

CPM Pursues Justice as South San Francisco Unified School District Files Suit Against Juul

SSFUSD's Lawsuit Alleges that Juul Targeted its Marketing Strategy to Teens and Pre-Teens, Leading to Exceptionally High Levels of e-cigarette use by Local Students
04.20.2020

South San Francisco Unified School District sued Juul Labs, Inc. over Juul's marketing strategy, advertising, and product design, which have targeted minors, especially preteens and teenagers, resulting in increased use of electronic cigarettes by youth in San Mateo County and increased costs for local schools.

According to the most recent California Student Tobacco Survey, a shocking 20.8 percent of teens in San Mateo County used e-cigarettes in 2018, up from 11.8 percent in 2017, and much higher than the state average of 10.9 percent. Even use by middle school students is sharply rising.

The use of nicotine and e-cigarettes impacts learning, memory, and attention. San Mateo schools, like schools around the country, are struggling to ban use on campus and keep students focused on learning. As alleged in the Complaint, SSFUSD has experienced increased tobacco related suspension rates and has had to incur costs to educate students about the risks of vaping.

"As the coronavirus sweeps the Bay Area, it is clearer than ever that vaping poses a serious health risk to our students," said SSFUSD Superintendent Shawnterra Moore. "Vaping makes students more susceptible to diseases like COVID-19 and a host of other health problems. We refuse to sit idle while the children we serve are misled by these predatory marketing tactics."

Attorneys

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Practice Areas

Municipal & Public Entity
Litigation

CPM PURSUES JUSTICE AS SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT FILES SUIT AGAINST JUUL

“In South San Francisco, we have seen the results of this predatory marketing take effect as more of our students begin vaping,” said SSFUSD School Board President Patricia Murray. “It’s time to act to protect the health of the children we serve.”

Anne Marie Murphy, of Cotchett, Pitre & McCarthy, said that “as a resident of South San Francisco and a parent, this case has particular meaning for me—it is heartening that our local school districts are leading the fight against the rising rates of vaping among school age children.”

The lawsuit has been filed by Cotchett, Pitre & McCarthy, LLP, based in Burlingame, and co-counsel at the Renne Public Law Group, Migliaccio & Rathod, LLP; Wagstaff & Cartmell, LLP; and the San Mateo County Counsel’s Office to challenge Juul and big tobacco.