

# SECTION 7: COMMUNICATION

- **IN-SCHOOL STUDENT ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Ask students to read daily announcements. Involve student groups or clubs in developing and delivering these announcements about the policy.
- **EVENT ANNOUNCEMENTS:** In just a few seconds, you can announce the policy at athletic events, meetings, concerts and plays. Involve student groups or clubs in developing and delivering these announcements. Include a mention of the nicotine-free campus policy in event bulletins/flyers. Sample messaging for these announcements are provided on page 25.
- **SOCIAL MEDIA:** Social accounts are sometimes the first place school communities go to check for daily updates about their campus. Create brief messages with policy reminders, especially for staff and adults. Consider including information about cessation resources as well as the rules.
- **STUDENT-DESIGNED PUBLICITY:** Ask student groups or classes to design posters, banners and signs to communicate the policy. Consider offering a prize for the best-designed piece that embodies the school's mindset on being 100% nicotine-free.
- **LOCAL NEWS COVERAGE:** Alert your local media outlets of your newly-adopted nicotine-free policy and include quotes from the board, administration and students on how important this policy is for health and wellness. You can even invite them to attend the board meeting where the policy will be officially voted in. Don't forget to let us know too as we'd love to celebrate with you! If you'd like assistance with developing an official press release, this is a service we offer for FREE to all districts that communicate with us about their intent to adopt the policy.

## COMMUNICATION IS KEY!

### TIPS FOR COMMUNICATING WITH VISITORS

Even with signs, written materials, and event announcements, some school visitors may not realize that the school district has a nicotine-free school policy in place. This is why all school staff should be trained to communicate the policy one-on-one to the public. Gentle, positive, and clear messages will let violators know that the policy is in place and that it will be enforced. Knowing how to effectively communicate the policy will go a long way toward relieving stress that school staff may have regarding enforcement and will help to avoid the negative confrontations with parents, workers, and other school visitors.

### TIPS FOR VERBALLY COMMUNICATING THE POLICY

- **GENTLE REMINDERS:** Most of the time the person in violation of the policy is unaware that it is in place. This is particularly true if your school district recently strengthened its policy or enforcement of the policy. Politely and firmly let the violator know that the campus or school event – as well as the entire school district – is nicotine-free. Explain that the policy includes all tobacco and nicotine related products, including e-cigarettes.
- **A RATIONALE FOR THE POLICY:** Inform visitors of the reasons for the policy in a positive manner. Let them know that the school or school board enacted the policy to protect students, school staff, and visitors from secondhand smoke, to ensure a safe and positive learning and work environment for students and staff, and to model healthy and positive behaviors for students.
- **RANGE OF COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES:** Make sure that other communication strategies are in place to support verbal messages. For example, visitors to outdoor athletic events should see signs and information in event programs that communicate the policy, as well as hear announcements at the start of the game and during breaks to remind them of the policy.