

Developing a 24/7 Tobacco-Free School Policy



Healthy Living Grantees can work with schools to establish and implement tobacco-free environments for students, staff, and visitors.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this guide is to help Healthy Living Grantees work with both public school districts and K-12 private schools to establish and implement tobacco-free environments for students, staff, and visitors. The material in this guide applies to collaborations with boards of education, superintendents, Safe School Committees, Healthy and Fit School Advisory Committees, school counselors, school nurses, students, parents, and community members.

In this guide, the term “24/7 policy” refers to a school policy that completely prohibits the use of tobacco and vapor products (with or without nicotine) by any person, at any time (including during non-school hours), in any place on school property or off-site during school-sponsored functions and events, and in school vehicles. A model 24/7 policy is attached to this guide as Appendix A.

This document acknowledges the traditional and sacred use of tobacco among American Indian people living in Oklahoma. Whenever the word tobacco is referenced in these materials, it refers to the use of commercial tobacco.



WHY ADOPT A 24/7 TOBACCO-FREE POLICY?

Both public and private schools play a vital role in raising awareness about the dangers of tobacco use and discouraging youth from using tobacco. Students are more likely to use tobacco products if they see other students, teachers, or visitors use them on school grounds.¹ Students who use tobacco products have significantly lower grades,² and students with lower academic achievement are more likely to use tobacco.¹

Schools can improve the health of students not only by educating them about the importance of healthy behaviors, but also by implementing policies that promote those behaviors. Tobacco-free policies that prohibit tobacco use 24 hours a day, seven days a week, provide opportunities for everyone – school administrators, staff, teachers, parents, visitors, and students – to demonstrate by example that tobacco use is not the norm and is unhealthy.¹

In recognition of the serious dangers associated with youth tobacco use, Oklahoma passed a law making schools 100 percent tobacco free, 24 hours a day and seven days a week. Yet schools may still want their own 24/7 tobacco-free policies for several reasons.

1. Vapor products (with or without nicotine)

Since state law does not prohibit the use of vapor products on school grounds, schools can add vapor products, such as e-cigarettes, to the number of prohibited items in their 24/7 tobacco-free policies. Why would a school want to do this? Vapor products are not regulated and may re-normalize tobacco use.³ The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention finds that while traditional tobacco product usage has decreased, youth use of vapor products tripled between 2013 and 2014.⁴ Nationally, 13.4 percent of high school students currently use vapor products.⁴ Air containing vapor aerosol is less safe than clean air. Many vapor products have been shown to emit chemicals known to cause cancer.^{5–11} Vapor product use has the potential to expose children, youth, and other people nearby to aerosolized nicotine and to other substances such as marijuana if the products have been altered.¹²

2. Tobacco marketing in schools

Adopting a 24/7 policy also gives schools the tools they need to counter tobacco marketing in the school environment. Through a 24/7 policy, schools can prohibit the tobacco and vapor industry from sponsoring events or funding school improvements. Tobacco companies have a history of providing donations or gifts to fund school events, providing school-based based education programs about the dangers of tobacco use, or financing school upgrades – all to bolster their image with the public. By supporting these kinds of programs, the companies get their name or brand on promotional materials, banners, ads, or gear. Youth who are exposed to this kind of advertising are more likely to hold favorable views of tobacco companies and more likely to experiment with tobacco.¹

3. Enforcement

Adopting your own 24/7 policy makes the state law easier to enforce. In fact, the state law encourages schools to adopt their own policies to enforce the Oklahoma 24/7 Tobacco Free Schools Act. A formal tobacco-free policy helps schools determine how they will handle students, staff, and visitors who use tobacco on campus.

Tobacco and Youth

88,000 Oklahoman youths under the age of 18 who are alive today in Oklahoma will die early from tobacco-related diseases.¹⁵

Each year in Oklahoma, 17,900 youths try smoking for the first time,¹⁶ and 4,200 youths under the age of 18 start daily smoking.¹⁵

In Oklahoma, 35.5 percent of high school youth reported they or someone they know smoked a tobacco product on school property during the past month.¹⁷



“I have not observed any e-cigarette or vapor products used on school property. It was important to add e-cigarettes and vapor products to the policy because if we did not, people would use them on school property.”

~ High School Counselor,
Northeast Oklahoma

WORKING WITH OKLAHOMA SCHOOLS

With nearly 700,000 students enrolled in schools in Oklahoma, both public and private schools are critical partners in protecting youth from the dangers of tobacco use. When approaching schools about adopting tobacco-free policies, the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) recommends that communities keep in mind the following:¹³

- Education will likely be the school's first priority, and health may only be a secondary one.
- Schools are busy places, and people who work at schools have many competing priorities.
- There are many different kinds of schools (e.g., public, private, charter, vocational, technical, alternative) and the needs of schools will vary by location.
- Similarly, decision-making processes will likely vary school by school. At some schools, policy adoption may take a long time and require multiple rounds of review.
- Schools sometimes need the support of the community even just to comply with existing laws.

