventions rather than punitive discipline following cannabis-related incidents.

These efforts have contributed to increased awareness among youth regarding the health risks associated with cannabis use, including impacts on brain development, mental health, and academic performance. Program data also indicate reductions in youth cannabis use alongside increased understanding of cannabis-related harms, reflecting the effectiveness of CAPP's prevention-focused, youth-centered approach.

Contra Costa Health Partnership Efforts

Public Health

Tobacco Prevention Program (TPP) provides technical assistance on public policy and education and shares technical expertise throughout the public health department and agencies within the County. In 2019, TPP began providing education on the health impacts of cannabis on adolescents and presented considerations regarding the decline in the perception of harm of cannabis use among youth over time, and the rise in use of vaping devices. Utilizing the Triangulum of Vaping can address the negative health impacts associated with the use of both tobacco and cannabis on youth.

Behavioral Health

Alcohol and Other Drugs Services (AODS) provides an array of services for youth and adults through contracted Community Based Organizations in the County. AODS uses the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF) to provide a comprehensive approach to Substance Use Prevention through education, youth leadership development, coalition building and public policy with a focus on decreasing adolescent

substance use, delaying onset of use, while increasing knowledge about the environmental factors that contribute to substance use.

Contra Costa County Office of Education

The Tobacco Use Prevention Education (TUPE) program functions as a countywide backbone for youth substance prevention, combining regional district support with direct student empowerment. TUPE provides school districts with technical assistance, tobacco-free certifications, and evidence-informed prevention curricula and implements these resources directly within the county's specialized school programs. The program champions restorative justice by training educators in alternative-to-suspension interventions and brief counseling models that address the root causes of youth vaping and cannabis use.

Cannabis Tax Revenue Updates

School-Based Cannabis Awareness Prevention Project (CAPP) - Update

Following the decision of the BOS, AODS was designated as the lead agency to develop a contract with TUPE. The initial contract covered a one-year period (July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025). Subsequently, the contract was extended to two years through June 30, 2026, allowing for a longer implementation period and more comprehensive data collection that better reflects the program's positive impact.

The term of the CAPP contract is 9/1/2024 – 6/30/2026, and the contract amount is \$383,642. In FY 2025-2026, TUPE submitted monthly narrative reports to AODS. Expenses through May 2026 total \$259,826, with \$123,815.98 remaining. The contract [74-678] term is from 9/1/24 through 6/30/26, with a total contract payment limit (CPL) of \$383,642. Between September 2024 and May 2026, the Contra Costa County Office of Education (CCCOE) invoiced \$259,826, representing approximately 67.72% of the total CPL. In FY25-26, however, the funding was not included in the AODS budget and reallocated by the CAO elsewhere. Due to the contractual agreement that had been established and the resources that TOE had allocated to CAPP, Behavioral Health was able to utilize one-time only unspent funds from its Substance Abuse Block Grant Prevention (SUBG) as a bridge to continue CAPP programming through June 30, 2026. In early 2026 in preparation for contract renewals, AODS inquired with CAO staff about the continued availability of cannabis revenue for The Contra Costa County Office of Education (CCOE) contract and unfortunately the funds were no longer available and repurposed.

Contra Costa County Cannabis Tax Revenue

For Fiscal Year 2025–2026, Contra Costa County's three storefront cannabis dispensaries generated a total of \$513,433.53 in cannabis tax revenue year to date. Of this total, STIIZY in Pacheco contributed \$412,009.69, 703 Chesley LLC contributed \$16,590.00, and The Artist Tree contributed \$84,833.84. These locally generated funds present a critical opportunity to sustain and expand youth cannabis prevention efforts through Contra Costa County's Alcohol and Other Drug Services (AODS) beyond the current contracted funding period ending June 30, 2026. Strategic reinvestment of cannabis tax revenue can strengthen evidence-based cannabis prevention, early



intervention, and youth development programming, ensuring continued support for youth and families impacted by substance use. In alignment with existing California Department of Public Health and California Department of Education funding through Proposition 64, these resources would further enhance cross-sector collaboration between Public Health, Behavioral Health, and the Contra Costa County Office of Education to advance coordinated cannabis prevention, intervention, and youth development initiatives across Contra Costa County.

