

Tobacco Free Partnership of Broward County Meeting

Quick recap

The Tobacco Free Partnership of Broward County held their final 2025 meeting virtually to discuss organizational updates and review revised bylaws, which were unanimously approved. The group reviewed various tobacco-related initiatives including school programs, public policy efforts, and educational campaigns, with particular focus on addressing vaping concerns among students and developing preventive approaches rather than punitive measures. The conversation ended with discussions about recruitment strategies, legislative updates, and upcoming communications efforts, including plans for the December newsletter and potential guest speakers.

Next steps

- [All Partnership members: Email updated email addresses to Claudia and/or Dr. Hummel for the partnership contact list](#)
- [Claudia: Add Wendi Gabriel to the partnership mailing list using the email provided in the chat](#)
- [Gary: Email Wendi Gabriel \(wendi.bpkwkiwanis@gmail.com\) regarding connection to Davie mayor for student presentation on vape shop issue](#)
- [Harrison: Put a tickler note on calendar to discuss National Night Out booth registration at June meeting \(or earlier, as suggested by Diana\)](#)
- [Chris: Check on registration form availability and details for 2026 Margate National Night Out event](#)
- [Barry: Follow up with American Heart Association \(forward original email\) to try to schedule a guest speaker](#)
- [Bill: Reach out to Sabine at American Heart Association to help connect with partnership](#)
- [Andrew: Write summary of recent summit event for January newsletter and send to Barry](#)
- [Barry: Review and provide feedback on Bill's end-of-year statement about Tobacco partnerships](#)
- [Barry: Reach out to Panthers ticket representative to inquire about tobacco retail license status at the stadium regarding Zyn sales](#)
- [Love: After holidays, schedule meeting \(first week back\) with team to brainstorm alternative disciplinary/educational program for students and referral process for 18+ students](#)
- [Gary: Follow up with Coral Springs zoning manager to attend meetings about proposed vape shop limitation policy](#)
- [Gary: After school resumes, coordinate with Rickards and other interested schools about joint Partnership/SWAT hybrid meeting timing](#)
- [Love: Work with Dr. Remy and school district to develop alternative to suspension for tobacco/vape violations, including potential SWAT club membership requirement](#)
- [Love: Try to get new school health manager Heather Katcher on the committee](#)
- [Barry: Add school district report under SWOT as a regular agenda item for future meetings](#)
- [Love: Bring up at next work plan brainstorming session the lack of effectiveness of paid media for recruitment and suggest alternative options to state coordinators](#)

- [Barry: Monitor and track legislation related to tobacco \(HB377/SB754, HB389\) and fentanyl test strips bill for updates](#)
- [Barry: At next relevant meeting, remind group about issue of Zyn sales at Panthers stadium and follow up on licensing question](#)
- [Gary and Aruna: After 9:00, attend BRACE meeting to pitch for additional school recruitment](#)
- [Andrew: Finalize training of last remaining NSU clinic staff on cessation services](#)
- [Barry: Send meeting notes to Diana as soon as available after the meeting \(mentioned at end\)](#)

Summary

Audio Setup for Virtual Meeting

The meeting participants experienced technical difficulties connecting to a big screen and decided to use laptops instead. Barry emphasized that sound quality was more important than video, suggesting that participants should position themselves near microphones. FernandezCM and others agreed to set up in a corner with the equipment, prioritizing audio clarity.

Tobacco Partnership Final 2025 Meeting

The Tobacco Free Partnership of Broward County held their final meeting of 2025 virtually due to technical issues with the fishbowl room. The meeting began with introductions of new Department of Health staff members and approval of the November 2025 minutes, which now include required elements such as meeting time, attendees, and action items as requested by Tallahassee. The partnership also discussed reviewing and revising their bylaws, with Barry sharing a draft that he worked on with Marcia to accommodate Health Department requirements.

Bylaws Review and Beach Sweep

The meeting focused on reviewing and approving revised bylaws, which were unanimously approved by the voting members. The group then discussed the recent Beach Sweep event, where 173 volunteers collected 244 pounds of debris, though attendance was lower than usual due to December's holiday season. The conversation ended with a message from the Tobacco Free Workgroup expressing gratitude for partnerships and emphasizing the importance of tobacco-free policies in creating healthy communities.