Communities working with schools to develop and implement a tobacco-free policy should do the following:

1. **Learn about your local schools and school districts** before initiating a conversation about a tobacco-free policy. Ask key questions: What are the local school districts? Where are the schools located? What kinds of schools are there (e.g., charter, magnet, vocational, alternative)? How many schools are private schools? What ages do the various schools in your community serve? How many children are enrolled?
2. **Learn to speak the language of school educators.** For example, when educators hear about school health, they think about the school nurse or sex education. Learning their vocabulary is a great way to facilitate communication. A good resource to help you get started is the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors' publication *Speaking Education's Language: A Guide for Public Health Professionals Working in the Education Sector*.
3. If you have not already done so, **develop relationships with school personnel.** You can call to introduce yourself, find someone who can make an introduction for you at the school, or attend board meetings or school events.¹³
4. Once you have a relationship, **work to establish goals and expectations.** For example, how will you help the school meet its objectives? Who will you be working with at the school? When, where, and how will meetings take place? What is the best way to communicate with school personnel?
5. **Become a resource for schools.** For example, be familiar with the state law requiring schools to be tobacco free 24 hours a day, seven days a week – a law schools already have to follow. Demonstrate how you can help schools both to comply with this requirement and to address emerging challenges related to vapor products.

Having this information along with a basic understanding of the school landscape (both specific to the school you are working with and with respect to Oklahoma as a whole) will help you set the stage for drafting and implementing a tobacco-free policy.



PRACTICE TIP

Schools need to make sure they are fulfilling the 24/7 Tobacco Free Act's new requirements. Healthy Living Grantees can assist schools whose current policies may not meet the mandates of the state law. In fact, many schools may seek, or be very open to, such assistance. If you are approached by a school, this is the perfect opportunity to discuss additional elements that the school may want to add to their policy that go beyond the 24/7 Tobacco Free Act.

ASSESSING THE NEEDS AND READINESS OF A SCHOOL: INSTRUCTIONS FOR HEALTHY LIVING GRANTEES

Assessing the needs and readiness of a school will help guide the development of a tobacco-free school policy. TSET has created several resources for Healthy Living Grantees to use to assess the needs and readiness of schools, including a *Healthy Living Assessment Guide*, an *Informal Conversation Guide*, and a *Policy and Practice Tool*.

Form a Partnership

Before Healthy Living Grantees can begin the assessment process, they will need to establish a partnership with the school. The *Informal Conversation Guide* provides questions to facilitate the initial conversation between grantees and the school's leadership, and directions for establishing a partnership before moving to the next assessment step. The *Healthy Living Assessment Guide* has more information about using the *Informal Conversation Guide*.

Assess Needs

Once a Healthy Living Grantee has partnered with a school, the next step is to assess the school's needs. A needs assessment can be completed by reviewing the school's existing policies and practices. Grantees should use the *Policy and Practice Tool* to determine the strengths and weaknesses of any existing tobacco policies. It is important to note that some schools may have tobacco control related practices that are not included in existing policies. If that is the case, those practices should be added to the policy. The *Healthy Living Assessment Guide* has more information about using the *Policy and Practice Tool*.

Assess Readiness

After completing the needs assessment using the *Policy and Practice Tool*, the Healthy Living Grantee must assess the school's readiness level. The readiness assessment will identify how willing and prepared the school is to protect student's health. Readiness levels can range from low (little to no awareness about the problem) to high (aware of the problem and taking steps to address it). Schools with a low readiness level may not be aware of the need for a stronger tobacco-free school policy, or they may think that a stronger tobacco-free school policy cannot help improve student health. Schools with a high readiness level will be more ready to adopt and implement a tobacco-free school policy. The strategies used to help schools develop a tobacco-free school policy are different depending on the school's readiness level. Conducting a readiness assessment can help ensure successful adoption and implementation of the tobacco-free school policy. TSET has created the *Organizational Readiness Model* to help Healthy Living Grantees assess school readiness. It includes strategies that others have used to increase readiness. The *Healthy Living Assessment Guide* also has more strategies that may be useful.



State Law

The 24/7 Tobacco Free Schools Act, which is effective as of August 22, 2015, requires schools in Oklahoma to be 100 percent tobacco free, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.¹⁴ The law prohibits the use of tobacco in any form, by any person, any place on school property and during any school-sponsored functions and events.

Specifically, the law states: “The use of a tobacco product shall be prohibited in or on an educational facility that offers an early childhood education program or in which children in grades kindergarten through twelve are educated. The use of a tobacco product shall also be prohibited in school vehicles, and at any school-sponsored or school-sanctioned event or activity.” The full text of the law is available [online](#).

