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# Tobacco-Free Schools Policy Checklist

K-12 Tobacco Prevention  
Tobacco Prevention and Control Program  
State of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services



## Section I: Tobacco-Free Schools Written Policy Content—Developing Comprehensive Policy

This section will help your team review current policies to build awareness regarding content and consider updates or changes that could be made at the school-level or advocated for at the district-level.

Tips for completing this section:

- Obtain all tobacco-related written policies and procedures from the district and the school (board policies, district & building-level policies, student/parent and staff handbooks, athletic contracts and others if applicable).
- Read the following questions regarding policy content and place an **X** in the proper box based on the written policies and procedures.
- Get input from a diverse group of partners from the school, district, and community regarding these questions.
- Utilize the Notes section to document discussion that arises.

<b>Key Elements of Recommended Tobacco Policy:</b>			
<b>The written policy:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Notes</b>
1. Prohibits use of <u>all</u> tobacco products on all school property, including grounds, buildings, parking areas and school vehicles, and at any school-sponsored event (on- or off-campus).			
2. Defines tobacco to mean <u>all</u> forms of tobacco and tobacco use.			
3. States that tobacco possession by a person under age 19 or by students is against the law.			
4. Applies to all students, staff and visitors and applies to all federally funded pre-K – 12 schools, including nursery schools, childcare centers and Head Start programs.			
5. Requires the posting of signs informing students, staff and visitors that school grounds are tobacco-free.			
6. Identifies specific enforcement procedures and consequences for violating school policies.			

## Section I: Tobacco-Free Schools Written Policy Content—Developing Comprehensive Policy (continued)

### Additional Best Practices for Written Policy Content:

Answer the following questions regarding policy content.

The written policy:	Yes	No	Notes
7. Includes a rationale for being tobacco-free.			
8. Establishes a protocol for communicating both the policy and the rationale to all students, staff and visitors.			
9. Includes language restricting items from school property that might contribute to tobacco use and acceptability (such as lighters, clothing with logos).			
10. Includes a requirement for tobacco prevention education for all students.			
11. Includes provisions against accepting tobacco industry funds.			
12. Includes language prohibiting tobacco advertising in school buildings and school functions.			
13. Includes consequences for violating school tobacco policy that are non-punitive as well as progressively punitive elements (such as an education program versus suspension).			
14. Includes provisions for students and staff to have access to programs to help them quit using tobacco.			
15. Includes language prohibiting distribution of tobacco products.			
16. Includes language outlining tobacco use rules for staff living in residencies connected to schools.			

## Section II: Tobacco Prevention Communication and Resources—*Translating Policy to Practice*

Tips for completing this section:

- Get input from a diverse group of partners from the school, district, and community regarding these questions.
- Utilize the Notes section to document discussion that arises.
- Plan to conduct annual or bi-annual review to evaluate implementation of written policies.

<b>Best Practices for Communicating Tobacco Policies and Procedures:</b>			
Answer the following questions regarding policy communication.			
<b>The School:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Notes</b>
1. Posts tobacco-free signage at all main entrances or sections of the building, event locations (sports fields, auditoriums etc.) and on district buses/vehicles. <i>(For more ideas on signage, complete the Supplemental Activity: Tobacco Signage Review included at the end of the checklist)</i>			
2. Uses a procedure for communicating school tobacco violations with parents or guardians.			
3. Includes statements in the student/parent handbook regarding no-tobacco use, and requires parent/guardian signature.			
4. Includes no-tobacco use requirements in athletic contracts and requires parent/guardian signature.			
5. Includes no-tobacco use agreements in contracts with outside vendors or groups using school facilities (e.g., landscaping companies, construction companies, youth groups, recreation departments and others), if applicable.			
6. Explains the policy, the rationale for being tobacco free, consequences for violations and available resources in newsletter articles or other communications to parents/guardians.			
7. Makes announcements at school events (e.g. sporting events, school plays, talent shows etc.) to remind students, staff, and visitors of the policy.			

## Section II: Tobacco Prevention Communication and Resources—*Translating Policy to Practice* (continued)

### Best Practice resources and programs for tobacco prevention and cessation

Answer the following questions about tobacco programs and resources.

