

Tobacco-Free School Toolkit



Tobacco-Free Schools
Everywhere – By Everyone – At All Times

Tobacco Free Nebraska
NE Department of Health and
Human Services
Division of Public Health

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Introduction

Welcome to the Tobacco-Free School Toolkit!

This toolkit was developed to assist school districts in adopting comprehensive 100% tobacco-free policies. It contains information and resources to effectively implement, clearly communicate and support a truly tobacco-free and e-cigarette-free campus.

If your school district hasn't adopted a tobacco-free campus policy this toolkit is designed to help you in the process.

If your school district has implemented a 100% tobacco-free policy we would like to hear from you. Please send us a copy of your policy. We will add you to the growing list of Nebraska schools with 100% tobacco-free campuses and property.



For more information, please contact:

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• Aluminum signs	
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When Tobacco Free Nebraska references tobacco, the reference is for all commercial tobacco products, including new products such as electronic cigarettes, and not the sacred and traditional use of tobacco by some American Indian communities.

Policy Principles

Comprehensive 100% tobacco-free school policies may look different for all school districts. However, effective policies require a framework of basic principles. The following are suggested for all comprehensive policies.

- **Who is included?**
 - EVERYONE! Students, all employees of the school district (including contractors) and visitors.

- **What is included?**
 - ALL tobacco products – cigarettes, cigars, pipes, spit, and smokeless tobacco.
 - ALL vapor products – e-cigarettes, e-cigars, vape pens, vaping pens, e-hookah, and hookah pens) and any component or accessory used in the consumption of a tobacco product (including e-cigarette liquids, with or without nicotine).
 - ALL heated tobacco products.
 - ALL alternative nicotine products or tobacco look-alike products.
 - Other considerations include lighters.

- **Where is it enforced?**
 - ALL school premises including any building, structure, property surrounding buildings and structures, athletic grounds, parking lots, or any other outdoor property owned, leased, or contracted by the school, both on- and off-site.
 - ALL vehicles owned, leased or rented by the school district.
 - ALL school-sponsored events.

- **When is it enforced?**
 - ALWAYS! 24 hours a day – 365 days a year.

- **Why have a 100% Tobacco-Free School Policy in your school district?**
 - To protect the health and safety of students, employees, and visitors to the school district.
 - Prevent youth initiation to tobacco products.

Policy Development

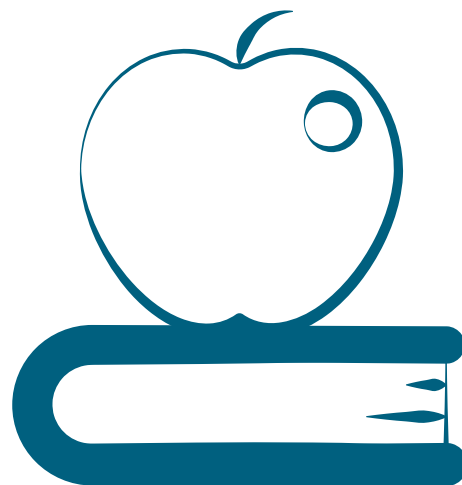
Policy development is a decision-making process. Careful development and drafting of policy can help you make the policy options you selected actionable. Policy development takes time and collaboration. Steps for successful policy development include the following elements.

- **Review existing tobacco policy.**
- **Write a draft policy.**
 - Keep it simple and specific.
 - Identify where, when, and to whom the policy applies.
 - Identify how soon after passage the policy would go into effect.
See Page 8 for model language
- **Develop a written rationale for the policy.**
- **Identify how the policy will be enforced.**
 - Review existing behavior and discipline policies.
 - Identify the consequences of violating the new policy for students, staff, contractors, visitors, and community members.
- **Develop an implementation plan for the policy.**
 - Develop a communication checklist for students, staff, and others.
- **Submit the policy, including enforcement, and the implementation policy to the Superintendent for appropriate approval.**
- **Set an implementation date.**
- **Prepare your school community by following your communication plan.**
See page 6 for policy communication
- **Begin policy implementation.**

Policy Implementation

Policy implementation can be defined as the third stage of policy cycle. It's the stage of the process immediately after the passage of the policy. Before implementation starts, everyone needs to be clear about the goals of the policy. It's important to identify resources that can help you implement the policy. This can include staffing and infrastructure. Define who is involved and who does what during implementation.