The state law encourages schools to adopt their own policies to enforce the Oklahoma 24/7 Tobacco Free Schools Act: “Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit a public school district or private school from having more restrictive policies regarding tobacco products in or on an educational facility, in school vehicles and at any school-sponsored or school-sanctioned event or activity.”

As state law does not mention vapor products, schools are free to prohibit the use of these products, such as e-cigarettes. Schools can do this by adopting a 24/7 policy like the model policy in Appendix A.





COMMON TOBACCO PRODUCTS

New products are constantly emerging, but generally tobacco and vapor products fall into three main categories:

1. Conventional combustible tobacco products

Conventional combustible tobacco products are lit and smoked, and they include cigarettes, cigars, little cigars, and cigarillos. Cigars, little cigars, and cigarillos are often sold individually or in small packages. These products are often low-priced and flavored like candy, making them especially attractive to young people.

2. Smokeless tobacco products

Traditional smokeless tobacco products are chewed or snorted, and they include chewing tobacco, moist snuff (also known as dip), snus, and nasal snuff. These products are used in different ways:

- Chewing tobacco and snuff are placed in the mouth and eventually spit out.
- Snus comes in what look like miniature tea bags. People will place snus in their mouth until it dissolves. No spitting is required.
- As the name suggests, nasal snuff is inhaled through the nose.

Recently, smokeless tobacco has evolved and now can look like candy, breath strips, or toothpicks. Youths will put these products in their mouths and keep them there until the product dissolves.

Most of these smokeless tobacco products come in flavors that are appealing to youth, such as mint, wintergreen, berry, chocolate, cherry, and apple.

3. Vapor products

Vapor products (also known as electronic cigarettes, e-cigarettes, electronic nicotine delivery systems, e-cigars, e-cigarillos, e-pipes, e-hookahs, hookah pens, etc.) are battery operated devices, often designed to look like, and be used in a similar manner to, conventional tobacco products.

Users of vapor products inhale a vaporized liquid solution that may or may not contain nicotine. Because the liquid solution is converted into vapor, the use of electronic smoking devices is sometimes referred to as “vaping” rather than smoking.

Please note that the information on this page is adapted from the [Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids](#).

STEPS TO ADOPTING A 24/7 TOBACCO-FREE POLICY

The following checklist outlines key steps for developing and implementing a 24/7 tobacco-free policy. Healthy Living Grantees can share and review this checklist with school districts.

Step 1: Assemble a team

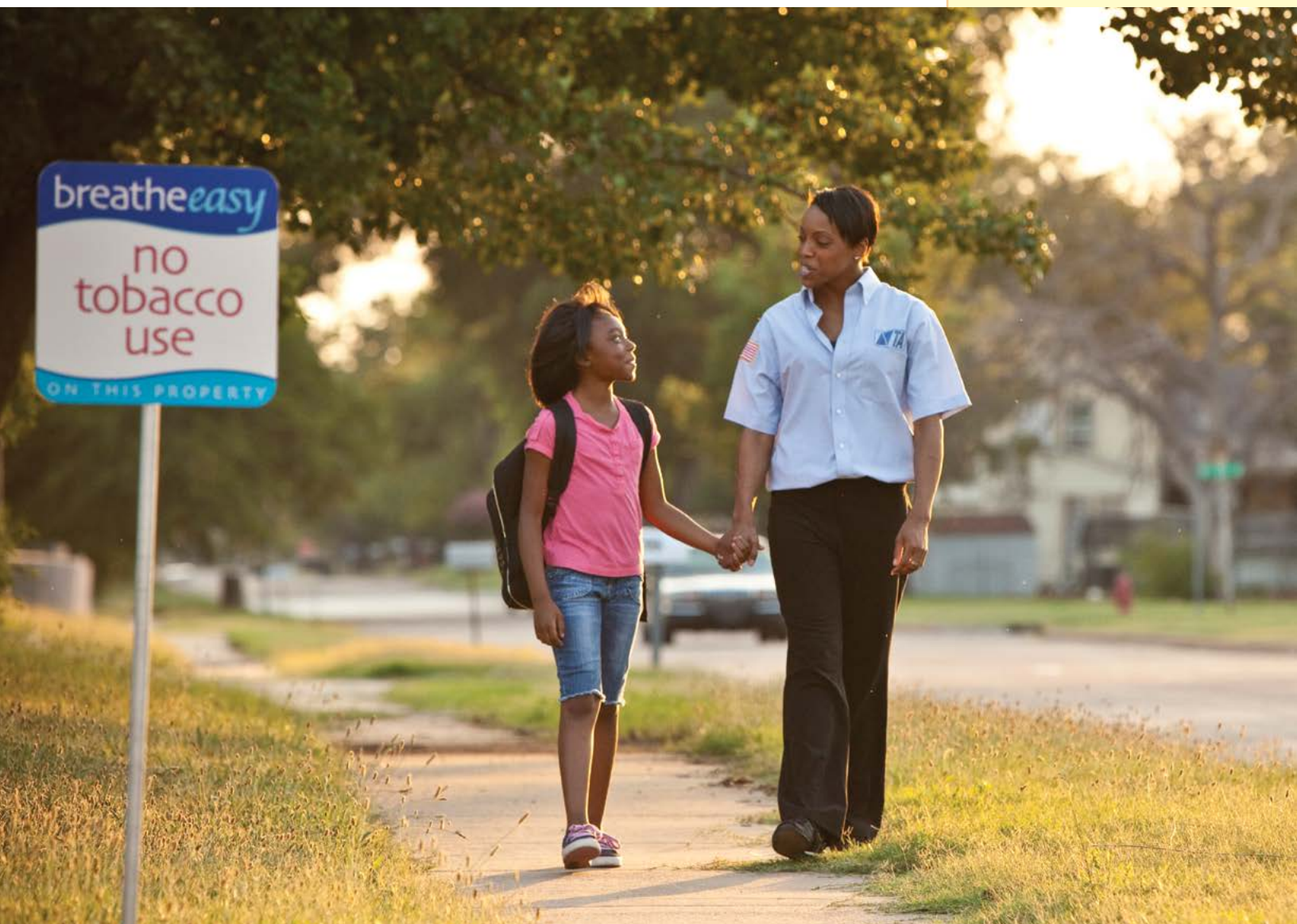
Community engagement and support is vital to a successful policy. Tobacco-free policies rely on everyone doing their part, whether that means refraining from using tobacco products where they are prohibited, or discussing the policy with friends, neighbors, and coworkers. Therefore, it is extremely important to bring together a team of parents, students, school board members, school administrators, school health professionals, and members of the public.