The School:	Yes	No	Notes
8. Implements comprehensive health education curriculum, including tobacco prevention concepts and student skill development. <i>If yes, in the "Notes" indicate what education is being done and at what level (e.g., Towards No Tobacco-7<sup>th</sup> grade, Life Skills Training Curriculum grades 9-12)</i>			
9. Has resources visibly available to encourage tobacco cessation for students, staff, visitors, and parents/guardians (e.g. posters, tip cards, brochures for telephone-based counseling, web-based programs, local resources or state resources).			
10. Provides assistance to students who want to quit using tobacco products (such as the N-O-T program, <a href="http://www.quitnet.com">www.quitnet.com</a> , <a href="http://mylastdip.com">mylastdip.com</a> , referral to Alaska's Tobacco QuitLine, or other local resources). <i>If yes, in the "Notes" indicate what cessation assistance is offered.</i>			
11. Links with available community-based tobacco prevention and policy activities (e.g. works with the local health agency on community policies or programs, joins community coalitions, works with student advocacy groups or state-wide media campaigns).			
12. Provides information to students, staff, visitors and parents/guardians regarding tobacco prevention efforts, the health risks of tobacco use, policies, and resources for cessation.			
13. Provides information to students, staff, visitors and parents/guardians regarding the dangers of secondhand smoke.			
14. Provides culturally appropriate information to students, staff, visitors and parents/guardians regarding the dangers of Iqmik and/or other smokeless tobacco products.			

## Section III: Tobacco Use Behavior and Enforcement—*Translating Policy to Practice*

Tips for completing this section:

- Get input from a diverse group of partners from the school, district, and community regarding these questions.
- Utilize the notes section to document where (e.g. behind the gym, bus stop, parking lot) and when (e.g. during school, at lunch, after school, after school events) tobacco use is seen or evidence of tobacco use is observed.
- Plan to conduct annual or bi-annual review of this section to evaluate tobacco use and develop plans to address problem areas.

### Assessing Tobacco Use Behavior:

Answer the following questions about tobacco use around the school.

	Yes	No	Notes
1. Students are seen using tobacco on school property. This includes cigarettes, chew, or other forms of tobacco.			
2. Staff are seen using tobacco on school property or in school vehicles.			
3. Students and/or staff are seen using tobacco in district vehicles or in private vehicles on school and/or district property.			
4. Visitors are seen using tobacco on school property.			
5. Students, staff and/or visitors are seen using tobacco at school-sponsored events (on or off campus).			
6. Students are seen during school hours near school property using tobacco.			
7. There is evidence of tobacco use on school property (e.g. cigarette butts, cigarette packaging, chew tobacco tins, tobacco spit in sinks).			

## Section III: Tobacco Use Behavior and Enforcement—*Translating Policy to Practice (continued)*

### **Assessing Policy Enforcement:**

Answer the following questions about what you observe about policy enforcement.

	Never	At Times	Always	Notes
8. The school enforces tobacco policy with students and utilizes clear procedures for handling violations.				
9. The school utilizes a progressive discipline plan to enforce tobacco policy with students (i.e. the consequences are less punitive for first offenses and become more punitive. Less punitive options may include tobacco education versus suspension). <i>State the discipline plan in the notes.</i>				
10. The school enforces the tobacco policy with staff and utilizes clear and consistent procedures for handling violations.				
11. The school enforces the tobacco policy with visitors and utilizes clear procedures for handling violations (e.g. providing information about tobacco policy and providing cessation information).				
12. Staff are identified to monitor and enforce the policy.				
13. The school uses a protocol for training staff regarding tobacco policies and enforcement strategies.				

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## Supplemental Activity—Tobacco Signage Review

Tips for completing this supplemental section:

- Complete this section with a student group or other interested parties in order to determine current signage location and any gaps.
- Use the notes sections to list other places signage was found, places where additional signs may be needed or note where use is occurring.

NOTE: This tool is meant to help to determine where signage is located and where it may be considered. It is not meant to imply that signs need to be in all of these locations.

Signage is clearly posted:	Yes	No	Notes
At main entrances to the building			
At perimeters of the school/district property			
In parking lots			
At major walkways			
At all major entryways			
Near the main office			
In all auditoriums			
In all gymnasiums			
At all athletic fields, especially in the spectator area			
At major student gathering places			
In all restrooms			
In loading areas			
In major stairwells			
In school or district vehicles/buses			
Signs are posted in multiple languages			
Other:			