Future Efforts

In FY26-27, the Tobacco Prevention Program (TPP) and the Contra Costa Office of Education Tobacco Use Prevention Education (TUPE) jointly applied for a State Prop 64 Cohort 4 grant program for which they were successfully awarded \$3,986,779 for five years. TPP and TUPE plan to expand on the success of CAPP program and include a youth leadership and development component led by TPP. The goal is to reach a minimum of 20,000 students across 10 school districts in 68 middle and high schools through TUPE, and to have 50 youth leaders in their internship program by the end of the 5-year grant. Additionally, TUPE and TPP will implement alternatives to suspension programs at all middle and high schools in Contra Costa County. The aim is to support identified school districts in providing school-based cannabis prevention through evidence-based curricula, alternatives to suspension, peer-led education, and community-based youth leadership opportunities. This will be accomplished by establishing a public health centered framework to address the impact of cannabis legalization on youth, centering those most affected by environmental inequities and the war on drugs. Youth will learn about the harms associated with underage cannabis use and develop skills and confidence to refuse use and delay initiation. The project aims to provide supportive interventions that promote healthy living standards.

TUPE SCHOOL-BASED CANNABIS AWARENESS PREVENTION PROJECT (CAPP) PROGRAM COMPONENTS	
1.	Stanford's Smart Talk: Cannabis Prevention & Awareness Curriculum
TUPE expanded its prevention efforts to include Stanford's Smart Talk curriculum, which complements existing tobacco prevention programs by providing comprehensive cannabis education to students. This curriculum supports educators in delivering age-appropriate lessons that increase awareness of cannabis risks and promote healthy choices.	
2.	Cannabis-Specific Alternatives to Suspension (YVAPE)
This model provides supportive alternatives to suspension for students involved in cannabis-related incidents. It includes referrals to the Youth Vaping Alternative Program Education (YVAPE) statewide online and phone intervention—as well as one-on-one Brief Intervention services delivered by trained school staff. Additional restorative justice approaches, such as peer-led Youth Courts, offer further support and accountability.	
3.	Youth Development
Youth development programs are a core component of comprehensive cannabis prevention services that are most strongly linked to the essential factors-school connectedness and Hart's Ladder. TUPE staff are committed to working in partnership with young people on effective prevention efforts. Youth development includes the inclusion of a cannabis-specific work group in our countywide <i>CourAGE</i> Youth Health Coalition, as well as trained peer educators at participating school sites.	
4.	Family and Other Stakeholder Engagement
TUPE engages families and community stakeholders through targeted events, presentations, and resource distribution. These efforts aim to increase awareness about substance use impacts, share available resources, and equip parents and caregivers with tools to support young people effectively.	
5.	Staff Professional Development
The County Office of Education supports ongoing staff development and regional collaboration by participating in local coalitions and national conferences. Staff receive training and lead workshops to enhance their knowledge and skills in cannabis prevention, youth engagement, and alternatives to suspension, strengthening program implementation and community partnerships.	

Contra Costa Cannabis Awareness and Prevention Project (CAPP) Activities

The following section summarizes activities completed during this period and as well as implementation highlights and outcomes.

Stanford Smart Talk: Cannabis Prevention & Awareness Curriculum

In FY 2025–26, the Smart Talk curriculum reported significant growth compared to the previous year. This included increased participation in training, broader district involvement, and a higher number of students reached.

The Smart Talk curriculum expanded from 223 students across seven (7) districts in 2023–24 to 988 students across eight (8) districts in 2024–25. This growth was supported by follow-up efforts

in April and May, ensuring that all sites had the necessary resources to implement the program effectively. Schools such as Golden Gate Community Schools (Brentwood, Pittsburg, and Richmond) began lessons in October 2024, and Marchus School (Special Education) completed its program by April 1, 2025. Growth has continued into the current fiscal year. As of June 3, 2026, 2,437 students completed the Smart Talk program, and 885 students completed Project ALERT. Six (6) teachers were identified as Smart Talk instructors, and seven (7) teachers were identified as Project ALERT instructors for FY 2025-26.

