

# SECTION 7: COMMUNICATION

## SAMPLE STAFF MEMO

Dear Staff,

Our school district values the health and well-being of all students and staff. To ensure we maintain a positive, healthy learning environment, [Name of School District] has a **tobacco-free school policy** in place that prohibits **all tobacco and e-cigarette use by students, staff, and visitors at all times**, including school events after regular school hours and at off-site school activities. This policy also prohibits students, staff, and visitors from bringing tobacco products to school and prohibits students from bringing tobacco products to off-site school activities. [Note: Tailor this sentence to your district's policy. Some districts choose to ban staff possession at off-site school events as well]. A copy of the policy is attached.

We have put this policy in place for three main reasons:

- **Help Students Be Tobacco-Free:** Youth spend a great deal of their time at school and school events. Keeping tobacco and e-cigarettes out of the school environment means students don't see their friends or adults using tobacco, which helps make tobacco use less socially acceptable.
- **Provide A Healthy and Positive Environment:** Breathing secondhand smoke can make others sick or worsen breathing problems like asthma. We want to keep our schools healthy for everyone. In addition, tobacco use at school easily distracts from learning and is linked to school failure and truancy and other risk behaviors.
- **Comply With Federal and State Regulations**

As staff, it is critical we are aware of and in compliance with our tobacco-free school policy. **Our tobacco-free policy must be enforced in order to be effective.** It is also important we recognize our position as role models for our youth. **All school personnel are required to enforce our tobacco-free school policy.** Here at [Name of School], staff should refer students who are found violating the policy to [customize this information for your school]. Ignoring violations or only warning students compromises the effectiveness of our policy.

It is our job to work together to provide a positive and healthy learning environment for our youth and fellow staff. As a tobacco-free school, we are paving the way for a lifetime of healthy decision-making in our students.

There are many helpful resources for youth or adults in our community who use tobacco and want to quit. New Mexico funds a free Quitline, 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) // 1-855-DEJELO-YA (1-855-335-3569), that anyone can use at no charge. Web-based services are also available at QUITNOWNM.com and DEJELOYANM.com. Participants by either phone or web are eligible to take advantage of a text messaging service, which supports this free tobacco cessation program.

We appreciate your help in supporting this policy. If you have questions or comments about the policy, please feel free to contact [Insert Point of Contact Here].

Sincerely,

[Principal / School Administrator]