



Kentucky Foundation  
*for* Medical Care



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## **TOBACCO-FREE FOR STUDENTS: Partnership to Donate Signage to Newly Tobacco-Free School Districts**

**(FRANKFORT, Ky - August 22, 2019)** Kentucky school districts that adopt tobacco-free campus policies under a new 2019 law are eligible for free tobacco-free campus and vehicle signage, thanks to a partnership among the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky (FHKy), the Kentucky Medical Association (KMA) and the Kentucky Foundation for Medical Care (KFMC). The groups say their "Tobacco Free for Students" program will cover the chief cost of

implementing the new law and significantly help improve community compliance.



10" x 12"



7" x 10"



5" x 7"

"Schools should be a safe haven for kids and teens from the sights and smells of smoking, vaping and dip," said Ben Chandler, FHKy president and CEO. "We advocated for this law because the research shows it will protect kids from secondhand smoke and reduce youth tobacco use. Placing readily recognizable tobacco-free schools signs on campuses across the state will remind students, staff, faculty and entire

communities that tobacco use has no place in school at any time."

KMA President Bruce Scott, M.D., said, "Smoking remains the leading cause of preventable death and disability in the United States and it is estimated that today there are 119,000 kids under the age of 18 in Kentucky who will ultimately die prematurely from smoking. Given that nearly ninety percent of adult smokers began using before the age of 18, preventing our youth

from ever picking up a cigarette or tobacco product of any kind is imperative to protecting these future generations from the harms of such an addiction."

"With Graves County schools just recently adopting the tobacco-free campus policy and with these new signs visible throughout the school, we hope our classmates begin to better understand the harms of tobacco and e-cig products to their health," said Kendall Tubbs and Abbi Stratton, high school seniors and Tobacco-Free Ambassadors at Graves County High School. "We also think this new rule will take the pressure off those of us who are asked to use these products but don't actually want to. As seniors, we hope by the end of our high school career to see all hallways, bathrooms, and sports games free from tobacco."

Through the Tobacco-Free for Students program, eligible school districts can order metal signs for school entrances and outdoor sports venue fencing, as well as window decals for exterior school building doors and buses. Initially, the signage will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis to districts that adopt a new tobacco-free schools policy after April 2019, in compliance with the new law ([House Bill 11](#), KRS 438.345). In January 2020, eligibility for the free signage will be expanded to include Kentucky school districts that previously had passed tobacco-free schools policies and would like to refresh their campus and vehicle signage. The program will continue until July 1, 2020, the deadline for schools to adopt the new policy, or until signage runs out.

"We expect to have enough signage to meet the needs of every school district that has recently made the decision to go tobacco-free," said Shawn Jones, M.D., president of KFMC. "Our hope is that offering the signage first to the 58 percent of school districts that hadn't previously gone tobacco-free will be an incentive to move quickly for budget-conscious school boards that want to protect student health but are struggling with how to pay for the mandated signage."