SWAT Program Expansion and Updates

The team discussed updating contact information for work plan activities, with some email addresses bouncing back due to potential firewall issues. Gary reported that the SWAT program added two new schools, bringing the total to 35, with a goal of 50, and mentioned receiving projects from the PhotoVoice initiative involving over 700 students. They plan a SWAT game date event at Tiger Tail in March for about 70 students, focusing on team building activities without the lecture portion to avoid classification as training. Aruna noted that two additional schools have expressed interest but won't start until after the holiday break, and she highlighted that recent school visits addressed concerns about vaping.

School Partnerships and Student Advocacy

After the meeting, Aruna and Gary will attend another meeting to pitch recruiting more schools. Barry inquired about potentially organizing a joint Partnership SWAT meeting after the new year, with Rickards High School as the first candidate. Diana shared updates on her collaboration with Broward County Public Schools, highlighting the need for a peer training program to empower students as advocates in schools. She also mentioned an upcoming assembly at Hollywood Hills High School in January to address the increasing concern of vaping among students.

Student Vaping and Discipline Strategies

The group discussed concerns about vaping and edibles among students, with Diana highlighting the need for education and support rather than punitive measures. Fernandez shared plans to work with Broward County Public Schools to develop alternative disciplinary actions and referral programs for students over 18. Andrew offered to discuss cessation resources for older students, and Barry suggested adding a school district report to future SWOT meetings. The group agreed on the importance of student-led initiatives and peer-to-peer education, with Barry noting the limited success of traditional town hall meetings.

Vaping Policy Shifts in Schools

The group discussed changes in school district policies regarding vaping, noting a shift from punitive measures to a more preventive approach. Barry emphasized the importance of educating students about the consequences of vaping, particularly for first-time offenders, rather than immediately resorting to suspensions. Andrew shared historical context, comparing current vape policies to past tobacco laws and the creation of a tobacco education course. The discussion highlighted the need for a balanced approach that includes education and alternative measures, such as participation in a SWAT program, to address student behavior effectively.

Tobacco Ban and Community Events

The group discussed tobacco-free public spaces, with Harrison reporting that Margate voted down a proposed ban, though Southwest Ranches showed interest. They agreed to pursue individual meetings with Margate commissioners who opposed the ban. The team also discussed participating in National Night Out events, particularly in Margate, with Steve suggesting they secure a booth near Crimestoppers. Gary provided an update on the Fortivorce project and mentioned searching for mobile vans to distribute educational materials.

Vape Regulation and Student Initiatives

Gary reported on a successful meeting in Coral Springs regarding vape shop regulations, which resulted in media coverage and potential policy changes. He plans to follow up with the zoning manager and coordinate with a student to address concerns about vape shops near schools in Davie. Barry and Wendi discussed adding Wendi to the health department mailing list for meeting notices. Andrew presented updates on the Vapes on Campus competition, which has 35 student teams creating multimedia campaigns to reduce vape prevalence on campus by March or April. He also mentioned a recent cessation training for iCUBA members and a Great American Smokeout event at HCA Florida Westside.

AHEC Health Initiatives Update

The group discussed AHEC's initiatives, including training healthcare providers and cessation services, as well as a recent presentation at the WIC annual conference. Andrew shared updates on NOVA Southeastern University's health network, including a new vaping prevention project with 35 teams across campuses. Barry inquired about the project's scope and potential for replication at other institutions. The team also discussed upcoming communications efforts, including the December newsletter and potential guest speakers from organizations like the American Heart Association. Barry requested materials from Andrew for the newsletter, and FernandezCM agreed to provide state day information.

Recruitment and Tobacco Policy Updates

The meeting covered several key topics, including recruitment strategies, advocacy efforts, and tobacco-related issues. Bill and Barry discussed the effectiveness of paid media for recruitment, with Barry expressing skepticism about its impact. FernandezCM mentioned limitations in choosing recruitment activities due to contractual obligations. The group also talked about federal and state legislative updates on tobacco products, with Andrew highlighting concerning research on dual use of vaping and smoking. Chris raised concerns about Zin products being sold at a Panthers stadium, which Barry agreed to follow up on. The conversation ended with holiday wishes and plans for the new year.