

Juul is not Cuul

Johnson County schools sue vape company

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For the past few years, the company “Juul” has been criticized for targeting teens and young adults by advertising on social media platforms such as Instagram, Snapchat and Twitter, along with using many other questionable marketing tactics. A nationwide lawsuit that started in 2018 includes more than a dozen school districts, including Blue Valley.

The superintendent Dr. Todd White of the Blue Valley school district joined three other Johnson County schools in a case to sue the company.

“Earlier [last] fall, we were contacted by a law firm to talk about what might be done from a legal means in order to curb the use of vaping, and in particular, Juul,” White said.

Joining the lawsuit is not the only thing the district has done to try to stop this epidemic. The district took previous actions against vaping in school by changing policies last year and adding to the curriculum, starting as early as elementary school.

“A couple of years ago, we began to hear from principals about juuling and vaping,” White said. “We did something I thought was fairly unprecedented — we changed our discipline handbook last year in the middle of the year.”

White said joining the lawsuit was a no-brainer when the district took into consideration the effect that juuling has on students.

“Our principals began to tell me that we’re spending an exorbitant amount of time policing vaping in our buildings,” White said. “We felt like there was a lot of misinformation out there about what juuling and vaping were and what it was not, and that it was so easily disguised as a USB, a pin [or] a key fob.”

Vaping has had a major impact on many students in the district, but that is not the only concern of district officials, who also fear that students are uninformed when it comes to what exactly they are doing to their bodies.

“Understand that what you’re doing today is going to affect a whole lot of other people down the road — people that you haven’t even met yet, like your children,” he said.

