

HVSSSC

Hudson Valley Student Support Services Center

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FACT SHEET

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Tobacco Free School Policy

Hudson Valley Student Support Services Center- Sample Policy

Policy # _____

Date _____

The following tobacco policy was developed in accordance with the New York State Expanded Clean Indoor Air Act 2003, ~1399-o,p,t, New York State Education Law ~ Article 9 Section 409, and Article 17 Section 804.

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 while on school property, at a school-sponsored event, or in a school-owned or school-contracted vehicle. To achieve these ends, school leaders shall prepare, adopt, and implement a comprehensive plan to prevent tobacco use that includes:

- A sequential educational program to prevent tobacco use that is integrated within the school health education curriculum; that is aimed at influencing student' attitudes, skills, and behaviors; and that is taught by well-prepared and well-supported staff
- Establishment and strict enforcement of completely tobacco-free school environments at all times
- Prohibition of tobacco advertising
- Appropriate counseling services and/or referrals for students and staff to help them address tobacco use/dependence issues
- Cooperation with community-wide efforts to prevent tobacco use
- Strategies to involve family members in program development and implementation

RATIONALE

Tobacco smoking is considered the chief preventable cause of premature disease and death in the United States. Smokeless tobacco can cause oral cancer within five years of regular use. 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. Research conclusively proves that:

- Regular use of tobacco is ultimately harmful to every user's health, directly causing cancer, respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, adverse pregnancy outcomes, and premature death
- Second-hand smoke is a threat to the health of everyone it contacts
- Nicotine is a powerfully addictive substance and the teen brain is most susceptible
- 80% of regular tobacco users begin before 19 years of age
- Tobacco use interferes with students' attendance, learning, and discipline
- Cigarettes are the number one cause of fatal fires in residences

TOBACCO USE PROHIBITED

No person shall sell, distribute, or use a tobacco product at any time anywhere on school grounds, in any vehicles used to transport children or school personnel, in any vehicle (public or private) while on school grounds, or at any off-campus school sponsored events. For purposes of this policy, "school grounds" means any building, structure, and surrounding outdoor grounds of a school contained within the District's legally defined property boundaries as registered in the county clerk's office, and any vehicles used to transport children or school personnel. Furthermore, tobacco use shall not be permitted at any time indoors or on the grounds of any facility owned, operated, leased, or contracted by the district as educational or library service for students pre k-12, unless legally excepted.

For purposes of this policy, tobacco is defined to include any lit or unlit cigarette, cigar, cigarillo, pipe, bidi, clove cigarette, and any other smoking product, and smokeless tobacco (spit, dip, chew, and/or snuff) in any form.

TOBACCO POSSESSION PROHIBITED

Possession, distribution, or sale of any tobacco products, rolling papers, or other paraphernalia such as lighters or matches by students are prohibited.

TOBACCO PROMOTION PROHIBITED

Tobacco promotional items (i.e. brand names, logos, and other identifiers), including clothing (see Dress Code), bags, lighters, and other personal articles, are not permitted on school grounds, in school vehicles, or at school-sponsored events. Tobacco advertising and sponsorship is prohibited on school grounds, in all school-sponsored publications, and at all school-sponsored events. School libraries shall order all periodicals by only using the school name and address, and shall not order periodicals or editions that contain tobacco advertising.

CLOSED CAMPUS

No student may leave the school campus during breaks in the school day to use a tobacco product. Signs to this effect will be posted at appropriate locations.

COMMUNICATION

The school administrator shall notify students, families, education personnel, and school visitors of the tobacco-free policy in handbooks and newsletters, on posted notices and/or signs, and by other efficient means. Signs will be at every school building and grounds entrance, school vehicle, and other appropriate locations. Signs shall include one of the following: "Tobacco-Free Zone"; "No Tobacco Use"; and/or a "No Smoking/Chewing" symbol, which consists of a pictorial representation of a burning cigarette and can of chew tobacco enclosed in a circle with a bar across it. Public announcements will be made at district sponsored events such as public board meetings, sporting events, musical concerts, open houses, and parent/family activity events. Outside interest groups who use district facilities will be notified in writing regarding this Tobacco Policy. To the extent possible, schools and districts may use local media to publicize the policies and help influence community norms about tobacco use.

ENFORCEMENT

The district shall designate school official(s) to enforce this policy and to address any violations (see Code of Conduct and Student Handbook). All staff members are asked to cooperate and to report violations to the designated administrator. Any tobacco product, rolling papers, or other paraphernalia, lighter, matches, or similar incendiary devices found in the possession of a student shall be confiscated by staff and discarded (or returned to parent/guardian). Students and employees also may be subject to relevant sanctions as determined by written school policy, including disciplinary action. Students who violate this policy may be offered a tobacco education program as an optional consequence or as an additional intervention. Other individuals in violation of this policy will be asked to refrain or to leave the premises. School staff shall be encouraged to participate in training on the correct and fair enforcement of tobacco-free policies.

PREVENTION PROGRAM AND INSTRUCTION

Tobacco use prevention education shall be integrated within the health education program provided, kindergarten through twelfth. The educational program

shall be based on theories and methods that have been proven effective by published research and consistent with the New York State health education standards.

STAFF TRAINING

Staff responsible for teaching tobacco use prevention shall have access to adequate pre-service training and participate in ongoing professional development activities to effectively deliver the education program as planned.

EDUCATIONAL REINFORCEMENT

Tobacco use prevention education shall be closely coordinated with the other components of the school health program. Tobacco use prevention concepts shall also be integrated into the instruction of other subject areas to the greatest extent possible.

School instructional staff shall collaborate with agencies that conduct tobacco use prevention education in the community and utilize/make available appropriate information materials. School staff shall also help interested students become involved with agencies and other organizations in the community that are working to prevent tobacco use.

CESSATION PROGRAM AVAILABILITY

The school health program shall include referrals to community resources and programs to help students and staff address tobacco use/dependence issues. School counselors or community agencies are encouraged to establish voluntary tobacco cessation programs at school. Attendance or completion of a tobacco cessation program is allowed as a voluntary substitute to suspension for possession or use of tobacco.

COOPERATION

The existence of a tobacco free environment for the benefit of all who occupy school district property will depend upon the thoughtfulness, consideration, and cooperation of all school personnel, students, and other individuals on school property. We invite the cooperation and understanding of all individuals in assuming responsibility for keeping our school district premises tobacco-free.