FY 2025-26 (as of June 3, 2026) Pre and post-survey results reflected the program's effectiveness:

- 75% of students reported believing occasional cannabis use was “very harmful” or “somewhat harmful,” compared to 62.5% pre-survey.
- 12.5% of students reported that occasional use was “not very harmful” in both pre- and post-surveys.
- 68.75% of post-survey respondents “strongly agree” or “agree” that they want to remain cannabis-free, cut back, or quit.

The following schools participated in the implementation of Smart Talk

Table 1
Participating Schools in FY 2025-2026

School	District	FY 2024-2025 # of Students	FY2025- 2026 (as of May 2026)
Antioch High School	Antioch USD	100	
Golden Gate Community School	CCCOE	18	
Marchus School	CCCOE	15	
Knightesen Elementary	Knightesen ESD	26	
Foothill Middle School	Mt. Diablo USD	70	
Oak Grove Middle School	Mt. Diablo USD	8	
Olympic High School	Mt. Diablo USD	300	
Iron Horse Middle School	San Ramon Valley USD	97	
Korematsu Middle School	West Contra Costa USD	354	713
Dozier Libbey High School	Antioch USD		300
Pleasant Hill Middle School	Mt. Diablo USD		250
John Swett High School	John Swett USD		101
Pine Valley Middle School	San Ramon Valley USD		30
Total # of Students		988	1,394

Smart Talk’s expansion has continued to complement the success of Project ALERT, another evidence-based curriculum. In the 2025–2026 school year, 2,279 students completed these evidence-based curricula, including 1,394 in Smart Talk and 885 in Project ALERT. This represents a substantial increase from 988 students served in 2024–2025 and 223 students served in 2023–2024. The continued growth in participation demonstrates the effectiveness of a comprehensive, classroom-based prevention education strategy across the County.

Cannabis-Specific Alternatives-to-Suspension & YVAPE

In 2023–24, TUPE successfully registered 78 schools to refer students to UC San Diego’s YVAPE program. As of December 2024, 76 schools remained actively registered, representing 14 of the County’s 18 school districts. While the overall number of participating schools remained relatively consistent, during the 2024–25 school year there was an increased number of students referred and who completed the program. A total of 30 schools referred students to YVAPE during the 2024–25 school year, up from 22 in 2023–2024. This represents 40% of pre-registered schools and 30% of all schools countywide serving students aged 12 and up. A total of 174 students were enrolled in YVAPE in 2024–2025, a significant increase from 99 students in 2023–24.

For the 2025–26 school year, and as of May 2026, 94 schools are now registered with YVAPE. During this period, 59 students were enrolled in the YVAPE program.