- **Develop an implementation timeline. Allow time for community/school input and board review.**
- **Inform students, staff, and community of the new policy.**
- **Develop enforcement plans for students, staff, contractors, and visitors.**
- **Identify parties responsible for enforcement.**
- **Develop communication strategies for the policy and enforcement.**
- **Enforce the policy.**



Policy Communication

*Many communities and schools have found that tobacco-free and e-cigarette-free policies are largely self-enforcing (meaning that people generally respect the rules, as long as they know about them). Communicating that your school has a tobacco-free and vape-free policy is crucial to the policy's success. There are lots of ways for you to make sure that students, staff, parents and visitors know about your policy! However you choose to notify people of the policy, make sure your message is clear, consistent, and positive.
(Kansas Vape-Free Schools Toolkit, March 2020)*

- **Post signs.**
 - Signage should be posted at all entrances to school buildings, athletic facilities, grounds, and parking lots.
- **Include details of policy in handbooks – student, parents and staff, manuals, contracts, newsletters, and websites.**
- **Send a letter to parents/guardians:**
 - Explain the policy and reasons for implementation.
 - Outline enforcement.
 - Encourage support for policy enforcement.
- **Review and discuss the policy at student and staff orientations, PTA, PTO, and similar meetings.**
- **Publicize the policy.**
- **Announce the policy at athletic and other school events, meetings, concerts, and plays.**
- **Involve student, parent, and community groups in communicating the policy.**
- **Include information on the policy in school and community publications.**
 - Include information about the policy in event bulletins and flyers.
 - Consider placing an ad in these publications thanking the school board for making the decision to adopt a 100% tobacco-free school policy.

Policy Communication

- Encourage and support students, staff, and the community to politely remind violators of the policy.
- Communicate the policy to volunteers who assist/supervise off-campus activities.
- Inform contractors/vendors who provide services to the district about the policy.
- Utilize consistent enforcement and define consequences for violations of the policy for students, staff, and visitors.
- Assess the policy at regular intervals, at least once a year, to determine if the policy, policy education, enforcement and communication are effective. Update and revised accordingly.
- Social media posts.



Even with signs, written materials and event announcements, some school visitors may not realize that the school district has a comprehensive Tobacco-Free School Policy in place. This is why all school staff should be trained to communicate the policy—one-on-one—to the public. Gentle, positive, and clear messages will let violators know that the policy is in place, and that it will be enforced. Knowing how to communicate the policy effectively will go a long way toward relieving stress school staff may have regarding enforcement and will help to avoid negative confrontations with parents, workers, and other school visitors.

Announcements and Social Media Posts

- **Announcements should be positive! Remind visitors that the policy exists to protect the health and safety of students and others.**
- **Invite students and youth groups to create and make the announcements.**
- **Support the announcements by having prominently displayed signs and notices in event brochures that reinforce the announcements.**

The following are sample announcements and social media posts which can be used to promote the tobacco-free school policy:

- *For the health and safety of our students, (name of school district) is proud to have a 100% tobacco-free school policy. At this time, we would like to remind fans and visitors the use of any tobacco product, electronic smoking device or any alternative nicotine products or look-alikes is strictly prohibited. We appreciate your support and would like to thank you for keeping our school tobacco-free. Enjoy the (name of the event).*
- *Hey fans! Did you know that tobacco use is the number one cause of preventable death in Nebraska? This is one reason why (name of school district) schools are 100% tobacco free. This means no use of tobacco products or electronic smoking devices at anytime, by anyone, anywhere on campus – including (name of venue). We appreciate your support and thank you for keeping our school and (venue) tobacco free. Enjoy the (name of event).*
- *On (month/year) the (name of school) board enacted a district-wide 100% tobacco free school policy. This means no tobacco use of any kind, including electronic smoking devices, by anyone, at any time. The policy ensures a positive and healthy environment for students*
- *Welcome to (name of school/event). We would like to remind everyone that tobacco use of any kind, including electronic smoking devices like e-cigarettes, is prohibited – at all times, by everyone, everywhere! Thank you and enjoy the (name of the event).*