Here are some ideas for how to form a team and build support:

- ☐ Seeking out parents, students, school nurses, teachers, PTAs/PTOs, and other advocates within the community and asking for their support and feedback.
- ☐ Informing school administrators and the school board of your desire to implement a new policy or revise an existing policy. Ask for their input, support, and cooperation.
- ☐ Meeting with a school's counselor(s), Safe Schools Committee, school nurse(s), Healthy and Fit School Advisory Committee, and other people in the community, such as local officials or community groups, and enlisting their support and feedback.

"The most important reason for including e-cigarettes and vaping in our policy is for the health and safety of the kids and community. Policies are adopted to keep people healthy and safe."

~ District Superintendent,
Northwest Oklahoma



Step 2: Assess the current policy

Find out whether the school has a written policy on the use of tobacco products. You may be able to learn this by reviewing the school's student and faculty handbooks, policy manuals, and other administrative materials. It also may be helpful to ask longtime administrators and faculty for background on how the policy was developed.

If the school already has a policy, compare it with the model policy in Appendix A, and review it against the policy checklist in Appendix B. Ask the following questions:

- ☐ Does the current policy prohibit the use of tobacco products, including combustible tobacco, vapor products (with or without nicotine), and all other tobacco products?
- ☐ Does the current policy apply to all staff, students, and visitors?
- ☐ Does the policy apply at all school-sponsored events?
- ☐ Does the policy apply to all school property?
- ☐ Does the policy apply to all school vehicles?
- ☐ Does the policy language specifically state that the policy applies "24/7" or "24 hours a day, seven days a week"?

After performing this evaluation, you should be able to identify gaps in the current policy and determine which provisions should be added, improved, or removed.

Step 3: Develop a policy

If the school does not have a policy, or if the school's policy needs to be significantly revised, use the model policy in Appendix A as a starting point. If the existing policy functions adequately, you may wish to update it with some of the language from the model policy.

Be sure to include the following elements of a strong policy:

- ☐ **Introduction:** The introduction should explain the reasons for the new policy. This will help people understand why they should comply with the policy, and possibly protect the policy against any legal challenges. There are a variety of strong reasons to keep schools tobacco free and vapor free. These reasons are presented in the section "Why Adopt a 24/7 Tobacco-Free Policy?" of this guide. For a sample introduction, refer to the model policy in Appendix A.
- ☐ **Definitions:** For clarity, you should define all key terms in the policy, such as "tobacco" and "24/7 tobacco-free campus."
- ☐ **Scope:** Make sure the policy states when, where, and to whom it applies. The model policy applies to everyone, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, on all school property, in all school vehicles, and at off-site locations during school-sponsored functions and events. This means the policy applies before, during, and after school, and on weekends and holidays. It covers the school football stadium and parking lot. It extends to visitors at athletic games, students on school-sponsored trips, and teachers in their cars while they're parked in the school parking lot.
- ☐ **Prohibitions:** Clearly list all items prohibited by the policy. At a minimum, tobacco use must be prohibited 24 hours a day, seven days a week, as required by state law. The model 24/7 policy also prohibits the use of vapor products (with or without nicotine), the acceptance of donations from the tobacco industry, and the presence of ash receptacles on school property.