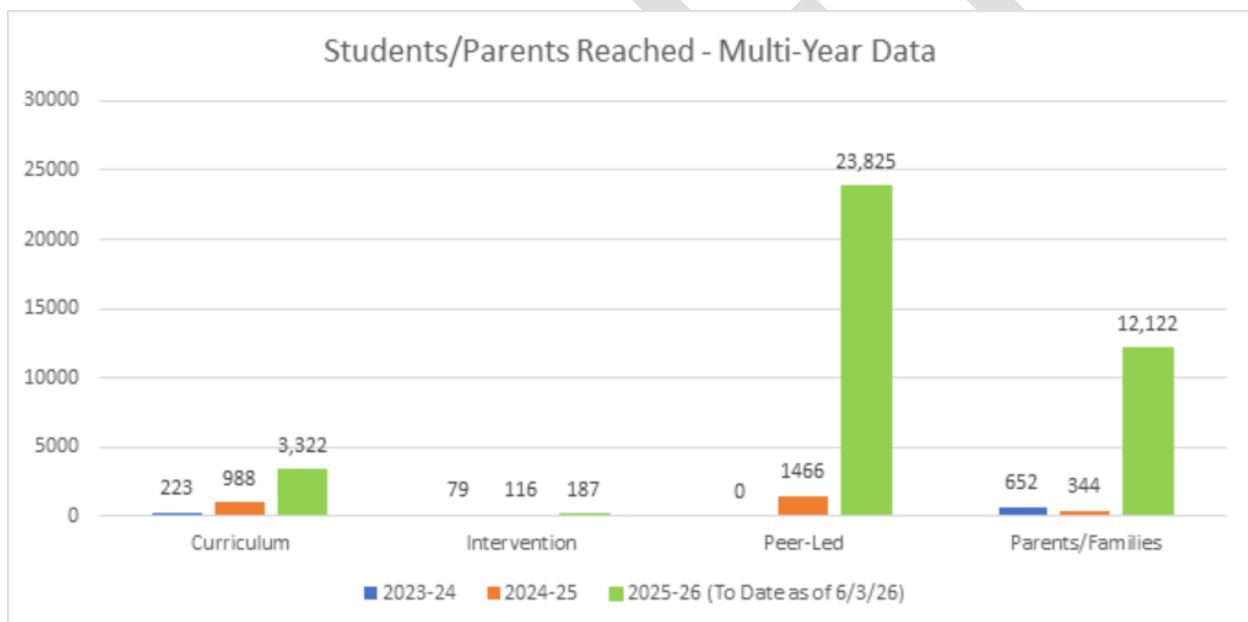


Chart 1. FY2025-2026 Students/Parent Reached – Multi-Year Data

In the 2024–25 school year, three students completed Brief Intervention services in response to cannabis-related incidents. This model uses a one-on-one Motivational Interviewing approach facilitated by trained school staff. All three students reported an increase in their knowledge of cannabis, and each indicated they were able to identify both the positive and negative aspects of their substance use. Additionally, all participants discussed and explored alternative coping strategies during their sessions. As a result of this intervention, a total of nine students avoided suspension during the reporting period.

FY 2024-2025 also marked the first time cannabis-related referrals were made to the Our Healthy Futures program. A total of 14 students avoided suspension through participation in this model. In March 2025, 12 students were referred to and successfully completed the program, followed by two more students who were referred to and completed the program in April 2025. These numbers reflect a growing use of this structured, supportive Alternative to Suspension pathway for youth involved in substance-related school incidents.

Liberty Union High School District launched a peer-led Restorative Youth Court pilot program between January and June 2025. In this model, student panelists with lived experience meet with peers facing disciplinary action, including those involved in cannabis-related offenses. These sessions are designed to provide support, assess student needs, and recommend alternative responses, such as referrals to YVAPE, Our Healthy Futures, or Brief Intervention services. Between February and May, eight students were referred to the Youth Court. Of those, four completed the full process, including three students whose cases involved cannabis or other substances. As of May 2026, the cumulative total for the 2025–2026 school year shows 8 Restorative Youth Court sessions held, with 38 students referred and 22 students served, including 9 cannabis-related cases.

Table 2
School District Participation in YVAPE by School Year

District	2023-24 Participation	2024-25 Participation	2025-2026 (As of May 2026)
Acalanes Union HSD	✓	✓	✓
Antioch		✓	✓
Brentwood	✓	✓	✓
Direct-Funded Charters	✓		
John Swett	✓	✓	✓
Knightsen		✓	✓
Lafayette	✓	✓	✓
Liberty Union	✓	✓	✓
Martinez	✓	✓	✓
Mt. Diablo	✓	✓	✓
Oakley	✓	✓	✓
Orinda		✓	✓
Pittsburg	✓		
San Ramon Valley	✓	✓	✓
Walnut Creek		✓	✓
West Contra Costa	✓	✓	✓

Youth Development

In the 2024-25 school year, youth development efforts expanded significantly. Nine students were formally enrolled in the CourAGE Youth Health Coalition and participated in the cannabis/marijuana prevention work group. These students helped plan and implement 11 peer-led cannabis prevention activities that reached a total of 1,466 students across the county.

For the 2025–2026 school year, the program utilized a robust youth mobilization framework supported by the Contra Costa CourAGE Youth Health Coalition. By May 2026, the program had trained 375 peer educators who successfully reached 23,825 students through various peer-led activities

Table 3
Peer-Led Cannabis Prevention Summary (2024–25 vs. 2025–26)

Measure	2024-25 Count	2025-26 Count (As of May 2026)
Total Peer-Led Activities	11	25
Total Students Reached	1,466	23,825
Students Reached in May 2025	707	
Participating Schools	10	
Participating Districts	5	

Table 4
Post-Survey Results (Comparison 2024–25 vs. 2025–26)

Survey Question	2024-25 Response	2025-26 Response (As of May 2026)
Learned more about the dangers of marijuana/cannabis	95%	95%
Practiced new or existing resistance/coping skills during the presentation	60%	57%
Want to stay cannabis-free, cut back, or quit after participating	92%	95%

57% of students participated in peer-led presentations during FY2025-26. This presents an opportunity to improve the interactive components of peer-led activities. The lower reported rate of skill practice—compared to gains in knowledge and intention to avoid use, may be due to limited time for practice, inconsistent facilitation, or unclear framing of skill-building moments.

