

# SECTION 7: COMMUNICATION

## SAMPLE LETTERS TO PARENTS (ENGLISH)

Dear Parents,

(Name of school district or school site) has a nicotine-free school policy in place. This policy prohibits all nicotine use by students, staff, and visitors at all times everywhere on campus, including school events after regular school hours and during off-site school activities. This policy also prohibits students, staff, and visitors from bringing nicotine products to school, as well as prohibits students from bringing nicotine 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 NICOTINE-FREE:** Youth spend a great deal of their time at school and school events. Keeping nicotine off campus means students don't see their friends and adults using nicotine, which helps make nicotine use less socially acceptable.
- **PROVIDE A HEALTHY AND POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT:** Breathing secondhand smoke can make others sick. It can trigger an asthma attack or worsen breathing problems. Staff and visitors using nicotine on campus or at school events place others at risk. We want to keep our schools healthy for everyone. Additionally, nicotine-free schools create the best social and learning environment for youth. Nicotine use at school distracts from learning and is linked to school failure and truancy.
- **COMPLY WITH FEDERAL AND STATE REGULATIONS:** Federal and state law prohibit using nicotine in elementary, intermediate, and secondary schools. Additionally, state law directs school boards to prohibit "the use, possession and distribution of nicotine products, e-cigarettes and nicotine liquid containers ... in school buildings, on school premises and by students at school-sponsored activities away from school grounds."

Nicotine-free schools provide positive role modeling for students. Schools are a place where children develop lifelong behaviors, and we are committed to ensuring smoking, chewing tobacco and e-cigarettes are not one of these behaviors.

We have placed signs about the policy on all school campuses. We will also make announcements at school events to remind people that tobacco and e-cigarette use is not allowed at these events or on school property.

There are many helpful resources for youth or adults in our community who use nicotine and want to quit. New Mexico funds a free Quitline, 1-800-QUIT NOW (1-800-784-8669) // 1-855-DEJEO YA (1-855-335-3569) // QUITNOWNM.org, DEJEOYANM.com, and LIVEVAPEFREE.com, that anyone can use at no charge.

We appreciate your help in supporting this policy. If you have questions or comments about the policy, please call the principal at your child's school at (include phone number or email address).

Sincerely,