

TOBACCO USE & POSSESSION

RATIONALE FOR TOBACCO USE PREVENTION:

According to the Center for Disease Control, tobacco use is the single greatest cause of disease, disability, and death in the United States (2010). In Maine 18.2% of adults use tobacco, compared to the national average of 19.3%. It has been shown that if individuals do not begin using tobacco products during adolescence, then it is improbable that they will initiate tobacco use as adults. Established education and intervention strategies are critical during adolescence because a decision made early in life can produce long-term consequences. To promote and model healthy lifestyles for our students, staff, and community members, the Board of Education for Regional School Unit 16 establishes the following tobacco-free policy.

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy:

“tobacco product” is defined to include any lit or unlit cigarette, cigar, pipe, blunt, bidi, clove, electronic cigarette, any device designed to deliver nicotine through inhalation or “vaping” or used to simulate smoking and smokeless tobacco including dip, chew, snuff, snus, and spit tobacco.

For the purposes of this policy:

“tobacco use” includes carrying or having in one’s possession a tobacco product that is giving off smoke or chewing spit tobacco in any form. For the purpose of this policy, “use” means the chewing, lighting, smoking or other handling of tobacco products.

USE AND POSSESSIONS

The RSU 16 Board of Education is committed to promoting the health, welfare and safety of students, staff and community members. RSU 16, including all buildings and property, will be tobacco free 24 hours a day, 365 days per year. This includes all days that school is not in session and all functions taking place on school grounds. School activities to be smoke free include but are not restricted to: buildings, parking lots, wilderness trails, playing fields, and athletic functions.

PROHIBITED CONDUCT

A. Students:

The use, possession, sale, dispensing, or distribution of tobacco products by students on district property, in district vehicles, and at school-sponsored functions is prohibited. The wearing of products including T-shirts, hats, and pins that advertise, promote, or glorify the use of tobacco products at school or school-sponsored functions is prohibited.

B. Staff:

The use of tobacco products by all school employees on district property, in district vehicles, and at school-sponsored events is prohibited.

C. Community Members

The use of tobacco products by all visitors to the school district property, including during non-school hours and all school/community-sponsored events is prohibited.

D. District

Advertising of tobacco products in school buildings, at school functions, on school-owned property, and in school publications is prohibited.

COMMUNICATION

RSU 16 will print the tobacco policy in both the student and employee handbooks. Signs signifying a tobacco-free campus will be posted at all entrances of district buildings, athletic fields, and school playgrounds. A tobacco-free campus announcement will be made at the beginning of school-sponsored co-curricular events.

EDUCATION

Tobacco prevention education is embedded into the RSU 16 K-12 comprehensive health curriculum that aligns with the Maine Learning Results. Severity and susceptibility of tobacco related illnesses will be emphasized and will act as an early prevention tool. Maintaining a smoke-free campus will help influence impressionable students to adopt and live a healthy lifestyle free from tobacco products.

ENFORCEMENT

The following levels are assigned to specific types of violations of the RSU 16 Tobacco Use and Possession Policy. Violation levels shall be used by the Administrator of a school in which prohibited conduct occurs. The Administrator shall report any level three violation of this policy, as promptly as practical, to the Superintendent.

A Level One violation includes, but is not limited to, the wearing of products including T-shirts, hats, and pins, that advertise, promote, or glorify the use of tobacco products at school or school-sponsored functions.

A Level Two violation includes, but is not limited to, any violation involving the use or possession of tobacco products by students on district property, in district vehicles, and at school-sponsored functions.

A Level Three violation includes, but is not limited to, the sale, dispensing, distribution of tobacco products, or any subsequent violation will result in level three procedures.

