

# adopt

## Adopting a policy

### Checklist for a Comprehensive 100% Tobacco-Free School Policy

**A 100% tobacco-free school policy can be simply expressed as follows:**

*“Bans all tobacco use (including smokeless tobacco) on all school property and at all school sponsored events and functions on or off campus, by all people (including students, employees, visitors, and contractors), at all times.”*

*or*

*“The use of all tobacco products by students, staff or visitors in any school building, on any school property, or at any school-sponsored activity or event (regardless of location), is prohibited.”*

However, developing a comprehensive policy – such as the [model 100% tobacco free school policy](#) developed by the NC Tobacco Prevention and Control Branch and the NC Department of Public Instruction – can increase understanding of the policy and help to improve enforcement.

#### **Elements of a Comprehensive 100% Tobacco-Free Schools Policy**

Following are the basic components of a comprehensive 100% tobacco-free school policy:

- **Purpose or rationale:** Policies should contain a clear statement describing the need for a comprehensive “no tobacco use” policy. This may include health hazards, secondhand smoke, risk factors, gateway drug issues, fire and safety problems, or role modeling.
- **Scope of the policy:** The policy should specify that it applies to students, school staff, contracted employees and visitors. The policy should apply to all school grounds, buildings, and vehicles – including athletic facilities and all facilities that

are owned, leased, or contracted by the school district. The policy will apply to school-sponsored events off-campus, as well as on-campus. The policy may include prohibitions against tobacco use by anyone in the areas adjacent to campus, as well as a statement that students may not leave the school campus during breaks in the school day to use a tobacco product. Finally, the policy should clearly state that it is in effect 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

- **Definitions:** The policy should specifically define “tobacco products” as cigarettes, cigars, pipes, chewing tobacco, snuff and any other items containing or reasonably resembling tobacco or tobacco products. “Tobacco use” should include smoking chewing, dipping, or any other use of tobacco products.
- **Advertising and sponsorship prohibition:** Policies should have language prohibiting tobacco advertising on school property, at school functions and in school publications. This may include gear, paraphernalia, clothing, etc. Policies should also include language prohibiting school acceptance of gifts or funds from the tobacco industry.
- **Program support:** Policies should describe the types of programs that school districts will put into place in order to support their tobacco use policy. These should include an alternative to suspension program (ATS) for youth policy violators, a youth cessation program – such as the American Lung Association’s Not-On-Tobacco (N-O-T), and an adult cessation program to support school staff in managing, cutting down or quitting tobacco use. Cessation referral should be included as a part of enforcement.
- **Enforcement:** Policies should offer enforcement guidelines that outline progressive consequences, sanctions or disciplinary actions for students, staff and visitors in violation of the policy. The policy should also indicate or describe the person(s) responsible for enforcing the policy at each school.
- **Procedures:** A timeline for implementation should be included. The policy may also identify who is responsible for organizing the implementation, enforcement, and periodic revision of the policy.
- **Communication mechanisms:** Include a description of how the policy will be clearly communicated to all relevant audiences including students, staff, parents and visitors.
- **Prevention education:** Specify that effective tobacco prevention education is an essential component of a tobacco-free school district.