100% of students served through Our Healthy Futures and Brief Intervention reported that they had the opportunity to identify alternatives to use. This reflects the strength of alternatives to suspension programs, also including YVAPE and Youth Court, and promoting consistent implementation across districts and schools. TUPE has expanded “Admin Team” meetings, offering district-specific implementation support, and providing technical assistance to strengthen adoption and referral workflows.

Recommended next steps include:

- Ensuring all presentations include structured opportunities for skill practice
- Enhancing peer educator training on delivering interactive content
- Developing a toolkit with ready-to-use skill-building activities
- Refining survey language to help students more clearly recognize and report when they have practiced these skills

Family and Other Stakeholder Engagement

Youth cannabis use is influenced by normalization, low perception of harm, promotion and peer acceptance. Cannabis use has negative health impacts on learning and contributes to early onset psychosis. Despite multilevel efforts to educate young people, vaping continues to rise. According to the 2023 CHKS, 14 percent of 11th graders reported vaping in the past 30 days, which reflects a 3% increase from the previous year. This data trend highlights the importance of strategically aligning proven tobacco control policies with cannabis regulations to protect youth health.

During the 2024-25 program year, cannabis prevention efforts extended to families and caregivers through a series of local engagement events and parent resource distributions. While only one centralized parent-focused event was held last year, in 2024-25 there were multiple District-led Fentanyl Awareness Events and consistent dissemination of resources throughout the year. In total, 344 parent guides on substance use and mental health were distributed, and six community events engaged families across the county. For the 2025–2026 school year, as of May 2026, districts and schools planned and led 45 parent engagement activities, resulting in 12,122 parents and guardians reached.

Table 5

Parent Guide Distribution & Family Engagement Events (2025–26)

Date	School / School District	Participants	Number of Guides Distributed
Sept 2024	Foothill MS (Mt. Diablo)	65	40
Oct 2024	Diablo View MS (Mt. Diablo)	32	40
Nov 2024	Valley View MS (Mt. Diablo)	57	25
Nov 2024	Fentanyl Awareness Event (Liberty Union)	90	30
Jan 2025	El Dorado MS (Mt. Diablo)	30	20
Feb 2025	Olympic HS (Mt. Diablo)	20	10
Mar 2025	Fentanyl Awareness and Overdose Prev Training (Countywide)	38	19
Apr 2025	CCOE'S Coordinating Council Parent Guide Distribution (Countywide)	N/A	200
2025–2026	District- and school-led Parent Engagement Activities	12,122	Included in outreach

While overall distribution numbers for the 2024–2025 school year were lower than the previous year, those efforts were more targeted and district led, creating localized opportunities for engagement. During the 2025–2026 school year, the program significantly scaled its efforts, reaching 12,122 parents and guardians across 45 separate engagement activities. This transition marks a shift from centralized distribution toward large scale, high impact community outreach and parent education.

Staff Professional Development

The Contra Costa County Office of Education (CCOE) continued to prioritize staff capacity building throughout the 2025–2026 school year. A key highlight included supporting the participation of school and community-based organization staff at the 7th Annual Teaching Cannabis (and Other Drugs!) Awareness & Prevention Virtual Conference, held on April 22–23, 2026. This national virtual event, co-sponsored by the American Academy of Pediatrics California Chapter 1, featured over 70 dynamic workshops focused on substance use education, prevention strategies, and the latest research on cannabis, e-cigarettes, and other drugs. Registered participants gained access to evidence-based tools and practical strategies to:

- Deliver age-appropriate lessons to middle and high school students regarding the risks and effects of cannabis and other commonly used substances.
- Explore current research on the impact of cannabis use on adolescent brain development, cardiovascular systems, and respiratory health.
- Identify and apply early intervention strategies for adolescents experimenting with or regularly using substances.
- Understand state and federal policies that impact youth access to and treatment for substance use.

