

TOBACCO USE ON SCHOOL PROPERTY AND GROUNDS

I. RATIONALE

The Patchogue-Medford School District recognizes its responsibility to promote the health, wellbeing and safety of students, staff and others on school property and all school grounds. Research conclusively proves that:

- Tobacco use is the single most preventable cause of death in the United States;
- 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 personal health of everyone, especially persons with asthma and other respiratory problems;
- Nicotine is a powerfully addictive substance;
- Tobacco use most often begins during childhood or adolescence;
- The younger a person starts using tobacco, the more likely he or she will be a regular user as an adult;
- Many young tobacco users will die an early, preventable death because of their decision to use tobacco;
- Use of tobacco interferes with students' attendance and learning;
- Smoking is a fire safety issue for schools.

Prevention programs in schools are most effective when supplemented by strong tobacco-free policies and when they are part of a broader school, community, and state effort to reduce youth smoking. In light of this information, and to be consistent with school curriculum and federal and state law, it is the intent of the Patchogue-Medford School District to establish a tobacco-free environment.

II. DEFINITIONS

A. Tobacco: means any cigarette, cigar, pipe, bidi, clove cigarette, and any other smoking product; as well as a spit tobacco, also known as smokeless, dip, chew, and snuff, and any other spit tobacco product in any form.

B. School Property: means any building, structure or vehicle owned, leased or contracted by the Patchogue-Medford School District.

C. School Grounds: means property surrounding buildings and structures, athletic grounds, parking lots, or any other outdoor property owned, leased or contracted by the Patchogue-Medford School District.

Tobacco Use On School Property And Grounds (Cont'd.)**III. TOBACCO USE PROHIBITED**

No person is permitted to use tobacco in any way at any time, including non-school hours on either school property or school grounds.

IV. TOBACCO EDUCATION

Instruction to discourage the use of tobacco shall be included in the health education provided for all elementary school pupils taught by either classroom teachers and/or by community-based educational liaisons (i.e. Police Smart).

Consistent with Board of Education Policy #5145, specific to tobacco use, the district will offer programs in the K-12 school curriculum in a manner supportive of health education regarding tobacco. Staff responsible for teaching tobacco-use prevention shall have adequate training and participate in ongoing professional development activities to effectively deliver the education program as planned.

V. TOBACCO POSSESSION

No student is permitted to possess tobacco on school property, grounds, or at school sponsored events on school grounds.

VI. TOBACCO DISTRIBUTION

Distribution or sale of tobacco, including any smoking device is prohibited on school property or school grounds.

VII. TOBACCO PROMOTION

Tobacco advertising is prohibited on school property, grounds, at any school sponsored event or activity off campus, and in all school-sponsored publications. The school will request tobacco-free editions of all publications in school libraries. School acceptance of gifts or funding, or parent/classroom educational materials from the tobacco industry is prohibited.

Tobacco Use On School Property And Grounds (Cont'd.)**VIII. TOBACCO CESSATION INTERVENTION**

Referrals and access to community resources and programs to help students and staff overcome tobacco addiction shall be provided to students and staff. School counselors, health-services and community agencies are encouraged to establish voluntary tobacco-use cessation programs at school.

IX. NOTICE

Signs communicating this policy shall be prominently posted and properly maintained where tobacco use and smoking are regulated by this policy, including all building entrances, grounds, and vehicles. Signs shall include “No Smoking” or the international “No Smoking” symbol.

The Patchogue-Medford School District shall also notify students, parents/guardians, staff and other school visitors annually of the tobacco-free policy in written materials including, but not limited to handbooks, manuals, contracts, newspapers, newsletters and/or web-site postings.

X. ENFORCEMENT

Enforcement of this policy shall be equitable and consistent, in accordance with the student code of conduct, and employee personnel policies.

Student violations of this policy will lead to disciplinary action up to and including suspension from school. Student participation in a tobacco cessation program and/or tobacco education class may be allowed as an alternative to discipline. Parents will be notified of violations involving their child and subsequent action taken by the school.

Employee violations of this policy may lead to disciplinary action in accordance with personnel policies, collective bargain agreements, and/or applicable law.

Violations by others will result in appropriate sanctions as determined and imposed by the Superintendent or the Board of Education.

Tobacco Use On School Property And Grounds (Cont'd.)**XI. ADMINISTRATIVE RULES**

The Superintendent will develop administrative regulations as necessary to implement this policy, including provisions for notification of the school's policy; disciplinary consequences; and procedures for filing and handling complaints about violations of the school's policy.

The Superintendent shall ensure that the school's tobacco-use prevention program, policies, curriculum, training and cessation programs are evaluated at regular intervals. The input of students, staff, parents and others from the community will be encouraged.

This policy shall be in force at all times.

Policy Adopted:

July 15, 1985

Policy Revised:

January 15, 1990

Policy Revised:

December 16, 1991

Policy Revised:

January 17, 1995

Policy Revised:

March 25, 2002

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May 20, 2009