

TEXAS ★ **STATE**
UNIVERSITY

The rising STAR of Texas

August 24, 2015

Dear Superintendent:

Welcome back to another school year! At the Texas School Safety Center we strive to serve schools and communities to create safe, secure, and healthy environments. In our role as a statewide service provider for the Texas Department of State Health Services to reduce the impact of tobacco on all Texans through prevention, training, and enforcement initiatives, we are taking this opportunity to inform you of changes in the Texas Education Code concerning the addition of e-cigarettes to your tobacco-free schools policies. These changes take effect beginning the 2015-2016 school year.


At the close of the 84th Legislative session, the Texas Education Code was amended to include e-cigarettes in tobacco-free schools policies. Effective October 1, 2015, this affects your work in two ways:

- 1) Your district's Board of Trustees shall ensure that e-cigarettes are included in the enforcement of the amended Texas Education Code; and
- 2) Your district's student handbooks and school websites should be updated to reflect the changes according to Texas Education Code, Section 28.004(k)(2)(C) whether the district has adopted and enforces policies and procedures that prescribe penalties for the use of e-cigarettes, as defined by Section 38.006, and tobacco products by students and others on school campuses or at school-sponsored or school-related activities.

To aid you in this effort, the Texas School Safety Center is making tools and resources available to all school districts to help ensure that staff, students, parents, community members, and visitors are aware of these changes, and to help promote your district's tobacco-free schools policies. There are a variety of sign options, handout materials, and general information about e-cigarettes available for you to forward to your individual campuses. All Texas school Principals will also receive a direct mail notification of these newly available resources. Please visit www.txssc.txstate.edu for more information and to access these resources at no charge.

We encourage you to begin promoting these new policies by posting the enclosed sign at your office in support of tobacco-free, smoke-free, and e-cigarette free schools.

Sincerely yours,


Kathy Martinez-Prather
Director

Enclosure

TEXAS SCHOOL SAFETY CENTER

400 West Hopkins | 400 West Hopkins Building | San Marcos, Texas 78666

phone: 512.245.8082 | fax: 512.245.1465 | WWW.TXSSC.TXSTATE.EDU

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