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Department of Education
PUBLIC AFFAIRS SERVICEReproduction No. 087, s. 2021ZENIA G. MOSTOLES, Ed.D., CESO V
Schools Division Superintendent
Schools Division of Bulacan**PRESS RELEASE****DepEd supports stricter measures against e-cigarettes**

April 4, 2021 – Committed to nurturing healthy learners, the Department of Education (DepEd) expressed its full support towards stricter measures on Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) or Electronic Non-Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENNDS), or also known as e-cigarettes or “vapes.”

“On matters related to substance use prevention, education alone is not enough. In their classes, we teach our learners how to reject harmful substances. Outside these classes, we need policies and structures that will help reinforce our learners’ health-promoting choices, complementing what we teach them in school,” Secretary Leonor Magtolis Briones penned in her statement of support, in time for the public hearing on the provisions of the Vaporized Nicotine Products Regulation Act.

The Senate hearing explored regulations on age restriction, online trade, product flavors, among others. Currently, vapor products and heated tobacco products (HTPs) are already regulated under Republic Act 11467 (RA 11467), signed by President Rodrigo Roa Duterte in January 2020.

Under RA 11467, selling vapor products and HTPs to persons below 21 years old is prohibited. However, the pending bills in the Senate, similar to the substitute bill at the House of Representatives (HoR), intend to reduce the minimum age of restriction to 18.

“This a real concern for us in DepEd. Before the pandemic, the Philippine Pediatric Society (PPS) has coordinated with us to explore the determinants of e-cigarette use among [Grades 7 to 9] learners [and results showed] that 6.7% [of 11,500 learners surveyed] have tried and are using e-cigarettes,” Briones said.

The PPS survey results showed that the top reasons for using vape among DepEd learners are online accessibility (32%), varied flavors (22%), and the belief that e-cigarettes are safer than tobacco (17%). Banking on these results, Sec. Briones joined the calls of “fellow health champions” for discussions on tobacco product regulations to be led by the Senate Committee on Health.

“Especially now that we are in a pandemic, I appeal to our legislators to approach the issue from a health perspective. We are all first-hand witnesses of how any threat or attack to a country’s health system eventually affects every other sector of public life, from economics to education,” Briones noted in her statement.

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Department of Education
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The Department of Education (DepEd) formulates, implements, and coordinates policies, plans, programs, and projects in the areas of formal and non-formal basic education. It supervises all elementary and secondary education institutions, including alternative learning systems, both public and private; and provides for the establishment and maintenance of a complete, adequate, and integrated system of basic education relevant to the goals of national development.


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