

## **Gilmer County's Tobacco Control Policy**

### **Section I. General**

- 1.1 Scope, This policy sets the requirement for schools in West Virginia to be tobacco free.
- 1.2 Authority. West Virginia Code 16-9A-1 through 16-9A-4, and 18-2-5, WV Board of Education Policy 2422.5A.
- 1.3 **Filing Date.**\_\_\_\_\_
- 1.4 **Effective Date.**

### **Section II. Purpose**

2.1 The purpose of this policy is to prohibit the use or distribution of tobacco products in school buildings, on school grounds, in school-lease or owned vehicles, and at all school affiliated functions in order to improve the health of West Virginia students and school personnel. Students under the age of 21 may not possess any tobacco product at any time. The use of tobacco products has a direct link to numerous health problems and this policy is intended to prevent students, school personnel and visitors from being exposed to secondhand smoke and prevent youth addiction to tobacco products. This policy is intended to promulgate a positive, pro-active approach to tobacco control. In addition, school personnel shall act as positive role models for students by not distributing, possessing, or using tobacco products.

### **Section III. Application**

3.1 This policy shall apply to any building, property or vehicle leased, owned or operated by any school or the county board of education. This policy shall apply to any private building, or other property including automobiles or other vehicles used for school activities when students or staff are present.

3.2 No person shall distribute or use any tobacco product in any area in Section 3.1 of this policy at any time. In addition, students under the age of 21 shall not possess any tobacco product at any time outlined by WV State Code 16-9A-1 through I6-9A-4.

3.3 Individuals supervising students off school grounds are prohibited from distributing or using any tobacco products while in the presence of students or any time while engaged in any activities directly involving students.

3.4 No school or board property, as defined in section 3.1 of this policy, or school, or county publication may be used for advertising of any tobacco product.

3.5 Groups using areas described in Section 3.1 shall sign agreements with the county board of education agreeing to comply with this policy and to inform students, parents and spectators that this policy remains in force on evenings, weekends, and other times that school is not in session.

## **Section IV. Implementation**

4.1 This policy serves as school policy except where the need for school level procedures or measures is indicated. Compliance is mandatory. Schools may impose additional strategies and restrictions not outlined in county policy provided they meet the tenets and intent of the county policy.

4.1.1 Administration; Administration procedures for dealing with tobacco are the responsibility of all county and school administrators as follows:

A. It is the responsibility of each school administrator to implement provisions of this policy within their schools.

B. It is the responsibility of each school to refer students with tobacco-related problems *to* the school counselor, school nurse, or other identified health professional.

C. It is the responsibility of each school to maintain an environment for students, staff, and visitors that presents no physical harm, discomfort or unsanitary condition resulting from tobacco product use.

**4.1.2 Communication:** The county board of education shall provide uniform and coordinated communication efforts for school, staff and the public during initial implementation and whenever county-wide activities. or programs are offered. On-going communications shall be a vital part of the county tobacco control policy and

will include, at a minimum procedure for communicating the policy to students, staff, parents or family members, visitors, and community at large as follows:

- A. **Staff Development:** It shall be the practice of the individual school and county board of education to provide appropriate staff development regarding the current policy. In addition, provision of training for facilitators for cessation education and support programs for students will be at the discretion of each individual school.
- B. **Employee and Student Handbooks:** Employee and student handbooks shall include information regarding the scope of the policy and, in accordance with due process, sanctions for violations. (See enforcement section)
- C. **Parent/Guardian notification:** All parents should be given notification, in accordance with due process; about the sanctions for violations which will be enacted should their child violate policy 2422.5A. (See enforcement section)
- D. **Public notification:** Public notification should include at a minimum, the placing of signs indicating tobacco free area on school grounds and vehicles, announcement of the policy at all school and county sponsored functions and agreements with all groups using school facilities or property as outlined in Section 3.5 of this policy. Each school may decide how to assure all stipulations for off-campus activities in section 3 are adhered to by non-school personnel.
- E. **Other communication procedures:** In addition, it shall be the responsibility of each school to select one or more of the following communication procedures for communicating the policy to students, school staff, parents or families, visitors, and the community at large.

