

Western School District

Tobacco Free Environment Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

The Western School District shall be a Tobacco Free Environment.

This policy shall apply to:

- All buildings, facilities, grounds and properties under the jurisdiction of the Western School District.
- All vehicles parked on school property, school buses, board-owned or leased vehicles.
- All staff, students and any person present on School District property, 24 hours a day - every day.
- All school trips, off-site school activities, and activities outside of school hours.
- Anyone transporting students to or from school events, and while in the presence of students during those events.

RATIONALE

The Western School Board believes it has an obligation to provide a safe and healthy environment for all students, parents, employees and visitors.

The Board supports current literature and research that tobacco usage is addictive and it kills and disables. In addition, second hand smoke is a health hazard to others. The Board also believes that allowing tobacco use on school property is in conflict with prevention messages within the curriculum and the classroom.

Also, in addition to the philosophical reasons, schools may face liability issues by allowing tobacco use on their premises, particularly in light of laws that intentionally limit access and the sale of tobacco products to youth.

This policy is in support of our comprehensive school health programs designed to help students learn and foster healthy lifestyles by providing them with knowledge, skills, social support and environmental reinforcement.

PROCEDURES

- 1.1 Principals shall establish protocols and procedures to implement the Tobacco Free Environment Policy. Since each school has its own unique situation, each should, through a team approach with teachers, students, parents, school councils, neighbors, and other partners, develop a plan which can work for its situation/its property. Principals will need to be cognizant of the potential for off the property problems.
- 1.2 The Director/principals/others shall notify students, families, educational personnel and school visitors of the Tobacco Free Environment Policy through school handbooks, web pages, signage, and other appropriate methods of communication.
- 1.3 The School District shall have a district contact person(s) to help where necessary with policy implementation. It is recognized that in the beginning, this policy will create some unique challenges that will require a team approach to address.
- 1.4 This policy shall be respectful of traditional Aboriginal use of tobacco for ceremonial purposes.

2. Definition

- 2.1 For the purposes of this policy, 'tobacco' is defined to include all cigarettes, cigars, pipes, clove cigarettes, or other smoking products, and spit tobacco, also known as smokeless, dip, chew, and snuff, in any form.

3. Violations

- 3.1 A person shall be considered in violation of this policy when he/she is observed:
 - Holding a visible cigarette (lit or unlit) or any other tobacco product;
 - Throwing away a cigarette;
 - Exhaling smoke from the mouth or nose; or
 - Occupying or exiting a bathroom cubicle, vehicle, space, or area from which smoke is emanating.

A person is also in violation of this policy when he/ she provides tobacco to a student or there is other evidence of tobacco use.

4. Student Offenses

- 4.1 The principal and/ or designate will review incidents of violations of the

Tobacco Free Environment Policy. If the charges are found to be valid, the principal and/ or designate may follow the suggested procedures. Refinements of these suggested procedures may evolve at the individual school or at district level.

4.2 ***First Offense and Second Offense***

- 4.2.1 Counsel the student concerning the harmful effects of smoking and/ or tobacco use and inform the student of the provisions of the Tobacco Free Environment Policy and procedures; and
- 4.2.2 Telephone the student's parents and inform them of the infraction, the penalty, and of the penalties for future infractions;
- 4.2.3 Have a copy of the Tobacco Free Environment Policy sent home to be signed by parent or guardian and returned to school.

4.3 ***Third Offense***

- 4.3.1 Assign the student a one school-day in-school or out-of-school suspension.
- 4.3.2 Counsel the student. Consider arranging enrolment in a cessation program offered by a support group.
- 4.3.3 Conduct a telephone conference with the student's parents, inform them of the infraction and the penalty, or request that they come to school for a conference, if the principal sees such a conference as desirable.

4.4 ***Fourth and Each Additional Offense***

- 4.4.1 Assign the student a three school-day in-school or out-of-school suspension.
- 4.4.2 Arrange for enrolment in a cessation program offered by a support group.
- 4.4.3 Conduct a telephone conference with the student's parents, inform them of the infraction and the penalty, or request that they come to school for a conference, if the principal sees such a conference as desirable.

4.5 ***Enumeration of Offenses***

Offenses shall be cumulative during a school year and are not cumulative over the school years.

EDUCATION AND SUPPORT

In primary and elementary schools, the importance of developing and delivering effective curriculum is critical to help students avoid getting started with smoking. In junior and senior high schools, cessation programs or quitting aids will be necessary since some students are already addicted. The District and

the school staff/community will need to offer organized support to these students. School/District personnel may find it necessary to involve addictions counselors, public health nurses, The Alliance for the Control of Tobacco, the Cancer Society, the Lung Association, Smokers Help Line, etc. Students will need a great deal of support if they are trying to quit.

For students who find it difficult to quit smoking and who violate the policy, it might be productive to assign readings, write a report on the dangers of smoking, write an anti-smoking song or poem, prepare a presentation for other students, or calculate the expense of smoking over a period of time.

Anti smoking programs should be made available to:

- Instruct about immediate and long-term undesirable physiologic, cosmetic and social consequences of tobacco use.
- Decrease the social acceptability of tobacco use.
- Address reasons why young people smoke.
- Teach how to recognize and refute advertising and other social influences that promote tobacco use.
- Develop students' skills for resisting social influences that promote tobacco use.
- Develop necessary assertiveness, communication, goal-setting, and problem-solving skills that may enable students to avoid tobacco use and other health-risk behaviors.

POSITIVE ROLE MODELING

Children learn to smoke not only from peers but also by imitating adults. Adults who use tobacco inevitably influence students' attitudes by suggesting it is a responsible adult decision to use a tobacco product. A 24/7 tobacco-free environment, combined with educational efforts in the school, provides a genuine opportunity for all adults to serve as positive role models for not using tobacco. It is important that the environment which surrounds a young person be clear in its expectations and in its attitudes towards tobacco use.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Director or designee(s) will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating this policy and these procedures.

This policy should be reviewed with principals on a periodic basis. The procedures should be reviewed and revised as necessary.