CCCOE's continued leadership in developing and sharing effective cannabis prevention strategies through strong partnerships, capacity building, and engagement at the local and national level demonstrates that they are, in fact, well-positioned to implement CAPP. Lastly, the CCCOE expanded its role in local cannabis prevention efforts by actively participating in the Contra Costa Cannabis Prevention Coalition.

Contra Costa Health remains committed to implementing upstream, equity-centered prevention services that address evolving youth cannabis and vaping trends through integrated cannabis strategies that build protective factors, improve youth outcomes, and reduce disparities.

Next Steps

- CCH and Office of Education (TUPE) will expand implementation of CAPP to reach more students throughout the County between 2026-2031. .
- CCH and Office of Education (TUPE) will expand strengthen alternatives-to-suspension interventions for youth identified as at risk for substance use including increasing intervention services within middle schools.

- CCH and Office of Education (TUPE) plans to integrate a youth leadership development program to offer opportunities to at risk youth. Additionally, CCH and Office of Education (TUPE) will post a request for proposal for university based evaluator to support program objectives and growth.

Recommendations

- ACCEPT the Report from Contra Costa Health (CCH) with updates on the implementation of TUPE's cannabis school-based education program and baseline outcomes for FY25-26.
- CONSIDER redirecting some of the Cannabis Tax Revenue towards implementation of cannabis prevention education as well as Screening and Brief Intervention (SBI) in alternative education and at Juvenile Hall settings where youth report disproportionately higher rates of cannabis exposure, school disengagement, and prior disciplinary referrals due to cannabis use.
- CONTINUE to receive updates through the CCH Public Health and The Contra Costa County Office of Education (CCOE) regarding efforts to address youth cannabis and vaping trends through its newly awarded P64 Cohort 4 program.

Appendix A

Tobacco Use Education Prevention (TUPE) Programming Framework

The Contra Costa Office of Education's Tobacco Use Prevention Education (TUPE) program is committed to promoting tobacco-free lifestyles among youth and providing resources to prevent and reduce tobacco use. Through a comprehensive approach, the TUPE program offers various services and initiatives aimed at empowering students, educators, and communities to make informed choices regarding tobacco use. Below is an overview of the frameworks used by the program:

1. The Social-Ecological Model

TUPE, just as Contra Costa Health, uses a five-level social-ecological model to assess how environmental and interpersonal factors can encourage or deter tobacco use and vaping among youth. Each level of the model described below identifies a point of influence and a potential opportunity for intervention.

- a. The **“Individual”** level examines the influence of factors such as attitudes and knowledge.
- b. The **“Interpersonal”** level examines the role of peers, family, partners, and mentors.
- c. The **“School”** and **“Community”** levels explore how behavior is impacted by teachers and the social and physical characteristics of institutions, environmental settings, media, and advertising.
- d. The **“Policy”** level looks at the broader implications of laws, rules, and enforcement measures.

The model provides a useful framework to assist TUPE programs and community partners in determining how to focus strategies and resources.

2. Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF)

TUPE uses the Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF) to provide a comprehensive approach to guide TUPE prevention programs using a five-step model for continuous improvement and effective programming. Core components include the following:

- a. **Assessment:** Identify local prevention needs based on data
- b. **Capacity:** Build local resources and readiness to address prevention needs
- c. **Planning:** Find out what works to address prevention needs and how to implement strategies effectively, then create a plan of action
- d. **Implementation:** Deliver evidence-based programs and practices as intended
- e. **Evaluation:** Examine the process and outcomes of programs and practices

3. Connectedness and Hart's Ladder of Youth Participation

Prevention programs are successful when students feel connected to their school and prevention programs can also directly support young people's feeling of connectedness, particularly through intentional and positive youth development program strategies. Students who feel connected to school are more likely to have positive health and academic outcomes. Crucial to that connection is the development of trusting and meaningful

relationships on campus. Four essential factors crucial to strengthening school connectedness for students include:

1. Adult support
2. Belonging to a positive peer group
3. Commitment to education
4. A positive school environment

Hart's Ladder is a visual illustration of the importance and value of youth participation in prevention programs. The highest rung on the ladder involves youth-initiated projects where youth and adult allies share equal levels of decision making. This ladder challenges educators to move away from the lower rungs of non-participation (youth as decoration, tokenizing youth, or assigning/informing youth) to the higher rungs in which young people are genuinely engaged as partners.

