

TOBACCO-FREE SCHOOLS**Purpose and Goals**1. Intent

The South Colonie Central School District recognizes its responsibility to promote the health, welfare and safety of students, staff, parents and visitors to our school. Therefore, the South Colonie Central School District will prohibit the use of tobacco products in all District buildings, on school property and at school-sponsored activities.

2. Rationale

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 heavy 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 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 efforts 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 South Colonie Central School District to establish a tobacco-free environment.

3. Definitions

- a. Tobacco: Means any cigarette, cigar, pipe, bidis or beedies, herbal cigarette, clove cigarette, chewing tobacco, powdered tobacco, nicotine water, and any other tobacco smoking product; as well as spit tobacco, also known as smokeless, dip, chew, and snuff, and any other spit tobacco product in any form.

- b. School Property: Means in or within any District building, structure, athletic playing field, playground, school bus, parking lot or land contained within the real property boundary line of a public elementary or secondary school, and any building, structure or vehicle owned, leased, or contracted by the South Colonie Central School District.
- c. School Grounds: Means any building, structure and surrounding outdoor grounds contained within the elementary or secondary school's legally defined property boundaries.
- d. School Function: Means a school-sponsored or school-authorized extra-curricular event or activity regardless of where such event or activity takes place, whether on school property or school grounds or any other location off school property or school grounds, including any event or activity that may take place in another state.

Tobacco-Free Environments

- 1. Tobacco Use Prohibited: No person is permitted to use tobacco in any way at any time, including non-school hours, on school property, grounds or at any school-sponsored event or off campus activity.
- 2. Tobacco Possession: No student is permitted to possess tobacco on school property, grounds, or at school functions.
- 3. Tobacco Distribution: Distribution or sale of tobacco, including any smoking device is prohibited on school property, grounds, and at any school function.
- 4. Tobacco Advertising: Tobacco advertising is prohibited on school property, grounds, at any school function, and in all school-sponsored publications. Whenever possible, the school will request tobacco-free editions of all publications in school libraries.
- 5. Tobacco Promotion: Students are prohibited from wearing or having in their possession tobacco promotional items, including clothing, bags, lighters, and other personal articles on school property, grounds, or at any school function.

Notice

- 1. Signs communicating this policy shall be prominently posted and maintained where tobacco use and smoking are regulated by this policy, including all building entrances, grounds, and vehicles. Signs shall include "No Tobacco" or the international "No Smoking" symbol, which consists of a pictorial representation of a burning cigarette enclosed in a circle with a bar across it.
- 2. The District shall also notify students, parents/guardians, staff, contractors and other school visitors annually of the tobacco policy in written materials including, but not limited, to handbooks, manuals, contracts, newspapers, and newsletters.

Enforcement

1. All administrators, staff and chaperones will enforce the tobacco policy for student infractions.
2. Employee infractions will be enforced by the administrators. Employee violations of this policy will lead to disciplinary action in accordance with personnel policies and collective bargaining agreements.
3. Parent and visitor infractions will be enforced by administrators.
4. Student violations of this policy will lead to disciplinary action up to and including suspension from school as per the District's Code of Conduct. 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.

Tobacco-Use Prevention Education

The District shall provide instruction to discourage the use of tobacco.

1. Teacher/Staff Preparation: Prevention methods for staff would include offering ongoing opportunities for tobacco-cessation and education. These trainings would be facilitated by trained staff. Staff members will have the opportunity to attend facilitator training annually.
2. Instruction Program: As per the South Colonie Central School District Health Curriculum, health classes will be offered to students in schools District-wide. Students will be required to attend Health Education class in Grades K-4, Grades 7-8, and at the High School level.
3. Educational Collaborative: Collaboration with school health services and school counseling psychological and social services.

Assistance to Overcome Tobacco Addictions

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

The Superintendent shall ensure that the school's tobacco-use prevention program, policies, curricula, training and cessation programs are evaluated on an annual basis. The input of students, staff, parents and others from the community will be encouraged.

Reference: Public Health Law §§ 1399-aa, 1399-n(6), 1399-o
Education Law §§ 409(2), 804, 2801(1)
20 U.S.C. § 6083, Pro-Children Act of 1994

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