

SECTION 3: REASONS FOR 100% TOBACCO-FREE SCHOOLS

1. IT'S THE LAW. TOBACCO-FREE SCHOOLS COMPLY WITH FEDERAL AND STATE REGULATIONS.

- The 1994 Federal Pro Children Act states: "No person shall permit smoking within any indoor facility utilized for services to kindergarten, elementary, or secondary education ... to children."
- New Mexico Administrative Code ruling 6.12.4.8 requires school boards to prohibit "the use, possession and distribution of tobacco products, e-cigarettes and nicotine liquid containers ... in school buildings, on school premises and by students at school-sponsored activities away from school grounds." The rule also requires establishing provisions for the policy's enforcement and communication.

2. TOBACCO USE BY STUDENTS IS LINKED TO MANY HIGH-RISK BEHAVIORS THAT IMPACT ACHIEVEMENT AND GRADUATION.

Youth who use e-cigarettes are more likely to...

- Use other forms of tobacco
- Use painkillers to get high
- Binge Drink
- Earn low grades in school⁶

3. TOBACCO-FREE SCHOOLS CREATE HEALTHY LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS FOR YOUTH.

- Tobacco and nicotine use at school distracts from learning. Student tobacco use at school is linked to school failure and truancy.⁷
- Tobacco-free schools reinforce lessons learned in the classroom about health and prevention.

4. TOBACCO-FREE SCHOOLS ENSURE POSITIVE ROLE MODELING BY TEACHERS, COACHES, OTHER STAFF, VOLUNTEERS, VISITORS, AND PEERS

- Students are more likely to smoke in a location where they have seen other students and adults smoking. Tobacco-free schools allow every person the opportunity to learn positive behaviors from their peers and role models.⁸
- A tobacco-free school represents a firm commitment by the school administration and staff to prohibit tobacco use by students, employees, and visitors.

5. TOBACCO-FREE SCHOOLS ARE SAFER FROM THE RISK OF TOBACCO-CAUSED FIRES

- One in 20 home structure fires were started by smoking materials between 2012 and 2016. These fires caused almost one in four home fire deaths, and one in 10 home fire injuries.⁹

6. TOO MANY NEW MEXICO STUDENTS ARE BEING EXPOSED TO TOBACCO AND NICOTINE AND ARE BECOMING REGULAR USERS.

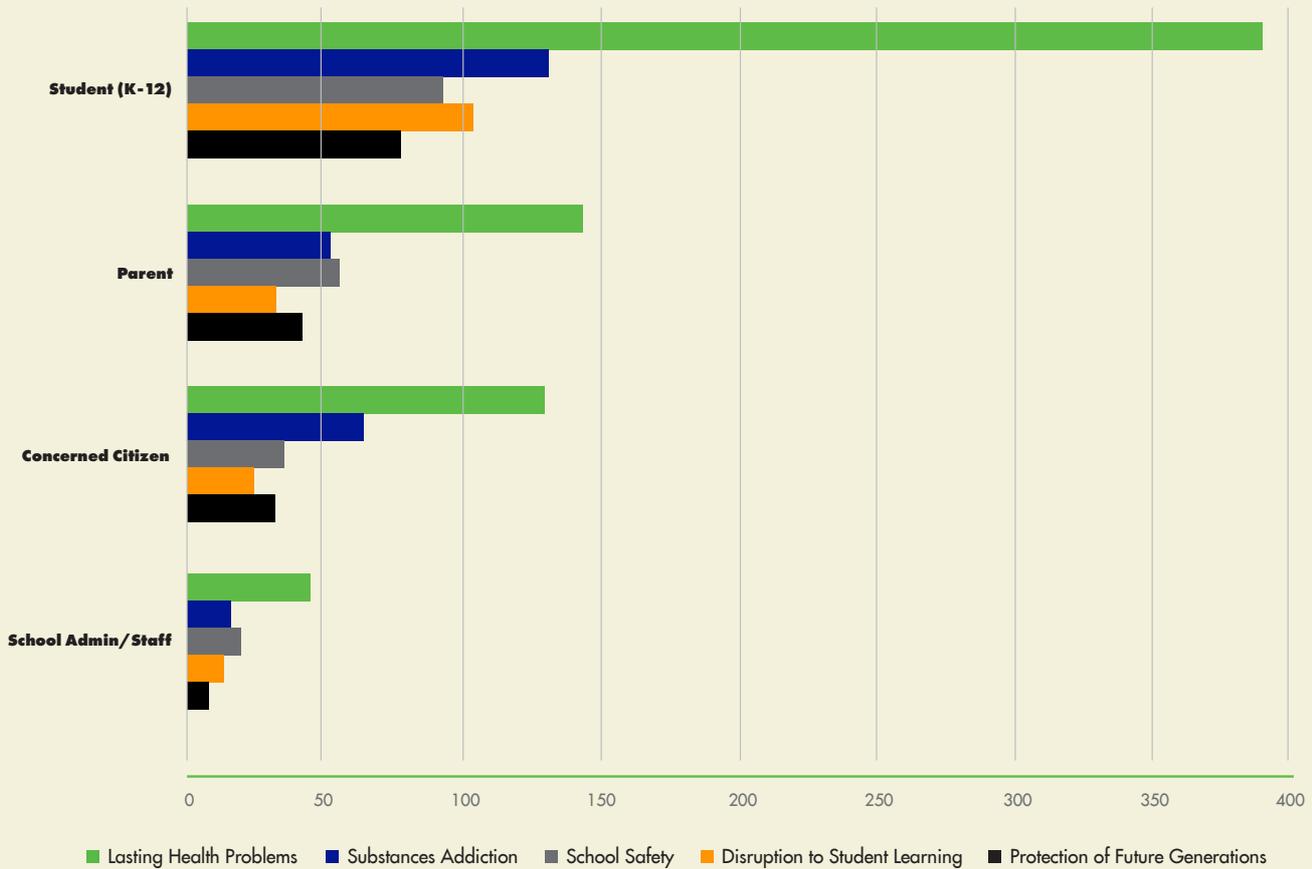
- In 2017, 13.5% of New Mexican youth admitted to smoking cigarettes before age 13. 51% of New Mexican youth admitted to ever trying e-cigarettes.¹⁰
- In 2019, 8.9% of New Mexico youth reported current cigarette smoking and 34% reported current e-cigarette use.³

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New Mexico citizens shared with us why they support 100% tobacco-free school policies.* The graph below demonstrates the top priorities amongst the students, parents, concerned citizens and school faculty that responded.



This is what students had to say about why they want stronger tobacco policies for their school:

“
I believe schools should be 100% tobacco free because it will encourage people to quit and to show you don't need to smoke to be 'cool' or to 'fit in'.
”
- Gracie, Student at Tucumcari Public Schools

“
Students in the hands of tobacco companies only feed the companies more and make them stronger and leave students or kids hurting, while they walk away richer. That's why I believe it's up to us to put a stop to it and make sure schools are taking proper measures against tobacco to protect our future youth and make sure tobacco companies don't do this again.
”
- Darien, Student at Los Lunas Public Schools

“
I wish everyone would stop coming up to me and asking me to use tobacco.
”
- Irma, Student at Albuquerque Public Schools

*Participants were surveyed in the 2020-2021 school year.