Meaningful youth engagement is vital in creating safe, supportive, and healthy school environments that lead to better peer to peer connections, student to adult relationships, and overall school connectedness.

Appendix B

Tobacco Use Education Prevention (TUPE) Services Provided

The Contra Costa Office of Education's Tobacco Use Prevention Education (TUPE) program is committed to promoting tobacco-free lifestyles among youth and providing resources to prevent and reduce tobacco use. Through a comprehensive approach, the TUPE program offers various services and initiatives aimed at empowering students, educators, and communities to make informed choices regarding tobacco use. Below is an overview of the services provided by the program:

1. Project ALERT

Prevention programs include Project ALERT, a research-validated classroom-based substance use prevention program implemented in middle schools, and Stanford's You & Me, Together Vape-Free program, which TUPE implements with non-traditional schools. Non-traditional schools include continuation schools, alternative schools, independent study, etc.

Project ALERT motivates students against drug use, cultivates new non-use attitudes and beliefs, and equips teens with the skills and strategies they will use to resist drugs. The content and instructional strategies are grounded in research on effective health education. 11-lesson curriculum (grade 7) & 3 booster lessons (grade 8).

The Project ALERT Core Curriculum is organized into four parts. The lessons build on each other and are taught in consecutive order.

The concepts stressed in each lesson are:

- Motivating nonuse.
- Identifying pressures to use drugs, learning to resist those pressures, and practicing resistance skills.
- Review of key concepts and resistance skills practice.
- Newest content: Prescription Opioids and Heroin (Lesson 8); Smoking and Vaping Cessation.

2. You & Me, Together Vape-Free Stanford Tobacco Prevention Toolkit:

You & Me, Together Vape-Free addresses key factors associated with youth e-cigarette use, including changing adolescents' attitudes towards and misperceptions about e-cigarettes; increasing refusal skills, marketing, and social media; reducing stress and depression; improving coping; and decreasing intentions and actual use of all e-cigarette products.

The You and Me, Together Vape-Free curriculum includes 6 lessons that address key factors associated with youth e-cigarette use, including changing adolescents' attitudes towards and misperceptions about e-cigarettes; increasing their refusal skills to pulls of

flavors, marketing, and social media; reducing stress and depression which have been linked to e-cigarette initiation and use; improving coping; and decreasing intentions and actual use of all e-cigarette products. Lesson 6 addresses the intersections of tobacco and cannabis use.

Goals:

1. Increase their knowledge about e-cigarettes and the harms they can cause.
2. Gain awareness of strategies manufacturers and sellers of e-cigarettes employ to increase use among adolescents, such as deceptive and creative marketing strategies.
3. Gain skills to refuse experimentation and use of e-cigarettes.
4. Ultimately, to reduce and prevent e-cigarette use of any type, including nicotine, cannabis/THC, and/or non-nicotine products.

All TUPE schools implement school-wide activities or events. Activities, ideally led or co-led by trained student peer educators, includes school-wide audio and video announcements, lunchtime tabling, and pledge campaigns. CCCOE TUPE staff encourage schools to leverage existing, nationally recognized events, such as Great American Smokeout and Take Down Tobacco to plan and implement activities with the goal of raising awareness of the dangers of tobacco use among students and staff. Many schools also incorporate TUPE messaging and activities into existing events that already engage much of their school community, such as Open House, music or theater performances, athletic games, etc. to reach a broader audience. CCCOE TUPE provides sites with the necessary information, resources, and materials to implement these activities.

One of the strongest components of local TUPE programs are TUPE peer educators. The primary role of our Peer Educators is to provide tobacco-prevention information, resources, and support to their peers, as well as inspire all members of the school community by modeling healthy choices and leadership.

CCCOE TUPE trains hundreds of students from middle schools, high schools, and non-traditional (continuation) schools as TUPE Peer Educators each year. Peer Educators then go on deliver anti-tobacco messages at their school, primarily through classroom presentations and school-wide events.

The goals of all Peer Educators are to:

- Teach new information about tobacco/e-cigarettes.
- Encourage non-tobacco users to stay tobacco free.
- Encourage current tobacco users to cut back or quit by sharing resources.
- Have fun!

