

Good Afternoon

My name is Theresa Mitchell Dudley and I am a middle school Social Studies and Science teacher in Prince George's County where I am honored to serve as the President of the Prince George's County Educators' Association. Our membership includes approximately 10,000 classroom teachers and Certified Staff. We support SB-548, which will improve the state's knowledge of the challenges facing Maryland students in public middle and high schools by adding questions on adverse and positive childhood experiences to the regularly administered Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Youth Risk Behavior Survey/Youth Tobacco Survey.

It is imperative that we address the issue of tobacco used amongst our youth. As a middle school teacher every year I would stress during the Red Ribbon Week that tobacco is a drug and can cause harm that the children may or may not experience today but over their lifetimes the harm is significant.

Our children are now being sold E-Cigarettes and high school use according to the U.S Surgeon general increased 78 percent between 2017 and 2018 leading the Surgeon general to call youth use an "epidemic. E-cigarettes are not harmless and produce a chemical-filled aerosol that include nicotine, acetone, and other particles. Nicotine can harm adolescent brain development, negatively impacting memory, learning, and attention.

We now know the facts about the dangers of smoking and the new danger vaping. As an educator, we know that everything we do is data driven. Our students come to us to learn and

we teach the hazards of drug use. We need to know how many are using to share the message and to be able to address the problem with proper programming and educational materials. The data would be beneficial to educators and the families we serve.

In Solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Theresa Mitchell Dudley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "T".

Theresa Mitchell Dudley  
PGCEA President