I. PURPOSE

The Rhode Island General Assembly has determined that:

Smoking is the leading cause of preventable death and disease in the United States.[1] Secondhand smoke is the third leading cause of death in the United States. Ninety percent (90%) of the people who smoke start by age nineteen (19), with the average age of those starting to smoke at thirteen (13). Children exposed to tobacco smoke are at nearly twice the risk of being in poor or fair health as compared to children who are never exposed to tobacco smoke. Children exposed to tobacco smoke have an increased frequency of respiratory infections and decreased lung function.

The proliferation of electronic nicotine delivery systems ("ENDS"), commonly known as "e-cigarettes" have been designed and marketed to appeal to children. Flavored e-cigarettes decrease perceptions of harm, help mask the harsh taste of tobacco and play an important role in the appeal, initiation, and uptake of tobacco products among children. E-cigarettes can impact children's respiratory health, brain development, mood, sleep, immune function, and have an increased risk of initiating the smoking of cigarettes.

Preventing the use of tobacco, tobacco products, and e-cigarettes in schools or at school related activities can reduce the frequency in which children are exposed to e-cigarettes, or directly or secondhand to tobacco smoke thereby improving health outcomes for students. Preventing the use of these products will also reduce any detrimental effect on the health and safety of students, staff and visitors.

State law, R.I. Gen. Laws § 23-20.9-1 et seq., requires the Lincoln School District to develop policy and protocol to enforce the prohibition of tobacco product and ENDS usage by an individual utilizing any school facility.

II. ENABLING AUTHORITY

For all the reasons stated above and in accordance with its authority under R.I. Gen. Laws § 16-2-9, the Lincoln School Committee hereby adopts the following policy prohibiting the use of tobacco, tobacco products, e-cigarettes, and other ENDS products on all school facilities, property, and school related events in conformance with §23-20.9-1 *et seq*. and any other applicable state law or regulation.

[1] R.I. Gen. Laws § 23-20.9-2(a).

III. POLICY

A. Prohibition of the use and possession of tobacco products on school premises or events

No person shall, at any time, use a tobacco product, including ENDS, in any school building, on any school grounds, at any athletic event or any school sponsored event or in any school bus or other vehicle used for school purposes.

No student shall at any time possess any tobacco product or tobacco paraphernalia, including ENDS, in any school building, on any school grounds, at any athletic event or any school-sponsored event or in any school bus or other vehicle used for school purposes.

A general exception to this prohibition shall apply for the use of nicotine products utilized pursuant to a medical prescription and/or part of a cessation program or such products utilized to demonstrate the harm of tobacco consumption.

B. Enforcement

If a student is found to be using or in possession of tobacco products or tobacco paraphernalia, including ENDS, administrators or other designated staff shall confiscate such items.

Additional sanctions may also be implemented. Such sanctions shall be implemented based on the circumstances of the use of tobacco products that may be caused by a medical addiction that is triggered by social-emotional circumstances.

Enforcement should be congruent with enforcement of any other alleged policy violation of the student handbook.

C. Prohibition on Tobacco Advertisements

No one on behalf of the Lincoln Public Schools may solicit or accept any contributions, gifts or money from the tobacco industry to include, but not be limited to, donations, monies for sponsorships/scholarships, advertising, promotions, loans or support for equipment, uniforms and sports and/or training facilities. No one on behalf of the Lincoln Public Schools may solicit or accept curricula or other educational materials of any that are created by or with input from the tobacco industry.

IV. DEVELOPMENT OF PROTOCOL

The Superintendent of Schools shall develop a protocol and procedures to facilitate this policy.

Policy First Reading: May 18, 2015
Policy Second Reading: June 8, 2015
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Revised Policy First Reading: December 12, 2022
Revised Policy Second Reading: January 9, 2023
Revised Policy Adopted: January 9, 2023

TOWN OF LINCOLN SCHOOL COMMITTEE, Lincoln, Rhode Island