

◆ **Recommended Component:** **Assure Tobacco-Free Buildings and Grounds**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) identifies that a “tobacco-free environment” exists if the state, district, or school has a policy prohibiting cigarette, cigar, and pipe smoking, and smokeless tobacco use by students, faculty, staff, and visitors. The policy prohibits tobacco use in school buildings, on school grounds, in school buses or other vehicles used to transport students, and at off-campus, school-sponsored events. These “Tobacco-free environment” policies exist in 24.5% of states, 45.5% of districts, and 44.6% of schools.⁴

Assure Tobacco-Free Buildings and Grounds Checklist

- Enact tobacco-free laws and regulations
- Adopt school board policies mandating tobacco-free schools
- Educate school personnel, students, parents and the community about tobacco-free policies
- Develop systems to enforce policies

The following activities ensure that school buildings and grounds, including bathrooms and buses, will be tobacco-free during school hours and all school activities. Because these activities are policy-based, they can make a long-lasting impact on students with asthma and the overall school community.

► **Enact tobacco-free laws and regulations** that will mandate by law that school buildings and grounds, as well as buses, are 100 percent tobacco-free. Regulations should include clear methods and responsibilities for enforcement. Such local and state laws would require all activities taking place on school properties be tobacco-free. The Federal Pro-Children Act of 1994 prohibits smoking in federally funded facilities (see the American Lung Association Tip Sheet: Policies & Legislative Issues Affecting Asthma in Schools in the Master Planning section of this Toolkit).

Current tobacco-free state legislation ranges from a complete ban of tobacco use by students, staff and faculty on school property and during on- and off-site school activities, to laws that prohibit use by students and limit staff/faculty smoking to designated areas with specific ventilation requirements. (Detailed information is available in American Lung Association’s State Legislated Actions on Tobacco Issues; see the Resources section for ordering information.)

► **Adopt school board policies mandating tobacco-free schools.** Board policies should include both implementation and enforcement issues. Implementation should include tobacco control education and cessation services for students, faculty, and staff. Also be sure to work with unions/associations to adopt contract language that supports the policy. See the State of West Virginia Tobacco-Free Schools Policy included with this hand-out. Also refer to the Sample Nonsmoking Policy and Sample Nonsmoking Announcement Memo in the IAQ Coordinator’s Guide of IAQ Tools for Schools.

⁴ Fact Sheet: Tobacco-Use Prevention. CDC’s School Health Policies and Programs Study (SHPPS) 2000 (accessed August 4, 2006, <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyouth/shpps/factsheets/pdf/tobacco.pdf>)

What Should a School Policy on Tobacco Include?

The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention's *Guidelines for School Health Programs to Prevent Tobacco Use and Addiction*⁵ recommends that a school policy on tobacco use must be consistent with state and local laws and should include the following elements:

- An explanation of the rationale for preventing tobacco use (i.e., tobacco is the leading cause of death, disease, and disability)
- Prohibitions against tobacco use by students, all school staff, parents, and visitors on school property, in school vehicles, and at school-sponsored functions away from school property
- Prohibitions against tobacco advertising in school buildings, at school functions, and in school publications
- A requirement that all students receive instruction on avoiding tobacco use
- Provisions for students and all school staff to have access to programs to help them quit using tobacco
- Procedures for communicating the policy to students, all school staff, parents or families, visitors, and the community
- Provisions for enforcing the policy

- ▶ Educate school personnel, students, parents and the community about tobacco-free policies. The entire school community must understand what the actual tobacco-free policy stipulates and the consequences of an individual's violating the policy. A Sample Presentation/Outline to Union/Association or School Board about the Importance of Tobacco-free School Environments is included with this hand-out.
- ▶ Develop systems to enforce policies. Identify problem areas for targeted efforts (i.e., bathroom, stairwells). (See the Resources section of this Toolkit for more information about policy enforcement.)

REFERENCE MATERIALS

- ❖ State of West Virginia Tobacco-Free Schools Policy
- ❖ Sample Presentation/Outline to Union/Association or School Board about the Importance of Tobacco-free School Environments

⁵ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Guidelines for school health programs to prevent tobacco use and addiction. MMWR 1994;43(No. RR-2): 7-8.



State of West Virginia Tobacco-Free Schools Policy

Policy 2422 5a — Tobacco Free Schools
TITLE 126
LEGISLATIVE RULE
BOARD OF EDUCATION

SERIES 66
TOBACCO CONTROL (2422.5A)

126-66-1. General.