#### Schools Already Adopting Tobacco-Free Policy

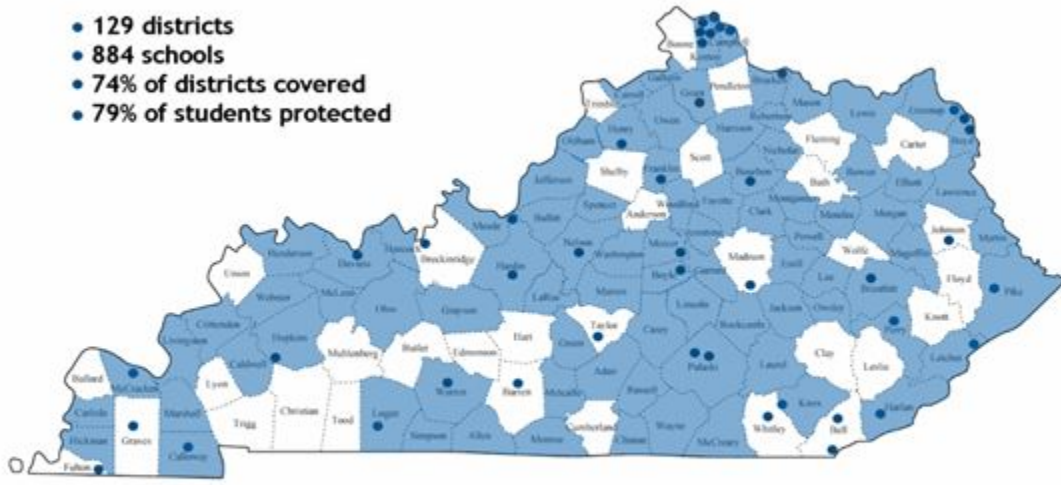
The Tobacco Free for Students program was developed in consultation with the Kentucky School Boards Association (KSBA). As of August 9, 55 school districts have already adopted the new policy, KSBA Executive Director Kerri Schelling said. That means that 74 percent of Kentucky school districts now have tobacco-free policies, an increase from 42 percent since the law passed.

"We are extremely grateful to the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky, the Kentucky Foundation for Medical Care and the Kentucky Medical Association for their investments of time and money to help offset the cost of tobacco-free school signage in our public schools. At a time when state funding for education is extremely limited, these types of partnerships are critical in easing the burden on local communities. KSBA is proud to work with these groups on the signage project as avid supporters of House Bill 11 and in the interest of student and staff health to combat the vaping epidemic," Schelling said.

# Kentucky's Tobacco Free School Districts

\*updated August 9, 2019

- 129 districts
- 884 schools
- 74% of districts covered
- 79% of students protected



\*Tobacco-free Schools  
in compliance with  
KRS 438.345

Kentucky Foundation  
for Medical Care

KMA  
Physicians in Charge for Kentucky

KOBA  
Kentucky Office of Behavioral and  
Advanced Sciences

FOUNDATION FOR A  
HEALTHY  
KENTUCKY

"Passing the tobacco-free schools bill was an important first step in eliminating tobacco use on our school campuses," said Rep. Kim Moser, the primary sponsor of HB11. "I'm thrilled about the number of Kentucky public schools that already have adopted the new policy. And I'm grateful to the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky and the Kentucky Medical Association for stepping up to help schools implement the new law."

The model policy in the new law, to be adopted by districts by July 1, 2020, in time for implementation for the 2020/2021 school year, prohibits the use of all tobacco products at all times on school campuses and in school vehicles. The policy also prohibits tobacco use by school officials on field trips when students are present. The law does not prohibit adult use of nicotine replacement therapy products for tobacco cessation.

The Tobacco-Free for Students website - [www.tobaccofreestudents.org](http://www.tobaccofreestudents.org) - includes an order form and all other information districts need to order the new signage.

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## About the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky

*Funded by an endowment, the mission of the nonpartisan Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky is to address the unmet health needs of Kentuckians by developing and influencing policy, improving access to care, reducing health risks and disparities, and promoting health equity. Since the Foundation opened its doors in 2001, it has invested nearly \$28 million in health policy research, advocacy, and demonstration project grants across the Commonwealth. Follow the Foundation on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#), and visit our website at [www.healthy-ky.org](http://www.healthy-ky.org).*

## About the Kentucky Medical Association

*Established in 1851, the Kentucky Medical Association is a professional organization for physicians*

*throughout the Commonwealth. The KMA works on behalf of physicians and the patients they serve to ensure the delivery of quality, affordable healthcare.*

*Members of the KMA share a mission of commitment to the profession and service to the citizens of this Commonwealth that extends across rural and urban areas. From solo practitioners to academicians to large, multi-specialty groups, KMA is the ONLY state association representing every specialty and type of medical practice in Kentucky.*

**About the Kentucky Foundation for Medical Care**

*Founded by the Kentucky Medical Association in 1971, the Kentucky Foundation for Medical Care (KFMC) is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization committed to improving the health of all Kentuckians through medical education and public health initiatives.*

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