

Whalen, Leonard

From: Pruitt, Stephen - Commissioner, KY Dept. of Education
Sent: Wednesday, August 30, 2017 3:56 PM
To: All State Supt
Subject: Tobacco Free School Policy
Attachments: Tobacco Free School Policy Letter 82917.pdf

Dear Superintendent,

Attached is a letter from the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) and the Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS) encouraging schools district to join many other school districts in adopting a 100% Tobacco Free School policy.

Should you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Jamie Sparks at Jamie.sparks@education.ky.gov or Elizabeth Anderson-Hoagland at ElizabethA.Hogaland@ky.gov.

Sincerely,



Stephen L. Pruitt, Ph.D.
Commissioner of Education
Office of the Commissioner

Kentucky Department of Education
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Matthew G. Bevin
Governor



Hal Heiner
Secretary
Education and
Workforce Development Cabinet

Stephen L. Pruitt, Ph.D.
Commissioner of Education

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

300 Sower Boulevard • Frankfort, Kentucky 40601
Phone: (502) 564-3141 • www.education.ky.gov

August 29, 2017

Dear Superintendent:

Together, the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) and the Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS) encourage your school district to join the many other school districts that protect our youth against the number one preventable cause of disease and death in the United States: tobacco. Kentucky has the highest rate in the nation for youth and adult smoking. We ask that you strongly consider adopting a 100% Tobacco Free School policy in your school district to reflect a firm commitment by school administration to provide students, school personnel, parents and community members the positive effects of a safe, tobacco-free environment.

Results from the 2015 Kentucky Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) indicated that 44 percent of high school students have tried smoking at least once and 7 percent of high school students have smoked cigarettes on school property. Furthermore, 42 percent of high school students have tried using an e-cigarette and 23 percent are current e-cigarette users.

The Surgeon General has found there is no safe level of secondhand smoke exposure. Exposure to secondhand smoke and aerosolized chemicals from e-cigarettes is dangerous to students and staff. E-cigarettes, also known as vapor products or alternative nicotine products, have been increasingly popular among youth as they are easy to conceal. E-cigarettes are a major health concern as they contain known toxins, like formaldehyde and diacetyl, and can also be used for illicit drugs. School districts must include e-cigarettes in their 100% Tobacco Free School policy and are required to update already adopted policies to include e-cigarettes.

Tobacco Free Schools give adults the opportunity to model tobacco-free lifestyles and reduce the social acceptance of tobacco use. Studies show that students in tobacco-free schools are less likely to start smoking. Tobacco prevention may be one of the most promising approaches to adolescent drug use as studies even suggest that cigarette smoking may be a gateway drug to illegal drug use.

To be considered a 100% Tobacco Free School district, the policy must prohibit tobacco use, including vapor products and alternative nicotine products, by staff, students and visitors 24 hours a day, seven days a week, inside board-owned buildings or vehicles, on school-owned property, and during school-sponsored student trips and activities.

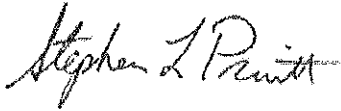
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In Kentucky, there are 64 school districts and 681 schools that have a 100% Tobacco Free School policy. To see where these schools and districts are located, please use this link: <http://tobaccofreeschoolsky.org>.

The burden of tobacco use in our state is affecting every sector of our society. One way to begin addressing this issue is by adopting a local 100% Tobacco Free School policy. Passing a 100% Tobacco Free School policy is the right thing to do for your students, your staff and your community. We encourage you to pass and implement a policy today.

For more information, please contact Jamie Sparks at Jamie.sparks@education.ky.gov or call him at (502) 564-2706, ext. 4539 or Elizabeth Anderson-Hoagland at ElizabethA.Hoagland@ky.gov or call her at (502) 564-9358. Also, visit this website, www.tobaccofreeschoolsky.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen L. Pruitt". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Stephen L. Pruitt, Ph.D.
Commissioner of Education