## **1. Students**

- a. Discuss the policy with students at student orientation meetings.
- b. Spread the information through student organizations and activities.

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- c. Place or make announcements in school publications and/or via school media (e.g., channel one)
- d. Have students design posters, banners, and signs.
- e. Tell students about opportunities for tobacco cessation and support programs at school or in the community and provide information about how students can sign-up for these programs,

## **2. School Staff**

- a. Provide every staff member with a copy of the policy and discuss any changes in school tobacco policy and enforcement at staff meetings, such as faculty senate.
- b. Post information in staff lounges or offices.
- c. Tell staff about opportunities for tobacco cessation and support programs in the community and provide information about how staff can sign-up for these programs.
- d. Inform prospective employees of the policy in all job interviews,

## **3. Parent/Guardian**

- a. Send a letter to each parent or guardian explaining the policy changes, giving reasons for the changes and asking for support
- b. Discuss the policy changes at the PTA/PTO or LSIC meetings.
- c. Include an article outlining the policy and implications of the policy in the school newsletter and school or community newspaper.

## **4. Public/Community**

- a. Post signs at all entrances to school property and on

all vehicles owned by the school Other places to post signs include gathering places, restrooms, loading areas, and stairwells.

b. Remove all ashtrays from school properly, especially those outside the entrances to school buildings if not previously removed,

c. Announce the new policy at all athletic events, meetings, concerts and plays. Have students develop and/or deliver announcements.

d. Train students, staff, and community volunteers to politely ask community members to respect school policy and to avoid communicating in a way that sounds judgmental or would escalate conflict.

e. Ask students, staff and community volunteers to assist in distributing informational flyers at school events.

f. Communicate the policy to parent and business volunteers who are assisting in supervising youth on off-campus activities that might include field trips, job shadowing or community service.

g. Be aware of the difficulty for those who use tobacco and be sensitive to their concerns, but enforce the policy on a consistent basis.

h. Inform vendors who provide supplies, materials and services on a regular basis to the school about the policy. (Use an official memo, face-to-face communications or include a clause in the written contract agreement.)

**4.1.3 Prevention Education:** Required Health Education Program of Study (WV Board of Education Policy 2520.06) shall be coordinated with Safe and Drug Free school activities and programs to provide a comprehensive K-12 tobacco prevention curriculum for all children in the county. School administration, Local School Improvement Councils, and School Curriculum Teams should ensure that prevention education efforts are coordinated and age-appropriate.

**A. Health Education Instruction;** County health education programs of

study include instructional objectives related to prevention of tobacco use, assessment of hazards of tobacco, benefits of remaining tobacco-free, and skills to refuse peer pressure to use tobacco products K~12 as outlined in WV Board of Education Policy 2520, Health Education Instructional Goals and Objectives.

B. Safe and Drug Free School Program: School-wide or targeted grade-level programs sponsored by safe and drug free schools' funds shall be coordinated with other prevention education efforts and meet guidelines and stipulations set forth in drug free schools' grants to the county/RESA for use in prevention education efforts.

**4.1.4 Cessation Support Education:** All schools in the county will be provided with a list of available cessation programs to refer staff and students interested in cessation. Cessation support education shall not be used as a punishment for those caught violating policy, although referral information should be provided by the school administration to these individuals in addition to any sanction taken by the school. Individual schools will make the determination to provide or refer, if available, to voluntary cessation education and support programs that address the physical, psychological, and social issues associated with nicotine addiction and provide on-going support reinforcement necessary for desired behavior change. (Definition)

A. Referrals may be made to the locally determined site for tobacco cessation classes for staff and students.

B, Information regarding upcoming cessation support education programs will be given to all students in grades 7-12 and staff via the regular school calendar and through posted announcements in school newsletters and on bulletin boards per individual school strategy,

C. Schools may send individuals to a cessation support education training with county professional development funds in accordance with county policy for requisition of these funds provided that the program meets the basic definition for a cessation support education program as provided above.

