



The Governing Body Foundation calls for the Inclusion of a Ban on Vaping in School Codes of Conduct

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The Governing Body Foundation (GBF) is a leading organisation committed to promoting school safety and fostering a conducive learning environment. It recognises the growing concern surrounding vaping within the education community. Many member schools have reported vaping as a pressing issue and have sought guidance on addressing it effectively. GBF firmly advocates that school codes of conduct should explicitly prohibit vaping, encompassing the use of any device that produces an aerosol or vapor for inhalation, regardless of nicotine content. Similar to the prohibition of smoking cigarettes or cannabis, these measures aim to maintain a smoke-free environment, irrespective of the age of the learners.

School safety encompasses various aspects, and GBF believes that codes of conduct play a vital role in maintaining a secure environment for teaching, learning, and working. As such, the inclusion of vaping in these codes is crucial for safeguarding the well-being of all stakeholders.



Image 1: Creating a safe and healthy learning environment is a top priority for South African schools.

The South African Schools Act mandates the Governing Body (SGB) to adopt a Code of Conduct for Learners and implement a Code of Conduct for SGB members, as determined by the MEC for Education in each province. The GBF strongly advises schools to adopt Codes of Conduct for Educators, encompassing the South African Council for Educators' Code of Professional Ethics, along with additional school-specific information. These codes serve to inform individuals about expected conduct and outline the consequences for code violations. This will enhance school safety by prohibiting behaviors that could harm others.

Schools have the authority to include provisions against vaping in codes of conduct for staff and coaches. Although vaping by adults is not unlawful, it can be restricted within school policies to mitigate potential harm caused by emissions. As e-cigarettes do not contain tobacco and are not technically classified as traditional cigarettes, they are not evaluated as "tobacco products" under South Africa's Tobacco Control Act. Schools are encouraged to revise their rules regarding smoking and vaping as new legislation, known as the Control of Tobacco Products and Electronic Delivery Systems Bill, is currently under consideration by the National Assembly. This bill seeks to introduce stricter regulations pertaining to smoking and the use of vaping devices in South Africa, following extensive consultation.



Image 2: Prohibiting vaping in school codes of conduct promotes a smoke-free environment for learners and staff.

To address vaping within schools, GBF proposes the following measures:

- Amend relevant school policies and codes of conduct for both learners and adults.
- Display "no smoking" and "no vaping" signs throughout school premises.
- Educate learners, staff, and parents about the dangers of vaping through informative materials placed prominently in the library, classrooms, corridors, and offices.
- Ensure fair and consistent implementation of the codes of conduct.

The GBF remains committed to fostering safe learning environments across South Africa, and by taking a firm stance against vaping, it aims to protect the well-being of all individuals within the school community.

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Notes to Editor:

The Governing Body Foundation (GBF) is an organization dedicated to supporting and empowering governing bodies in South African schools. As an influential advocate for effective school governance, GBF provides guidance, resources, and training to help governing bodies fulfill their responsibilities and enhance educational outcomes. The organization assists in developing policies, codes of conduct, and strategies that promote school safety, inclusive practices, and educational excellence. Through its initiatives, GBF aims to foster collaboration between schools, parents, and education authorities, ensuring a conducive learning environment for all learners. The GBF's work is rooted in the principles of good governance, transparency, and accountability, with a focus on promoting the interests and well-being of students, educators, and school communities. To learn more about the Governing Body Foundation and its initiatives, please visit www.gbf.org.za.