

# Ridge High School

268 SOUTH FINLEY AVENUE  
BASKING RIDGE, NEW JERSEY 07920  
908-204-2585; FAX:908-204-2582

**FRANCIS T. HOWLETT, JR.**

*Principal*

**KATHLEEN DUSEBOUT**

*Assistant Principal*

**DR. GINA DONLEVIE**

*Assistant Principal*

**SCOTT THOMPSON**

*Assistant Principal*

**THOMAS THORP**

*Assistant Principal*

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Dear Parent or Guardian,

I am reaching out to you in an effort to raise your awareness regarding a new sort of app students are using and also to explain how we are handling e-cigarettes/vaporizers.

It is no secret that anonymous online chat sites have been a source for HIB issues. The two most popular are Yik Yak and Streetchatapp.com. Parents should keep in mind that new apps are cropping up all of the time and these are just two of the most problematic that we have seen since school opened this year. Streetchat is an anonymous site where students can post pictures and include captions underneath while Yik Yak is just the post without the picture. Many students and faculty have fallen victim to inappropriate postings on this site.

Turning to our Tech Department for answers has resulted in these sites being blocked with our Internet filters, thus the sites cannot be accessed through the district network. However, our filters can be circumvented with the use of private 4G cellular access the students have through their own personal devices.

Yik Yak claims to be able to spare schools from their app being used on campus with the use of a "Geofence," which disables the app for a distance in and around campus. My experience has been that this "Geofence" is suspect and some students are still able to use the app in some locations. Our technology department is working with these companies to improve the "Geofence" coverage.

Additionally, our district technicians have provided these two resources that parents can use to block these sites from their child's technology. They are:

<https://support.google.com/googleplay/answer/1075738?hl=en>

<http://www.theinstructional.com/guides/parental-controls-with-ios-restrictions>

This article suggests some other apps to avoid:

<http://www.sunshineandhurricanes.com/worst-apps-for-kids/>

We hope this helps.

Another issue that we have been confronted with recently is the use of E-cigarettes or vaporizers. Unfortunately, E-cigarettes can be used to inhale the active ingredients of marijuana in ways that are virtually undetectable to average human senses. As a result E-cigarettes are considered, by policy, to be drug paraphernalia. Students in possession of an E-cigarette will be subject to Policy and Regulation 5530. In practice this means that students found in possession of e-cigarettes will be sent for a suspicion based drug test. Possession of drug related paraphernalia in and of itself is reasonable suspicion to have the student drug tested even if there are no outwardly physical symptoms that the student is impaired. Furthermore, students found in possession of e-cigarettes will be given a disciplinary consequence of Saturday Detention consistent with policy 5533 unless they test positive which results in a minimum of a 4 day suspension. The relevant policies and the school's code of conduct are posted on the district website. Here is an article you can refer to relative to the problem we are confronted with:

<http://www.drugfree.org/join-together/more-people-using-e-cigarettes-to-smoke-marijuana/>

I spoke to the students at length about the consequences for possessing E-cigarettes at school or school functions at the class meetings during the first week of school. Students should know and understand the consequences of Policy 5533 and 5530. Efforts are currently underway to have a public meeting to present parents with more information on E-cigarettes – stay tuned.

Please speak with your child about the proper use of technology and the E-cigarette/vaporizer issues. Thank you.

Regards,

Francis T. Howlett Jr.