D. Schools may elect to provide a cessation support education program for students if staff or appropriate individuals from community agencies agree to provide the program for a minimum of one year.

**4.2 Board Action (Enforcement):** The county board of education has decided that all schools should adhere to the following for enforcement of tobacco policy 2422.5A. Board Action 6/15/98, 10/25/99, 4-10-07

**A. For Students:**

Following is the procedure for First Offense:

1. **Counseling:** All students should be referred to the guidance counselor or other health services or psychological services, if applicable, for all offenses.
2. **Notification:** Authorities will be notified .
3. **Suspension:** All students shall be suspended a maximum of three days, with the option of doing school or community service to eliminate day or days of suspension.
4. **Parent/Guardian Notification:** Parents/Guardians of all students shall be notified.

Following is the procedure for Second Offense:

1. **Counseling:** All students shall be referred to the guidance counselor or other health services or psychological services, if applicable, for all offenses.
2. **Notification:** Authorities will be notified.
3. **Suspension:** All students shall be suspended a maximum of five days, with the option of doing school or community service to eliminate day or days of suspension.
4. **Education Program:** It is strongly recommend that all Student violators attend an educational program or receive educational material that discusses the addiction process and cessation options.
5. **Parent/Guardian Notifications:** School policy should address parent/guardian notification procedures and parent guardians shall be notified of all violations and subsequent sanctions placed on the student

Following shall be the procedure for Third Offense:

1. **All the above.**

2. **Suspension/Expulsion:** The student will be suspended for ten days with no option of doing community or school service and possible recommendation to the Board of Education for expulsion for a period of time determined by the Board of Education and/or the Superintendent.

### **B. For Staff:**

All staff in violation of the policy should be provided information regarding tobacco cessation programs although participation in such programs will be voluntary on the part of the staff member.

1. **Employee Evaluation /Record:** All staff violations required documentation on staff evaluation forms and work records.

2. **Mandatory Education Sessions:** All employees violating the policy will be required to attend an educational program or receive educational material that discusses the addiction process and cessation options. This should not be confused with cessation programs. It is not recommended to require staff violators to attend mandatory cessation programs.

**In accordance with due process. First violations of this policy shall include the following:**

- (a) Conference with supervisor;
- (b) Required to submit improvement plan;
- (c) Referral to local authorities, subject to a fine,

**In accordance with due process, Second violations of this policy shall include the following:**

- (a) A written reprimand in the employee personnel file,
- (b) A conference with supervisor, and/or
- (c) Submission of an improvement plan by the staff member.
- (d) Referral to local authorities, subject to a fine;
- (c) Suspension without pay for 1 day.



- (f) Attendance at education session on tobacco or employee provided with information re: the addiction process and cessation options.

**In accordance with due process, Third violations shall include, in addition to steps outlined for second violations, the following:**

- (a) Referral to local authorities, subject to a fine;
- (b) Suspension without pay for 3 days; and
- (c) Referral to the county board of education for additional disciplinary action

**Employees violating the policy more than three times shall be suspended for a minimum of 5 days and/or referred to the county board for additional disciplinary action that may include termination.**

### **C. For the Public:**

Public sanctions should include the following:

- (a) Request to individual to stop and refer to school policy
- (b) If person refuses to stop, request for individual to leave site of school function and refer to policy;
- (c) If a person refuses to leave or is a repeat violator, refer to local authorities, subject to fine,

**4.2.2** This policy is aligned with State Board of Education Policy 4373, Student Code of Conduct; Gilmer County Board of Education Policy 5311, Substance Abuse Policy and Gilmer County Board of Education Policy 5144, Student Behavior Policy

**4.6 Policy Review;** This policy will be reviewed every two years and appropriate modifications made at the advice of school administrators, faculty senates, and LSIC groups. Review dates: 6/15/2000,6/15/2002,6/15/2004

**Adopted:** 06/15/98 **Updated:** 10/25/99

Policy Revisions Adopted : 4-10-07