

SCHOOL POLICIES

Tobacco cessation is a process and rarely a one-time event. Many highly motivated people find tobacco cessation to be extraordinarily difficult. It may take as many as eight to 11 attempts until a person is completely tobacco free. For others, the process may be less complicated and shorter. Youth may face particular challenges due to prevailing perceptions of youth tobacco users as “independent,” “mature” or “cool.” It is unlikely that youth will succeed with one cessation attempt, especially if they have been using tobacco for some time and are in the latter stages of addiction. To address these challenges, ACE policy amendments acknowledge that:

- I. Quitting is a difficult process that requires patience and support. Administrative punishments rarely acknowledge the importance of cessation or seek to support cessation. ACE Champions are encouraged to work with school administrators to develop a student tobacco use policy that works for school staff while facilitating youth cessation wherever possible.
- II. Youth tobacco use is influenced by peer pressure and the school environment. Comprehensive Tobacco Free School Grounds Policies create a school environment that not only supports youth cessation, but also tobacco use prevention and changes in social norms toward tobacco use.

ACE policy amendments are changes made to current school tobacco policies to strengthen them. Examples of ACE policy amendments are on the next page and include adopting tobacco-free school grounds policies that are more comprehensive and include cessation as a complement or alternative to administrative consequences for a student’s violation of school tobacco policies.

To help facilitate consideration of policy changes, the first step is to familiarize yourself with existing school and district policies. Does your school have existing tobacco free school grounds and youth cessation policies? If so, are they less comprehensive than the ACE model policies? If so, your first priority is to visit with your principal or superintendent - as appropriate - and champion model ACE policy amendments in your school. Discuss challenges and possible modifications to the amendments that would better suit your school. In most cases, policy amendments can be made at the discretion of the principal or superintendent. In some cases, it will require action by the district school board. If it is necessary to secure school board approval, you will need to initiate this request in the manner required by your district to be able to implement ACE.

This may be an ongoing process, so do not be discouraged if you do not immediately get comprehensive policy amendments implemented. If the timing is not right or if school administration is opposed to the idea, work on other aspects of ACE that may build support for future policy amendments. Model language for the ACE amendment and comprehensive tobacco-free school grounds policy is provided in the following section. Be sure to use ACE resources and materials and work with community partners who are supportive of these policy amendments. For examples of the range of school policies possible, consult the Model Tobacco Wellness Policy Guidelines.²

For assistance preparing a request to your school board or making a connection with community partners who will help you champion policy amendments, please contact Holly Frye (ACE@kdheks.gov), the Kansas Tobacco Use Prevention ACE Coordinator.

² Kansas Department of Education. Kansas Pre-K-12 Wellness Policy Guidelines – Part 4. Available at: http://www.kshealthykids.org/HKS_Docs/Standards/Tobacco_Guidelines_June_2011.pdf. Accessed March 15, 2013.



MODEL POLICIES

Model ACE Policy Amendment:

Students who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary measures in accordance with applicable school and district policies. Students who violate this policy will be given the option to defer disciplinary measures pending documented registration in the ACE Kansas Youth Cessation Program. Participation must be verified by an ACE Champion. Because tobacco cessation is an intervention for tobacco use and addiction, students who violate this policy will be allowed at the discretion of their ACE Champion to defer disciplinary measures by participating in the ACE program as many times as needed.



Model Tobacco-Free School Grounds Policy:

Tobacco use of any kind is not permitted by any person (staff, student or visitor) at any time in or on USD ### property, whether owned, leased or rented. Staff and students who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary measures in accordance with applicable school and district policies.

Students who violate this policy will be subject to [Insert disciplinary measures]. Students who violate this policy will be given the option to defer disciplinary measures pending documented participation in the ACE Kansas Youth Cessation Program. Participation must be verified by an ACE Champion. Because tobacco cessation is an intervention for tobacco use and addiction, students who violate this policy will be allowed at the discretion of their ACE Champion to defer disciplinary measures by participating in the ACE program as many times as needed.

Visitors who violate this policy will be asked to leave such district property and may be referred to school security personnel or local law enforcement if continued refusal occurs.

This policy further prohibits tobacco industry advertising, marketing and sponsorship on district property, at school functions and in school publications. In addition, the exhibition of tobacco-oriented gear or paraphernalia by staff and students is prohibited.

USD ### will use signage and, when possible, written and verbal notices in district communications to advertise this policy. The district will make available current information regarding smoking cessation programs.

