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**This material is adapted from resources developed by the Center for Civic Education.**

**Lawmakers** often look at several possible solutions (alternatives) before choosing the one that will solve a local or state problem. Some lawmakers might even contact other local or state governments with similar public policies to decide which solution is best.

Here is an example of how this might look:

Tobacco use is on the rise in local middle schools. The school board wants to create a policy that will get rid of tobacco use in schools. The **superintendent**, **school board**, principals, teachers, parents, and students are all concerned citizens interested in solving this problem. The superintendent, acting as the “government” for the schools in the county, decides to hold a meeting and invite interested citizens to suggest solutions. Several solutions are presented:

1. Create a “zero-tolerance” policy in the student code of conduct
2. Educate the students about the effects of using tobacco
3. Hire security guards to patrol the campus and bathrooms where smokers are found
4. Test the students for drug, alcohol, and tobacco usage

All the solutions that are presented might work. The superintendent will have to decide which solution is best to solve the problem.



**Source:**

*How Can Jackson Middle Meet Its Responsibilities to Deal with the Problem of Substance Abuse?*. *New.Civiced.org.* The Center for Civic Education, 2014. Web. 11 March 2014.

<<http://new.civiced.org/resources/curriculum/lesson-plans/1785>>