"Since we have adopted our policy, the whole attitude has changed among the school and the community about tobacco use. People respect the policy. The staff and faculty are happy because they like the tobacco-free environment."

~ Superintendent,
Southeast Oklahoma

PRACTICE TIP

Regardless of whether you're starting from scratch or updating an existing policy, keep it simple and specific. Avoid any gray areas that could allow for creative interpretation.



While traditional tobacco product use has decreased, youth use of vapor products tripled between 2013 and 2014.⁴ Nationally, 13.4 percent of high school students currently use vapor products.⁴

- **Enforcement:** In addition to explaining what conduct is prohibited, set forth the consequences for violating the policy. If the school already has adequate disciplinary procedures in place, you may refer to the procedures in the student and faculty handbooks.
- **Effective date:** The effective date is the date on which everyone must begin to comply with the policy and you will begin enforcing it. You will want to set an effective date that is several weeks after the date of adoption so that you will have time to implement the policy. Many Oklahoma school districts and private schools have set effective dates that allow a four-week period to complete implementation measures, which may include informing the public about the new policy. (Note that the 24/7 Tobacco Free Schools Act is effective as of August 20, 2015. However, the school policy can be adopted at a later date.)

Step 4: Present the draft policy to the school board

Once you develop a draft policy, you will need to present it to the school board for approval. Make sure you obtain and submit the necessary forms to get on the school board agenda. In the case of a private school, the person or group that approves school policies may be the principal, the private school's equivalent of a school board, or some other governing body. You will need to find out who is in charge of policy adoption.

Preparation is key. Select a group of people from different parts of the community to present to the school board; gather students, teachers, parents, local health care providers, and other influential community leaders. Research the school board members to learn their positions on tobacco-free and vapor-free schools. Then develop and rehearse your presentation, and prepare answers to anticipated questions.

Create a strong presentation:

- Include brief presentations covering each of the reasons for a tobacco-free policy that are listed in the section "Why Adopt a 24/7 Tobacco-Free Policy?" of this guide. Ask different people to present each reason. For example, you could ask a doctor to explain tobacco-related health hazards, such as the effect of nicotine on adolescent brain development and the relationship between smoking and childhood respiratory diseases. You could ask youth coalition members to present data on youth tobacco use and speak about their support for a 24/7 policy.
- Anticipate where there might be challenges. For example, although state law prohibits tobacco use, state law does not prohibit the use of vapor products. If someone raises this issue, be prepared to explain why it is important to include prohibition of vapor products in the school policy.
- Answer standard legal questions. Know the state and local law thoroughly, so you can answer questions about what the law requires and why the proposed policy is legal.

A few tips:

- Ask students, school staff, and community members to attend the meeting. Good attendance will show that the effort has broad support. Submitting a petition signed by community members can also be effective.
- If a board member asks a question that you can't answer, don't worry. Be honest and admit you don't know but would be happy to look it up after the meeting. Immediately after the meeting, obtain an answer and submit it in writing to the school board.

If the school wishes to make changes to the model policy language before adoption, grantees should contact the Oklahoma State Department of Health, Center for Advancement of Wellness to identify language options that will address their needs.



"The campus is well covered with 24/7 tobacco-free signs and decals. Our tobacco-free message is posted on our website, electronic signage, and is announced at games before the game starts and at each quarter."

~ High School Principal,
South Central Oklahoma



Students who use tobacco products have significantly lower grades,² and students with lower academic achievement are more likely to use tobacco.¹

Step 5: Implement and promote the policy

Once the policy is adopted, you will need to do a bit of legwork to prepare for implementation. The policy should include an effective date that allows time for this preparation.

Policy Implementation To-Do List

Communicate the new policy to students, faculty, and community members. Try the following ideas:

- ☐ **Present at teacher in-services or other teacher meetings**
These trainings and meetings provide a great opportunity to discuss what the policy covers, why it is important, and how teachers can help support it.
- ☐ **Invite youth groups** to create and make announcements.
- ☐ **Place policy details** in student and staff handbooks and on the school website.
- ☐ **Make announcements** over loudspeaker systems at all school-related events, including athletic events, meetings, concerts, plays, etc.
- ☐ **Distribute promotional items** at all school-related events, including athletic events, meetings, concerts, plays, etc.
- ☐ **Request support from school-related community organizations**
In addition to making sure their members and guests comply with the policy when attending events on school grounds, school-related community organizations can support the policy in a number of ways. They can fund the printing of handouts that describe the policy. They can provide smoking cessation programs. They can offer (or host) health classes that educate students about the dangers of tobacco. They can also ask people they see using tobacco products on campus to stop. Some examples of school-related community organizations include civic or service clubs, faith-based organizations, the Board of Elections, little league organizations, government agencies, professional associations, or any other group that might be hosting events on school grounds.
- ☐ **Communicate to parents/guardians** via text, email, or letter (per standard school procedure), explaining the policy changes, presenting reasons, and asking for support.
- ☐ **Ask students, staff, and community volunteers to assist** in distributing informational flyers at school-sponsored events.
- ☐ **Place an op-ed or letter to the editor** in the local newspaper, explaining the policy

“We have had zero negative feedback and many positive comments regarding our policy. One of our school board members is a tobacco user and he believes adopting this policy has been a positive influence for our school.”