Announcements and Social Media Posts

- *Hey (insert mascot here)! Our school recently took a huge step forward in protecting everyone's right to clean air. For the health and safety of our students and visitors, we are proud of our 100% tobacco-free school policy! Thank you for your support and help in keeping (insert school name) tobacco-free!*
- *We are the (insert school and mascot), we believe in creating a positive and healthy learning environment for all students. To build upon this belief, we have implemented a 100% tobacco-free policy. This means no use of tobacco products or electronic smoking devices by anyone, at any time. We appreciate your support in keeping (insert school name) tobacco-free!*
- *(Insert school) is a place where learning occurs every day! Staff, visitors and students do their best to model safe and healthy behaviors, which is why we have decided to implement a 100% tobacco-free policy. This means no use of tobacco products or electronic smoking devices by anyone, at any time. Thank you so much for your support of this positive change!*

Model Policy Language

To promote an environment free of commercial tobacco in primary and secondary schools, the Public Health Law Center has prepared a comprehensive model policy that school districts and schools may adopt. The policy includes definition of terms frequently used in policies.

<https://www.publichealthlawcenter.org/sites/default/files/resources/Commercial-Tobacco-Free-K-12-School-Model-Policy-2019.pdf>



Resources

Tobacco Free Nebraska

<http://www.dhhs.ne.gov/tfn>

- Youth Tobacco Use in Nebraska
- Teachers & Parents: That USB Might Be An E-cigarette - CDC infographic
- Electronic Cigarettes: What's the Bottom Line - CDC infographic
- Electronic Cigarettes Shaped Like Flash Drives - CDC infographic

Tobacco Free Nebraska Resource Directory

<http://dhhs.ne.gov/documents/TFNResources.pdf>

Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids

<http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/>

Public Health Law Center

<https://www.publichealthlawcenter.org/topics/commercial-tobacco-control>

- Commercial Tobacco-Free K-12 School Model Policy
- Commercial Tobacco-Free K-12 School Model Policy: Questions & Answers
- Student Commercial Tobacco Use in Schools Alternative Measures (2019)
- JUUL and the Guinea Pig Generation: Public Health Concerns about Use by Young People (2018)
- How Schools Can Help Students Stay Tobacco-Free (2019)

No Limits Nebraska - Youth Empowerment Movement

<https://nolimitsnebraska.com>

NE Tobacco Quitline

- The Nebraska Tobacco Quitline, 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669), gives Nebraska residents free and confidential, 24/7 access to counseling and support services.
- Quitline services are available in 170 languages and Spanish-speaking residents are welcome to call, 1-855-DÉJELO-YA (1-855-335-3569).
- For more information: <http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Get-Help-to-Quit.aspx>

Resources

Tobacco Free Nebraska would like to acknowledge the following resources consulted in developing this toolkit:

The Tobacco Prevention Toolkit

Stanford University School of Medicine

<https://med.stanford.edu/tobaccopreventiontoolkit.html>

Kansas Vape-Free Schools Toolkit

Kansas Department of Health and Environment

https://www.kdheks.gov/tobacco/download/Vape_Free_Schools_Toolkit.pdf

School E-Cigarette Toolkit

Minnesota Department of Health

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/tobacco/ecigarettes/docs/schooltoolkit.pdf>

Ordering Information

ALUMINUM SIGNS

Contact Tobacco Free Nebraska at:

dhhs.tfn@nebraska.gov

Limit – 2 signs per building not to exceed 8 signs, 8 decals, 8 stickers per school district

PRINTABLE SIGNS/BANNERS

dhhs.tfn@nebraska.gov

NEBRASKA

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DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES