

## **A Comprehensive Tobacco Free School Policy Sample**

### **INTENT**

All students shall possess the knowledge and skills necessary to avoid all tobacco use, and school leaders shall actively discourage all use of tobacco products by students, staff, and school visitors. To achieve these ends, district/school leaders shall prepare, adopt, and implement a comprehensive plan to prevent tobacco use that includes:

1. Develop and enforce a school policy on tobacco use.
2. Provide instruction about the shorts and long-term negative physiologic and social consequences of tobacco use, social influences on tobacco use, peer norms regarding tobacco use and refusal skills.
3. Provide tobacco-use preventive education in kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade
4. Provide program –specific training for teachers.
5. Involve parents or families in support of school-based programs to prevent tobacco use.
6. Support cessation efforts among students and all school staff who use tobacco
7. Assess the tobacco-use prevention program at regular intervals

### **RATIONALE**

Tobacco use is considered the chief preventable cause of premature disease and death in the United States. Schools have a responsibility to help prevent tobacco use for the sake of students' and staff members' health and the well-being of their families. School-based programs to prevent tobacco use can make a substantial contribution to the health of the next generation.

Research conclusively proves that:

- youth are sensitive to nicotine and can feel dependent earlier than adults. Because of nicotine addiction, about three out of four teen smokers end up smoking into adulthood, even if they intend to quit after a few years.
- youth and young adults see smoking in their social circles and many communities where they live. Smoking is often portrayed as a social norm and young people exposed to their images are more likely to smoke.
- early cardiovascular damage is seen in most young smokers: those most sensitive die very young
- secondhand smoke is a threat to the personal health of everyone, especially persons with asthma and other respiratory problems;
- tobacco use most often begins during childhood or adolescence;

Additional reasons why schools need to strongly discourage tobacco use are that:

- the purchase and possession of tobacco products is illegal for persons under age 18;
- use of tobacco interferes with students; attendance and learning;
- smoking is a fire safety issue for schools; and
- use of spit tobacco is a health and sanitation issue.

## **DEFINITION**

For the purposes of this policy "tobacco" is to include any product containing, made, or derived from tobacco that is intended for human consumptions, whether chewed, smoked, absorbed, dissolved, inhaled, snorted, sniffed, or ingested by any other means or any component, part, or accessory of a tobacco products to include but not limited to: any lighted or unlighted cigarette, cigar, pipe, and any other smoking product, and spit tobacco, also known as smokeless, dip, chew, snus, and snuff, in any form including, "e-cigarette" and electronic nicotine devices (ENDs).

*Exemption/Nicotine use: Only FDA approved cessation products are allowed. This includes: nicotine gum, nicotine lozenge, nicotine patch, nicotine inhaler, and nicotine nasal spray*

## **TOBACCO USE PROHIBITED**

Smoking or the use of tobacco products or non FDA approved nicotine cessation products by any individual is prohibited at any time, including non-school hours:

- in or on any property owned or leased by the school/district, including school buses or any school vehicles; or
- on school grounds, athletic grounds, or parking lots; or
- at any school-sponsored events on or off campus.

In addition, no student may leave the school campus during breaks in the school day to use a tobacco product. No student is permitted to possess any tobacco products/ non FDA approved nicotine cessation products. Signs to this effect will be posted at appropriate locations. School authorities shall consult with local law enforcement agencies to enforce law that prohibit the possession of tobacco by minors within the immediate proximity of school grounds.

## **TOBACCO PROMOTION PROHIBITED**

The district/schools shall not advertise tobacco/ non FDA approved nicotine cessation products in any manner. Tobacco /non FDA approved nicotine cessation products advertising, sponsorships, giveaways, promotional items are prohibited in all school-sponsored publications and at all school-sponsored events or at school functions whether on or off school property. Students exhibiting tobacco/non FDA approved nicotine cessation products -related gear or paraphernalia are prohibited. Tobacco/ non FDA approved nicotine cessation products promotional items include but not limited to clothing, bags, lighters, free tobacco samples, and other personal articles.

## **TOBACCO PREVENTION EDUCATION**

Tobacco use prevention education shall be integrated within the health education program in Pre-K- 12<sup>th</sup> grade to provide greater understanding of the health hazard of tobacco use. This education program shall include the short-and-long term negative physiologic and social consequences, social influences on tobacco use, peer norms regarding tobacco use and refusal skills.

## **TOBACCO CESSATION PROGRAM**

The district/ school shall inform students/ staff about tobacco cessation program available within the community or Arkansas Tobacco Quitline (1-800- QUIT-NOW). School counselors and community are encouraged to establish voluntary tobacco cessation programs at their schools

## **COMMUNICATION OF POLICY**

The superintendent/principal/other shall notify students, staff, families, parents, and visitors of the tobacco free policy through handbook, newsletters, signage, school web pages, local media, or appropriate method of communication. Signs should be posted at every school entrances.

## **POLICY ENFORCEMENT (for Students)**

Students who violate this policy will be subjected to disciplinary measures.

- 1<sup>st</sup> offense: Tobacco products must be confiscated and school shall contact parents.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> offense: Tobacco products must be confiscated, school shall contact parents, in school suspension for one day, and offer the cessation programs
- 3<sup>rd</sup> offense: Tobacco products must be confiscated, school shall contact parents, in school suspension for one day, notify police, and refer the cessation programs.

## **POLICY ENFORCEMENT (for Staff)**

Staff members who violate this policy will be subject to;

- 1<sup>st</sup> offense: receive a written warning and refer to cessation program
- 2<sup>nd</sup> offense: receive a formal reprimand and refer to cessation program
- 3<sup>rd</sup> offense: meet with school board and refer to cessation program

## **POLICY ENFORCEMENT (for Visitors)**

Visitors using tobacco products while on school property shall be asked to cease their use of tobacco products. If visitors refuse to do so, he/ she shall be asked to leave the school premises.