- 1.1. Scope. — This policy sets the requirement for schools in West Virginia to be tobacco free.
- 1.2. Authority. — W.Va. Constitution, Art. XII, § 2 and W.Va. Code 18-2-5.
- 1.3. Filing Date. — April 13, 1998
- 1.4. Effective Date. — May 13, 1998

126-66-2. Purpose.

2.1. The purpose of this policy is to prohibit the use or distribution of tobacco products in school buildings, on school grounds, in school-leased or -owned vehicles, and at all school affiliated functions in order to improve the health of West Virginia students and school personnel. Students under the age of 21 shall not possess any tobacco product at any time. The use of tobacco products has a direct link to numerous health problems, and this policy is intended to prevent students, school personnel and visitors from being exposed to secondhand smoke and prevent youth addiction to tobacco products. This policy is intended to promulgate a positive, pro-active approach to tobacco control. In addition, school personnel shall act as positive role models for students by not distributing or using tobacco products.

126-66-3. Application.

- 3.1. This policy shall apply at all times to any building, property or vehicle leased, owned or operated by a county board of education, a Regional Education Service Agency (RESA), the State Department of Education or the State Board of Education. This policy shall apply to any private building, or other property including automobiles or other vehicles used for school activities when students or staff are present.
- 3.2. No person shall distribute or use any tobacco product in any area defined in Section 3.1. of this policy at any time. In addition, students under the age of 21 shall not possess any tobacco product at any time in areas or situations defined in Section 3.1.
- 3.3. Individuals supervising students off school grounds are prohibited from distributing or using any tobacco product while in the presence of students or any time while engaged in any activities directly involving students.
- 3.4. No school or board property, as defined in Section 3.1. of this policy, or school, county, RESA or state publication may be used for advertising of any tobacco product.
- 3.5. Groups using areas described in Section 3.1 shall sign agreements with the county board of education agreeing to comply with this policy and to inform students, parents, and spectators that this policy remains in force on evenings, weekends, and other times that school is not in session.

126-66-4. Implementation.

4.1. All county boards of education, schools and RESAs must have a tobacco control policy that meets the stipulations of this policy and adheres to the following guidelines by January 1, 1998. A copy of the county policy should be submitted to the Office of Student Services and Assessment in the West Virginia Department of Education for approval.

4.1.1 Administration:

The tobacco control policy should make reference to:

- a. the responsibility of school administration to implement provisions of this policy, specifically education, communication, and enforcement provisions;
- b. clear procedures for identification, intervention, and referral of students with tobacco-related problems; and
- c. maintenance of an environment for students, staff, and visitors that presents no physical harm, discomfort, or unsanitary condition resulting from tobacco product use.

State of West Virginia Tobacco-Free Schools Policy (cont.)

4.1.2. Communication: The tobacco control policy must include, at a minimum, procedures for communicating the policy to students, school staff, parents, families, visitors, and the community at large. This policy must be communicated through, at a minimum, the following mechanisms:

- a. staff development;
- b. employee and student handbooks;
- c. parent/guardian notification; and
- d. general public notification (e.g., signs, announcements)

4.1.3. Prevention Education: The tobacco control policy should reference, at a minimum, required K-12 tobacco prevention education as outlined in the following:

- a. State Board of Education Policy 2520, Health Education; and
- b. Safe and Drug-Free Schools guidelines.

4.1.4. Cessation Support Education: The tobacco control policy must address how the RESA, county or school plans to:

- a. provide or refer, if available, to voluntary cessation education and support programs which address the physical, psychological, and social issues associated with nicotine addiction and provide on-going support and reinforcement necessary for desired behavior change; and
- b. provide information about available programs to all 7-12 grade students and staff on a regular basis.

4.2. Board Action: All county boards of education, schools, RESAs and the State Department of Education must develop procedures to assure compliance with the stipulations of this policy. Compliance is mandatory.

4.2.1. Enforcement provisions for students, staff and the public are to be included in policy.

- a. Such action for students may include, but is not limited to: counseling, school/community service, parent guardian notification, mandatory education sessions, police notification, and/or prosecution.
- b. Such action for staff may include, but is not limited to: referral to Employee Assistance Program (EAP); conference with supervisor; and disciplinary actions consistent with county, RESA or State Board of Education personnel policy.
- c. Such action for the public may include, but is not limited to: request to stop use or leave premises; and police notification.

4.2.2. Enforcement measures should be aligned with:

- a. State Board of Education Policy 4373, Student Code of Conduct;
- b. State Board of Education Policy 5310, Personnel Staff Evaluation: Professional Responsibilities and Performance Standards;
- c. State Board of Education Policy 1461, Drug-Free Workplace; and
- d. W.Va. Code 16-9A-1 through 16-9A-4, Tobacco Usage Restrictions.

