

## **School District Policy Regarding the Specification and Use of Environmentally Preferable ("Green") Cleaning Products**

Be it resolved that the Board of Education, recognizing the importance of the safety and health of the district's students, teachers and staff, does hereby adopt the following policy regarding products used to clean and maintain school facilities within the district.

### **Background and Intent**

Many chemicals commonly found in cleaning products used to clean and maintain schools pose significant and unnecessary health risks for children as well as teachers and staff. Exposure to some of these chemicals has been associated with an increased incidence of asthma, allergies, certain types of cancer, learning and behavioral disorders, endocrine disruption, chemical sensitivity, and kidney or liver damage. In addition to these potential health impacts, certain cleaning chemicals can negatively impact air and water quality or may be acutely toxic to marine life. The Board believes it is not necessary to jeopardize the health and safety of our students, teachers and staff, or to pollute our environment, when many less toxic or non-toxic alternatives are available.

Therefore the intent of this policy is to reduce student, teacher and staff exposure to these chemicals and reduce environmental pollution by stipulating procurement, implementation and evaluation policies for "green" cleaning products which ensure the highest levels of safety, efficacy and economy.

### **Classification of Products**

The Director of Facilities is hereby directed to classify cleaning products specified for purchase and use in district school facilities into one of the three following categories:

1. Type I products are those which are used daily for routine cleaning in classrooms, hallways and cafeterias, including all-purpose cleaners, cleaning pastes, window and mirror cleaners and dust mop treatments.
2. Type II products are those which are used to sanitize or disinfect in bathrooms, gymnasiums, nurses' offices, kitchens, etc.
3. Type III products are those which are used for floor stripping and finishing, metal polishing, graffiti removal, degreasing and heavy duty, restorative carpet cleaning.

### **Specifications:**

1. Products classified as all-purpose cleaners ("Type I") shall meet or exceed the following specifications, as warranted in writing by manufacturers and vendors:
  - Products must be certified by Green Seal® (using the new 2008 revised GS-37 standard) or EcoLogo®, or meet the specifications and criteria set forth by those organizations as verified by an independent third party certifying entity.
  - For products not certified by Green Seal® or EcoLogo®, all ingredients must be disclosed to purchaser.
  - Product must be bio-based and biodegradable or based on naturally occurring ingredients.

- Product in concentrate form must have a health rating of 0 or 1 as designated by the Hazardous Materials Information System (HMIS) and/or National Fire Protection Association (NFPA).
- Product in concentrate form must have a VOC content of less than 1%
- Product in concentrate form must be non-reactive, non-caustic and non-corrosive.
- Product in concentrate form must not contain known or suspected endocrine modifiers, phthalates or ingredients that are toxic to the liver or kidneys in environmentally relevant doses
- Product must not contain added fragrances (non-functional fragrances)
- Product must not contain non-food-grade dyes
- Product must not contain substances which contribute to greenhouse gases, smog or ozone depletion

*Note: The use of products with ingredients that do not add to the development of antibiotic-resistant bacteria is encouraged..*

2. Products classified as sanitizers and disinfectants ("Type II") shall meet or exceed the following specifications, as warranted in writing by manufacturers and vendors:

- Products must not contain chlorine-based ingredients (e.g., sodium hypochlorite)
- Products must not contain quaternary ammonium compounds ("quats") (e.g., ammonium chloride)
- Products must not contain phenolics (e.g., o-phenyl-phenol)
- Product labels must include instructions that the product should be used only after surfaces have been pre-cleaned
- Products must not be corrosive to skin or eyes

3. Products used for heavy duty floor care ("Type III") shall meet or exceed the following specifications, as warranted in writing by manufacturers and vendors:

- Product does not contain styrene
- Product does not contain heavy metals such as zinc, chromium or nickel
- Product does not contain petroleum solvents or 2-butoxyethanol

### **Implementation Guidelines**

1. Up to 90% of the dirt in schools is brought in on the soles of shoes. Walk-off mats (15 feet minimum) are part of an effective green cleaning program, and should be installed at all school entrances.

2. All classroom teachers shall be provided with approved Type I cleaning products for use when necessary, and shall be given instruction in their proper use.

3. No parent, teacher or staff member may bring into a school facility any consumer product which is intended to clean, deodorize, sanitize or disinfect.

4. Type II disinfectant products shall be used only for body fluid spills or in areas where there is a high potential for direct contact with body fluids or when a public health concern requires their use. These products contain registered pesticides and should never be used for general cleaning purposes or when children are present.

5. Type III floor stripping and finishing products shall only be used when facilities are not in use (vacation breaks) or over long weekends, when buildings can be properly ventilated before children, teachers and staff return. These products typically contain highly toxic, highly caustic

and highly corrosive chemicals. Their high VOC and pH levels require them to be used with personal protection and extreme caution, even when following guidelines.

### **Effective Date and Notice**

This policy shall take effect on \_\_\_\_\_.

- The district shall undertake to inform all parents, teachers and staff of the contents of this policy and the reasons for its adoption. All custodial staff shall be informed of the policy and trained in the use of “green” cleaning products. The District shall inform all vendors of this policy in writing and it shall be referenced in all new contracts and service agreements. Existing stocks of non-complying products shall be disposed of as directed by the Director of Facilities.

This document is part of **The ChildSafe School Program** created by Grassroots Environmental Education, a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization.

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