A. Student Violations

Level One

1. Students will be required to remove or change the article of clothing or other item that advertises, promotes, or glorifies the use of tobacco products.
2. Parents/legal guardians shall be sent written notice regarding the tobacco violation.
3. Students refusing to remove or change clothing or other items that glorify tobacco shall receive up to three days suspension, or detention. The student will read an RSU 16 School Board provided packet of information about tobacco products and complete an accompanying question/answer page in a satisfactory manner.
4. The student will not be allowed to participate in any co-curricular activity during the suspension period.

Level Two

1. Parents/legal guardians shall be sent written notice regarding the tobacco violation. A parent/legal guardian shall also be required to meet with the building Administrator within five days of the violation.
2. Up to five-days suspension, or detention
3. The student will not be allowed to participate in any co-curricular activity during the suspension period.
4. The student shall be referred to the school counselor, Student Assistance Team (or equivalent), or other available resources, i.e., cessation class or substance abuse counseling, for a minimum of one session. The total number of sessions will be recommended by the district substance abuse counselor. Required sessions will be communicated to the student/parent during a re-entry meeting.

Level Three

1. Parents/legal guardians shall be sent written notice regarding the tobacco violation, which shall be signed by the parent/legal guardian and returned to school. A parent/legal guardian shall also be required to meet with the building Administrator within five days of the violation.
2. Minimum of five days suspension, or detention.
3. The student will not be allowed to participate in any co-curricular activities during the suspension.
4. The student shall be referred to the school counselor, Student Assistance Team, or other available resources, i.e., cessation class or substance abuse counseling, for a minimum of one session. The total number of sessions will be recommended by the district substance abuse counselor. Required sessions will be communicated to the student/parent during a re-entry meeting.

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Policy Code: ADC

Adopted: January 2012

Revised: August 2015 February 2021

B. Student Referral to Law Enforcement Agency

The Superintendent/designee reserves the right to refer students to a law enforcement agency, on a case-by-case basis, as deemed necessary. However, the Superintendent/designee shall reserve the right to refer to a law enforcement agency any student reasonably suspected of selling, dispensing, or distributing tobacco products.

C. Faculty and Staff

All faculty and staff including administration, teachers, education aids, janitors, food service providers, coaches, substitute staff, volunteer or other staff members. may not use, advertise, or distribute tobacco products on school grounds or at school sponsored events. Staff members in violation to the policy will be subject to the following procedures.

1st Violation

1. A verbal warning by appropriate administrator.
2. Referral to cessation program.

2nd Violation

1. A formal written warning by appropriate administrator to be placed in personal file.
2. Referral to cessation program.

3rd Violation

1. Meeting with the superintendent and possible leave without pay or dismissal.
2. Referral to cessation program.

D. Visitors

All visitors violating this policy shall be immediately directed to cease the behavior. Visitors who do not comply will be asked to leave the school grounds. If a visitor refuses to comply, the police may be called. In addition, all persons suspected of selling, distributing, or dispensing tobacco products to students shall be referred to a law enforcement agency.

LEGAL REFERENCES

20 USC 6081 (Pro-Children Act of 1994-goals 2000)

22 MSRS § 1578-B

ME. PL 470 (An Act to Reduce Tobacco Use by Minors)

SIGNATURE BLOCK:


RSU 16 School Board



 Mary Martin, Chair

4-16-21

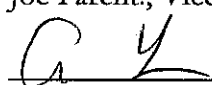
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 Joe Parent., Vice Chair

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 Amber Lyman

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 Arleena Stotts

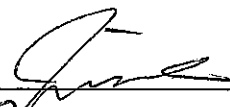
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James House

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Ed Rabasco

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Kelsey Earle

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Laura Hemond

4-16-21
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Melanie Harvey

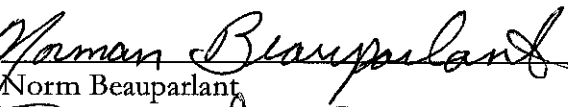
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Mike Downing

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Mike Lacasse

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Norm Beuparlant

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Norm Davis

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Steve Holbrook

4-15-21
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Travis Ritchie

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