~ District Superintendent,
Northwest Oklahoma

and its rationale. For examples of news media clippings, visit www.ok.gov/tset. When communicating the new policy, remember to be positive and to emphasize its benefits. Choose bright colors and graphics to get your message across. Provide opportunities for everyone to get involved. Show students, visitors, and staff that the school is concerned about their health!

- ☐ **Prominently post 24/7 signs and decals at all entrances** to school buildings, school grounds, parking lots, and athletic facilities, as well as in school vehicles. Also post decals near high-traffic areas like restrooms, loading areas, stairwells, and lounges.
- ☐ **Enlist the support of community law enforcement agencies** that work at sporting events and other events on campus.
- ☐ **Have palm-sized cards readily available** describing the 24/7 tobacco-free policy to give to anyone on school grounds or at off-site events.
- ☐ **Celebrate the new policy with a kick-off event!**

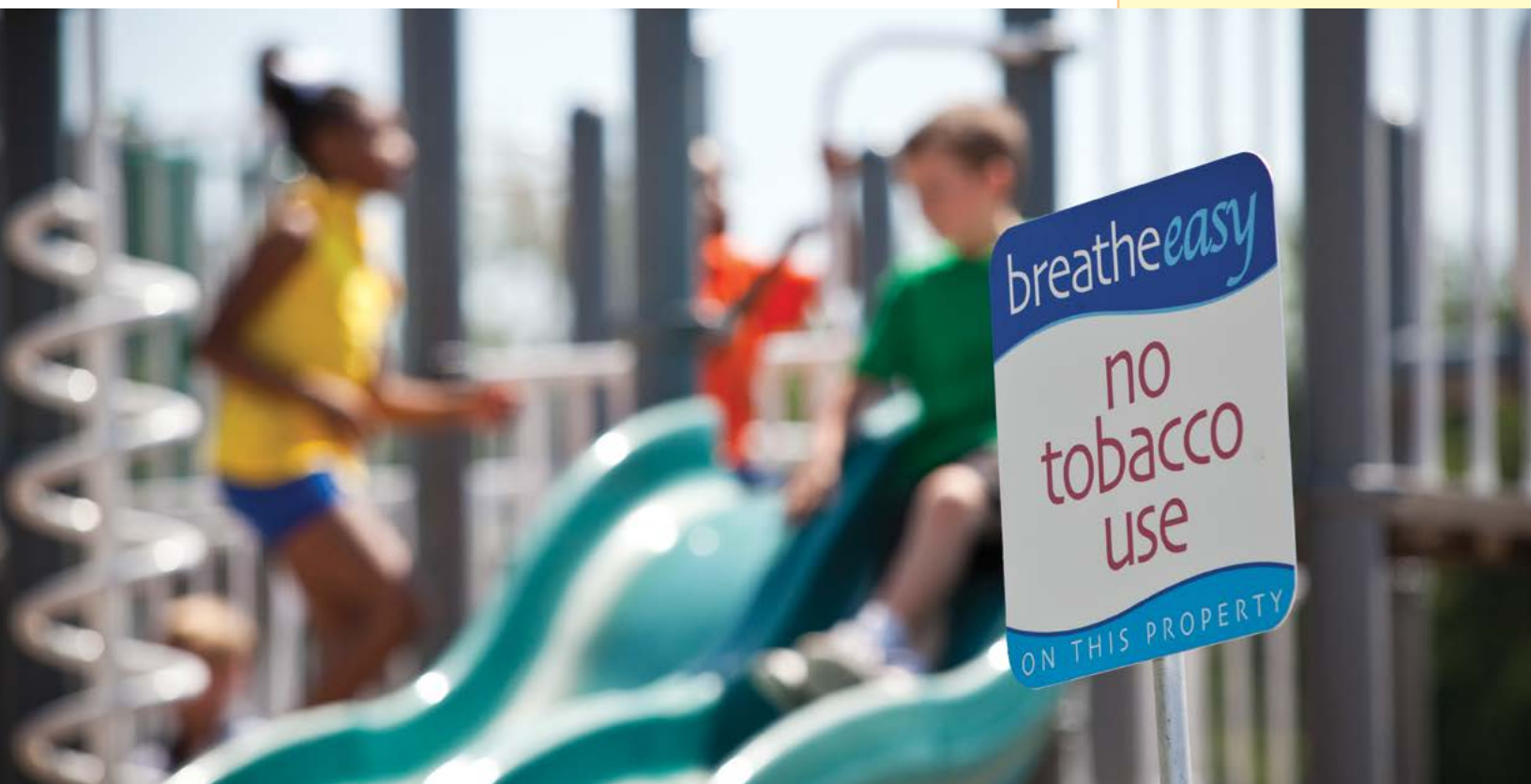
Step 6: Provide support to the people who may find it difficult to comply with the policy

For some people, the use of tobacco products and/or vapor products is an addiction. It is important to help people understand a 24/7 policy is a policy against the *use* of tobacco and vapor products – not against the user. The 24/7 policy does not require users to quit – it simply prohibits them from using tobacco or vapor products at school.