In addition to TUPE peer educators, CCCOE TUPE staff co-coordinate the Contra Costa CourAGE Youth Health Coalition. Established in 2013, CourAGE is a youth-directed group that plays a leadership role in addressing health-related issues. Members develop skills that empower them to create healthy environments through awareness and advocacy projects. The 35 members are in grades 8-12 and represent communities across our county.

Past and current CourAGE projects include:

- Countywide tobacco prevention video PSA Contest & Film Festival
- Student-led Youth Symposium
- Teens Tackle Tobacco conference workshops
- Supporting community-based events
- Presenting to local decision-makers
- Speaking at countywide Family & Community Engagement webinars

3. Alternative to Suspensions and Support for Youth with Nicotine Addiction:

To support students struggling with tobacco use, TUPE programs include an alternative-to-suspension model with multi-tiered approaches intervention. These approaches include referral, small group, and one-on-one support, as well as referrals to voluntary quit/cessation support through Contra Costa 211 and Kick It California.

4. YVAPE

YVAPE, run by UC San Diego (Kick It California) is the referral option and is a free educational program with phone coaching support for students who have been caught with tobacco or cannabis at school. YVAPE is available to California public middle and high schools who will enroll students instead of alternative disciplinary action for vaping. YVAPE is designed to provide a positive experience for the student and help them think through their vaping behavior. The program is now available for students aged 12 and up. Referred students receive an initial call from a trained YVAPE coach and talk with them for 15-20 minutes and set up a time for a follow-up call. Between the initial and follow-up call, students watch the YVAPE videos. They are encouraged to watch the videos with their parent/guardian and discuss the questions with them. Video topics include vaping industry marketing manipulation, vaping health effects, vaping marijuana, understanding motivation, and personal responsibility. During the 10–15-minute follow-up call, the student talks with the YVAPE coach about the videos and can ask questions. Lastly, students complete a short online follow-up survey and then receive a certificate of completion.

5. Our Healthy Futures Program Stanford Tobacco Prevention Toolkit:

Stanford Tobacco Prevention Toolkit's Our Healthy Futures program is geared for students who have been caught using e-cigarettes and/or for any students who are interested in trying to quit. Our Healthy Futures is to be taught by an educator, counselor, advisor, or another adult in a small group setting. The program can be implemented in one 2-hour session, or over multiple sessions. The program allows for warm-up questions interspersed between slides that allow students to share what they know about each topic.

The learning objectives for the 2-hour curriculum are:

- Describe the health problems associated with e-cigarettes/vape pens.
- Develop and individualized plan for setting goals related to their e-cigarette/vape pen use.
- Access resources to quit e-cigarettes/vape pens.

6. Brief 1-1 Interventions

Brief Intervention (BI) is the one-on-one program option. For the purposes of TUPE, the program is utilized to address tobacco use, however, the program is appropriate to address any substance use. Brief Intervention for Substance Using Adolescents (BI) is a short-term, one-on-one intervention that consists of two to four (2-4) 45–60-minute sessions aimed at adolescents who use tobacco or those most at risk for tobacco use. BI uses motivational interviewing, cognitive behavior therapy, and the stages of change model to meet the needs of adolescents. BI is also available for students to self-refer. Whenever possible, BI providers implement the optional parent/guardian session.

Brief Intervention provides young people with:

- A forum to talk about their tobacco use,
- Accurate information about tobacco, including e-cigarettes/vape pens,
- Support in identifying tobacco use related issues that impact them,
- Goal setting support, and
- Assistance in accessing other services, if needed.

Rounding out comprehensive programs are professional development for TUPE and non-TUPE staff, including the latest on vaping and teens, as well as trainings on specific program strategies, including curriculum, intervention programs, and youth development/engagement. Family and community engagement is done at the county, district, and site-level. CCCOE TUPE holds an annual countywide webinar on the latest on vaping and teens and tips for parents and other caring adults. District- and site-level family engagement includes newsletters, tabling at events, and presentations.

For students who want to cut back or quit, TUPE will continue to refer young people to Contra Costa Health's Behavioral Health Division, Alcohol & Other Drug Services (AODS) program, so that they can be connected to appropriate treatment services.