4.2.3. In addition, the policy should include referral to law enforcement authorities for appropriate action on violations of W.Va. Code 16-9A-1 through 16-9A-4 in accordance with measures outlined in individual school, county, or RESA policies.

4.3. Policy Review: The tobacco control policy should include provisions to review the policy every two years and make appropriate modifications as necessary.



I. Introduction: Smokefree and Tobacco-Free School Environments

Why important?

- Individual health of smokers/potential smokers
- Secondhand smoke as a source of short- and long-term health effects
- Secondhand smoke as an asthma trigger for students, faculty, and staff

II. Tobacco use among students

- Tobacco use usually begins in early adolescence.
- Cigarette smoking during childhood and adolescence produces significant health problems among young people. [For longer presentation: add information about health problems]
- Preventing young people from starting to use tobacco is critical to reducing the death and disease caused by tobacco use. [For longer presentation: add information about number of current smokers under 18; numbers of tobacco deaths, etc.]

III. Tobacco, indoor air quality and asthma

- Secondhand smoke is a major indoor air pollutant, containing about 4,000 chemicals, including 200 known poisons, such as formaldehyde and carbon monoxide, as well as 43 carcinogens.
- Secondhand smoke is a major asthma trigger for students, faculty, and staff; secondhand smoke worsens the asthma of an estimated 200,000 to 1 million children.
- Asthma stats/overview:
 - leading serious chronic illness among children
 - current attack prevalence is 4 million American children under 18¹
 - accounts for 14 million lost school days; is the leading causes of school absenteeism due to a chronic condition; third leading cause of hospitalization among children under 15
 - asthma breathing problems happen in episodes—can be anywhere from mild to life-threatening, requiring emergency medical treatment
 - each person with asthma has specific triggers; for many, it's cigarette smoke
- Creating asthma-friendly schools must include comprehensive smokefree policies.

IV. Tobacco as a workplace issue for faculty and staff

- Smokefree workplaces provide clean indoor air and protect employees from life-threatening effects of secondhand smoke.
- Health effects can have a major impact on employees' morale, productivity and sense of well-being.
- A smoking employee costs the employer at least \$1,000 per year in total excess direct and indirect healthcare costs.
- Workers have been awarded unemployment, disability and worker's compensation benefits for illness and loss of work due to exposure to secondhand smoke.

V. Tobacco use prevention [note: for short presentation, this section can be deleted.]

American Lung Association recommends that community/state policies to prevent tobacco use among young people should include:

- Tobacco education in the schools
- Restrictions on tobacco advertising and promotions on and near school grounds
- Complete ban on smoking by anyone on school grounds
- No sale of tobacco products to minors
- Tax increases on tobacco products so young people cannot afford them

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¹ National Center for Health Statistics. Raw Data from the *National Health Interview Survey*, US, 1997-2000. (Analysis by the American Lung Association Epidemiology and Statistics Unit, Using SPSS and SUDAAN software).

Sample Presentation/Outline to Union/Association or School Board About the Importance of Tobacco-Free School Environments (cont.)

VI. Elements of school-based smokefree policies [Note: for short presentation, this section can be shortened or deleted.]

- Educating students about how to resist social influences to smoke; incorporate specific tobacco use prevention programs
- Sustaining comprehensive school health education and community-wide programs that involve parents, media, community organizations and other elements of the adolescent's social environment
- Using teen-focused smoking cessation programs that involve appropriate facilitators who work well with teens in a non-judgmental way

Note: The net effects of smoking restrictions should reduce the psychosocial benefits of smoking to adolescents, making it less likely that those who experiment with smoking will continue to smoke and become dependent.

VII. Characteristics of model smokefree school policies:

- Smoking on school grounds, in school buildings, on school buses, and at school-sponsored events is prohibited for students, school personnel, and visitors.
- Schools enforce the smokefree policy and consistently administer penalties for violations.
- Disciplinary measures for non-compliance with policy are educational as well as punitive.
- Policy development includes active collaboration with teachers, students, and parent groups to give direction and build support for tobacco-free schools.
- All components of a school's smoking policy, including consequences for violations, are communicated in written and oral form to students, staff, and visitors.
- District-wide educational programs addressing the prevention of tobacco use are initiated or expanded as part of the policy implementation process.
- Smoking cessation programs or other incentives are developed for students, school personnel, and if possible, the public.
- Programs are periodically evaluated to provide information on acceptance and effectiveness of policy.
- Schools do not accept any contributions from the tobacco industry, including direct financial support and materials paid for or produced by or for the tobacco industry.