

## SMOKE-FREE ENVIRONMENT

### Background

The Government of Alberta cites conclusive evidence which implicates the use of tobacco and vaping products in the incidence of numerous debilitating and fatal diseases affecting the health of Albertans. The Division recognizes its responsibility to ensure the creation of a healthy working and learning environment for Division staff and students. Furthermore, the Division is aware of the importance of setting a positive example for students in its care. The Division has a responsibility to promote the health of its students by restricting their access to tobacco and vaping products in light of the risks associated with the use of such products.

The Division prohibits smoking and vaping by all persons at all times in all Division facilities, during all Division activities and events, and on Division property.

### Definitions

*Tobacco product* means a product made in whole or in part of tobacco, including tobacco leaves. It includes papers, tubes and filters intended for use with that product, a device that is necessary for the use of that product and the parts that may be used with the device.

*Vaping product* means (a) a device that produces emissions in the form of an aerosol and is intended to be brought to the mouth for inhalation of the aerosol; (b) a device that is designated to be a vaping product by the regulations; (c) a part that may be used with those devices; and (d) a substance or mixture of substances, whether or not it contains nicotine, that is intended for use with those devices to produce emissions.

### Procedures

1. This administrative procedure is applicable to all users of Division facilities including students, employees and visitors.
2. Students may not use, or be in possession of tobacco or vaping products while in school, on the school premises, on school or division property, utilizing division-provided transportation services, or during school related functions.
3. Tobacco or vaping product use by staff or visitors while in school, on the school premises, on school or Division property, utilizing division-provided transportation services, in division-owned vehicles or during school related functions is not permitted.

4. With the prior approval of the principal or superintendent as applicable, tobacco use as part of Indigenous smudging or pipe ceremonies is permitted (see Appendix A).
5. User groups or volunteers in facilities of the Division are to be notified and must comply with this procedure.
6. If a staff member fails to adhere to this procedure, the immediate supervisor will initiate the progressive discipline process.
  - 6.1. The procedure will be reviewed and the employee shall be encouraged to comply. Information on tobacco use cessation programs will be communicated.
  - 6.2. If non-compliance continues, the staff member will be given a verbal warning on failure to adhere to the procedure. Information on tobacco use cessation programs will be communicated.
  - 6.3. If non-compliance continues following the verbal warning, the staff member is given a written letter of reprimand with a copy sent to the Superintendent's office and personnel file. Information on tobacco use cessation programs will be communicated.
  - 6.4. If a staff member exhibits continued non-compliance with this procedure, the matter will be referred to the Superintendent or designate.
7. If a student fails to adhere to this procedure, the principal will take appropriate disciplinary action in accordance the Division's progressive discipline model (see [Administrative Procedure 350 – Student Discipline Framework](#)). The principal is encouraged to implement progressive discipline with students who are in contravention of this procedure with an educational awareness and/or counseling component.
8. Teachers are expected to engage with students about the health and social risks associated with smoking as per the provincial *Health and Life Skills* and *Career and Life Management* programs of studies.
9. All candidates considered for employment with the Greater St. Albert Roman Catholic Separate School Division will be informed of the Smoke-Free Environment Policy prior to appointment.
10. The Superintendent is responsible for advising all employees and other users of the smoke-free policy.
11. Maintenance staff are responsible for ensuring that "No Smoking" signs are posted in all Division facilities.
12. Staff members are encouraged to seek assistance with smoking cessation through the Division's Employee and Family Assistance Program.

## SMUDGING/PIPE CEREMONIES

### Background

The Division recognizes the spiritual needs of Indigenous communities. The Division recognizes that smudging involves first, a tobacco offering, and then, smudging. The use of sweetgrass, sage, cedar, and/or fungus are part of smudging and Indigenous traditional ways of life. Therefore, tobacco offerings and smudging are permitted in Division schools, subject to proper safety measures.

### Definition

*Smudging* is an Indigenous tradition which involves the burning of sage, sweetgrass, cedar, and/or fungus. Smudge produces a distinct scent, but the smoke associated with it is minimal and lasts a very short time. A smudge is burned to cleanse the body, mind, spirit of any bad feelings, negative thoughts, or negative energy - cleansing both physically and spiritually.

### Procedures

1. If smudging or a pipe ceremony is to take place in a Division building or designated site, principals/supervisors must ensure staff understand the associated protocols and importance of smudging and pipe ceremonies as part of Indigenous traditional ways of life.
2. If smudging or a pipe ceremony is to take place in a Division building, it will be in a designated area.
3. Any locations designated as smudging or pipe ceremony areas are to be well-ventilated and approved by the Manager of Operations and Maintenance.
4. Designated smudging areas must contain a fully charged fire extinguisher and staff responsible for overseeing a smudging or pipe ceremony must be trained in the proper use of fire extinguishers.
5. When smudging ceremonies are completed, the materials must be fully extinguished and disposed of in an appropriate manner in accordance with the following:
  - 5.1 Smoking or warm smudging materials need to burn out on their own.
  - 5.2 Smudge remnants and matches are to be placed in a metal can or box and saved.
  - 5.3 Smudge remnants are never to be placed in trash receptacles.

6. Pipe ceremony protocols are to be initiated and managed by a designated Indigenous leader who is an elder or who is designated by an elder.

References: Action on Smoking and Health: *Model School Board Tobacco Policy*

Alberta Education: *Program of Studies – Health and Life Skills Kindergarten to Grade 9*

Alberta Education: *Program of Studies – Career and Life Management*

Alberta Quits: *Tobacco Free Futures Guidelines*

Government of Alberta: *Education Act*

Government of Alberta: *Tobacco and Smoking Reduction Act*

Government of Canada: *Tobacco and Vaping Products Act*

Administrative Procedure 119 – Federal and Provincial Legislation

Administrative Procedure 265 – Volunteers in Schools

Administrative Procedure 310 – Student Safety

Administrative Procedure 350 – Student Discipline Framework

Administrative Procedure 355 – Use of Alcohol, Cannabis, Restricted and Illicit Drugs

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