The school can support students and employees who want to quit by connecting them with cessation resources. Support is available at the Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline. The Helpline is a free service for all Oklahomans. It has Trained Quit Coaches who can help those who want to quit tobacco. Services are available in English and Spanish. Visit www.okhelpline.com or call 1-800-QUIT-NOW.

“We thought there would be a problem with parents, but there has only been one incident of a parent using a vaping device at the first football game. We gave him one of our smokefree/vapefree palm cards, and the man quickly complied and apologized. The parents have been very supportive.”

~High School Principal,
South Central Oklahoma



Step 7: Enforcement

Enforcement is vital to maintaining a healthy environment for students, staff, and community members. Schools should encourage everyone to get involved, and empower everyone to ask classmates, colleagues, and neighbors to comply with the policy.

Positive reminders of the policy make enforcement easier. Here is an example of an announcement that could be made at an athletic event or different school function:

"For the safety of everyone, [insert school name here] is proud to have a 24/7 tobacco-free and vapor-free policy. At this time, we would like to remind everyone that cigarettes, e-cigarettes, chewing tobacco, and any other forms of tobacco are strictly prohibited on school grounds – including in and around the stadium. We appreciate your support, and thank you for keeping our school and stadium tobacco free."

Fortunately, most schools with 24/7 policies find that people generally comply with the policy. Schools report that when they find people violating the policy, enforcement rarely needs to go beyond a polite request to stop using the tobacco or vapor product. Oklahomans are overwhelmingly supportive of 24/7 policies. If someone is using tobacco on campus, here are some simple ways to ask him or her to stop:

"I'm sorry, but we have to ask visitors to comply with our school's 24/7 policy, which prohibits the use of tobacco and vapor products at school. Our aim is to protect our students, staff, and visitors from secondhand smoke and vapor and to role-model positive behavior for youth."

"I need to ask you to put away your chewing tobacco. We have a tobacco-free campus here, which applies to staff and visitors as well as students. I hope you understand."

"Please stop [smoking/vaping]. Our school is [tobacco/vapor] free, including staff and visitors. If you need to [smoke/vape], please leave school property to do so."

In addition to being a violation of school policy, tobacco use on school grounds is a violation of state law, for which the violator may be fined up to \$100.¹⁴

Step 8: Evaluation

It's a good idea to periodically evaluate whether the policy is meeting the goal of providing a healthy, tobacco-free and vapor-free environment for students, staff, and visitors.

Invite a diverse group – including teachers, parents, nurses, school resource officers, maintenance staff, coaches, and others – to evaluate the policy. Ask them to check whether the policy has been implemented as written. For example, has the policy been communicated and enforced? If there are differences between how the policy is written and how it works in practice, you might consider additional training for faculty and students. Or, if the model policy was not fully adopted, this may be an opportunity to encourage the school to adopt the model policy.



"The policy is accepted throughout the community; it is a new lifestyle. Be committed; it is what is best for staff and students."

~ Elementary School Principal,
Southeast Oklahoma

COMMON CONCERNS AND RESPONSES

Students, staff, or visitors are using tobacco or vapor products in violation of the policy.

Most schools find people are happy to comply with the 24/7 policy and enforcement is rarely a problem. However, when violations occur, enforce the rule in the manner that is outlined in the policy. For example, if a student is found smoking a cigarette, take the cigarette away, hold a meeting with the student, and discipline the student according to the policy. If a visitor is using dip on campus, politely inform the visitor of the state law and the school policy, and request that the visitor stop. See Step 7 above for ideas on how to communicate the policy.

People in my community use tobacco for ceremonial purposes.

The Oklahoma State Department of Health acknowledges the traditional and sacred use of tobacco among American Indian people living in Oklahoma. Whenever the word tobacco is referenced in these materials, it refers to the use of commercial tobacco.

People are using tobacco or vapor products during school-sponsored athletic events.

School districts that have adopted 24/7 policies have seen most adults willingly comply with the policy even at outdoor athletic events. A poll by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention showed broad support for a complete ban on the use of any tobacco product at school-sponsored events. Most adult tobacco users recognize it is important not to use tobacco on school grounds. For the adult user, a 24/7 policy isn't about *whether* they use tobacco or vapor products, but *where* they use those products.

