



Lincoln Commission On Children & Families

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Dear President O'Connor and Board Members:

I am writing to encourage Oregon Coast Community College to designate its new campuses as completely tobacco-free.

I direct the Lincoln County Commission on Children and Families, whose mission is to support and advocate for the care, protection, and positive development of all children and families within the Lincoln County Community. We work to ensure that all children are protected, educated, supported, and nurtured so they may achieve their full potential. We are fortunate to have OCCC among the many wonderful resources included to help achieve this vision, and we are so pleased to see the college growing with expanded educational opportunities through the new campus facilities being planned!

Lincoln County's educational institutions should maintain environments that are safe and accessible for all, and that promote health and wellness.

A tobacco-free campus protects minors from secondhand smoke and the influence of tobacco. Lincoln County high schools are completely tobacco-free. High school students on their school grounds may not smoke and are not exposed to secondhand smoke. These students should have consistent tobacco-free school educational environments, whether it be while at their high school or when they are taking classes at OCCC through programs such as Expanded Options. A college policy that allows smoking gives minors tacit approval to smoke while on campus.

A tobacco-free campus maintains an accessible campus environment. With widespread public awareness of the hazards of secondhand smoke, most people would prefer to avoid this exposure. The urgency of this issue is evident when we consider statistics such as the 9.3% of adults in Lincoln County who have asthma. For these individuals, avoiding secondhand smoke may be a medical necessity. These students (as well as staff with asthma) should not have to risk exposure to a completely preventable health hazard while walking across campus.

Part of the work of our Commission includes the support of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug prevention programs. A tobacco-free college campus will strengthen the support efforts done to keep our youth tobacco- and drug-free, and to help others in our community who struggle with nicotine dependence. We need to provide these individuals with every opportunity to succeed; a tobacco-free campus accompanied by education and smoking cessation resources is one important way of doing this.

Thank you for your consideration.

Barbara Dougherty
Director, Lincoln Commission on Children and Families