

TOBACCO-FREE SCHOOLS

Purpose: To establish a comprehensive tobacco-free school policy.

The board believes that commercial tobacco use and exposure to secondhand smoke and vaping aerosol are hazardous to the health of human beings, especially youth. Therefore, the board affirms that one of the best methods of instruction is one that is provided within a 100 percent tobacco-free environment.

Commercial tobacco products are products purchased in retail stores and do not include traditional tobacco products used for sacred or medicinal purposes.

Goal

The goal of this policy is to provide a comprehensive 100 percent tobacco-free, smoke-free, and vaping aerosol-free environment for all students, staff and visitors within all district facilities, vehicles and grounds and at all district- sponsored events by doing the following:

- exhibiting healthy behavior for all students, staff, visitors and the entire community
- utilizing proven and effective science-based tobacco use prevention curricula
- providing access to cessation counseling or cessation referral services for all students and staff

Procedures

- Prohibit the use and/or possession of all commercial tobacco products, alternative nicotine products or paraphernalia including, but not limited to, cigarettes, e-cigarettes/vapes, cigars, pipes, smokeless tobacco, dissolvable tobacco products, and snuff by all students, staff and visitors.
- Ensure that commercial tobacco use prevention education programs and curricula, as recommended by the South Carolina Department of Public Health, the South Carolina Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services and the South Carolina Department of Education, are an integral part of district substance abuse prevention efforts.
- Provide and/or refer to cessation services for students and staff.

Enforcement

The district will enforce this policy by determining appropriate disciplinary actions for violators (students, faculty, visitors).

Alternatives to Suspension

- Emphasis will be placed on implementing alternatives to suspension to mitigate negative consequences associated with out-of-school suspension.
- Students who are suspended are at increased risk for long-term physical and mental health issues, including increased likelihood of drug use.
- High school suspensions are also associated with lower scores on standardized tests and overall academic achievement of the entire student body.
- Whenever possible, School Resource Officers (SRO) should not be involved in the disciplining of students in violation of the school tobacco-free policy.
- Access information on Alternatives to Suspension, including links to teacher resources, by visiting the [SC DHEC Tobacco-Free Schools webpage](#).

Students

- parent/legal guardian/administrator conferences
- mandatory enrollment in a tobacco prevention education program
- community service
- in-school suspension
- out-of-school suspension (last resort – seek alternatives to suspension)
- suspension from extracurricular activities

Staff

- verbal reprimands
- written notification placed in personnel file
- suspension
- mandatory enrollment in a tobacco education program
- voluntary enrollment in a cessation program

Visitors

- verbal requests to leave school property
- forfeiture of any fee charged for admission
- prosecution for disorderly conduct after repeated offenses

Education and assistance

The school will be responsible for utilizing proven and effective commercial tobacco use prevention curricula to educate all students and providing assistance and/or make appropriate cessation referrals. Curricula are available on the [SC DHEC Tobacco-Free Schools webpage](#).

Tobacco industry marketing or sponsorship

The school will not accept any contributions or gifts, money or materials from the tobacco industry. The district will not participate in any type of services that are funded by the tobacco industry. In addition, any gear, paraphernalia, clothing, etc., that advertises tobacco use or tobacco products will not be allowed on district grounds or in the possession of faculty, staff or students at district-sponsored events.

Cf. GBED, JICG

Adopted 7/15/96; Revised 7/24/2024

Legal references:

A. United States Code:

1. 20 U.S.C. 6081 - Pro-Children Act of 1994.

B. S.C. Code, 1976, as amended:

1. Section 44-95-10, et seq. - Clean Indoor Air Act of 1990 and penalties for violations.
2. Section 16-17-490 - Contributing to the delinquency of a minor (school board rules and regulations may be exempt under certain circumstances).
3. Section 16-17-500 - Supplying minors with tobacco or cigarettes.
4. Section 59-67-150 - Qualifications of bus driver; drinking or smoking on bus.
5. Sections 16-17-500 and 501 - Youth Access to Tobacco Prevention Act of 2006.
6. Sections 16-17-500 and 501 – Amended to include alternative nicotine products and define terms alternative nicotine products and electronic cigarettes.