If you are concerned about compliance at athletic events, make announcements throughout the event to remind everyone the school is tobacco free and vapor free. If you come across someone violating the policy, explain the policy, and politely ask the person to stop using the product. More often than not, the person will comply. In the rare case that a person refuses to comply, follow the school's procedure for removing unwanted guests.

"The school board fully supports our policy which includes e-cigarettes and vaping devices."

~ District Superintendent,
Northwest Oklahoma

Acknowledgments

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For more information about the TSET Healthy Living Program, visit [TSET.ok.gov](https://tset.ok.gov).

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APPENDIX A: 24/7 TOBACCO-FREE CAMPUS POLICY

Introduction

- [Insert School District Name] understands the concern of parents, educators, students, and community members regarding the adverse effects of tobacco and secondhand smoke. We want to provide a safe and healthy environment for our students, staff, and community and set the proper example for our students.
- This policy is intended to improve the health and safety of all individuals using the schools.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

School Property is defined as any property that is owned, leased, managed, or otherwise controlled by the school district, including vehicles and any outdoor property, such as sporting facilities and parking lots.

Tobacco Product is defined as a product that contains or is derived from tobacco and is intended for human consumption, excluding drugs or devices approved for cessation by the United States Food and Drug Administration. This includes e-cigarettes and vapor products with or without nicotine.

24/7 Tobacco-Free Campus is defined as a campus where tobacco use is prohibited anywhere, at any time, and by any person. This extends to school vehicles and school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events, including those held off-campus.

Prohibitions

- Tobacco Product use is prohibited anywhere on School Property, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, by any person. This policy extends to school vehicles and school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events, including those held off-campus.
- This policy applies to employees of the school district, students, visitors, and any other person present on School Property. This policy also applies to all public school functions (sporting events, concerts, etc.) and any outside agency using the district's facilities, including stadiums. This policy is in effect 24 hours per day, seven days per week.
- The district will not accept donations of gifts, money, or materials from the tobacco industry. This district will not participate in any type of services, events, or programs that are funded by the tobacco industry.

- Students are prohibited from possessing Tobacco Products on School Property and at any off-site, school-sponsored meeting or event, including, but not limited to, field trips and athletic events.
- Ash receptacles, such as ash trays or ash cans, are not permitted on School Property.

Enforcement

- The success of this regulation will depend upon the thoughtfulness, consideration, and cooperation of tobacco users and nonusers. All individuals on school premises share in the responsibility for adhering to and enforcing this regulation. All students will receive instruction on avoiding tobacco use. Ultimately, each site administrator will take appropriate steps to enforce the regulation.
- Students found in violation of the policy will have their parents contacted for a first violation. Second offense could include disciplinary action. The school administrator will confiscate the prohibited Tobacco Product. Information about the Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline will be provided to students in violation of this policy in order to provide a resource for tobacco cessation.
- Employees who violate the regulation shall be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the employee bargaining agreements and/or the districts' faculty handbook. Information about the Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline will be provided to staff members in violation of this policy in order to provide a resource for tobacco cessation.
- Visitors who violate the policy shall be subject to a verbal request to the individual to stop. If the person refuses to stop, the individual will be requested to leave. If the person refuses to leave, they will be referred to local authorities.

Effective Date

This 24/7 Tobacco-Free Campus Policy is effective as of [Insert Effective Date Here].

Approved By School District:

Name & Title: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX B: 24/7 TOBACCO-FREE CAMPUS POLICY CHECKLIST

Model Policy - Required Elements

- ☐ The Policy prohibits the use of Tobacco Products, including the following:
 - Combustible tobacco products
 - Vapor products (with or without nicotine)
 - All other tobacco products
- ☐ The use of Tobacco Products is prohibited at all times, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, on School Property
- ☐ The use of Tobacco Products is prohibited in school vehicles at all times
- ☐ The prohibition applies to all school-sponsored or school-sanctioned functions that are open to the public, including those held off campus and any outside agency using the district's facilities, including stadiums
- ☐ The prohibition applies to all employees of the school district, students, visitors, vendors, and any other person present on school property
- ☐ The use of Tobacco Products is prohibited in personal vehicles while such vehicles are on School Property
- ☐ The school district will not accept donations of gifts, money, or materials from the tobacco industry
- ☐ The school district will not participate in any type of services, events, or programs that are funded by the tobacco industry
- ☐ Enforcement
- ☐ Effective Date

Definitions

School Property is defined as any property that is owned, leased, managed, or otherwise controlled by the school district, including vehicles and any outdoor property, such as sporting facilities and parking lots.

Tobacco Product is defined as a product that contains or is derived from tobacco and is intended for human consumption, excluding drugs or devices approved for cessation by the United States Food and Drug Administration. This includes e-cigarettes and vapor products with or without nicotine.

24/7 Tobacco-Free Campus is defined as a campus where tobacco use is prohibited anywhere, at any time, and by any person. This extends to school vehicles and school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events, including those held off-campus.



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