

TIPS FOR HEALTHIER AIR QUALITY IN CLASSROOMS

Introductory note: Depending on the available resources and flexibility of your school district, some of these items may be difficult or impossible to achieve. However, these guidelines will provide a target toward which your classroom can trend over time.

- Educate yourself on Indoor Air Quality and Asthma & Allergy triggers.
- Try to maintain cleanable horizontal surfaces.
- If your room has carpet:
 - Don't allow food or beverages
 - Check to make sure the custodial staff use high efficiency vacuums to capture the particles
 - Help the custodians by having students put chairs on the desk at day's end (if possible)
 - Check with custodial staff to ensure the carpet is cleaned appropriately (hot water/steam "extraction" is the best)
 - No strong chemicals or soaps
 - Carpet dried thoroughly within 24 hours after cleaning
 - Carpet cleaned at least quarterly
- Wet-wipe dusty surfaces weekly- - pick up on Fridays so janitor can dust- (do not use a feather duster)
- Avoid clutter... put loose items and piles into plastic boxes that can be wet-wiped.
- Avoid hanging items that collect dust: streamers, projects, papers, piñatas, etc.
- Pets should be visitors, not permanent residents.
- Remove fleecy items that can harbor allergy triggers...old overstuffed furniture, area & throw rugs, pillows, blankets or stuffed animals that can't be properly and regularly cleaned.
- Avoid use of "stinky" dry-erase board markers and cleaners.
- Avoid use of spray adhesives, contact cement, and volatile paints. Use non-toxic water based materials when ever possible.
- Avoid bringing chemicals, paints, or sprays from home without clearing them with the maintenance staff.
- Avoid use of room deodorizing sprays or plug-ins.
- Absolutely do not use Ozone machines in occupied areas.

- Inventory your supplies and materials in terms of indoor air quality:
Consider:
 - Are they low-odor?
 - Can they create dust or other particles?
 - Do they harbor allergens?
- Report water leaks, water stains, damp materials, or “musty” or “moldy” smells immediately.
- Don’t allow stained ceiling tiles to remain – they can harbor mold, and it’s hard to tell if or when they get wet again.
- Communicate with the facility staff regarding the mechanical systems for your classroom. Keep your room comfortable – learn how to operate your heating/cooling system for comfort and energy efficiency.
- Help ensure your students are getting adequate fresh air ventilation.
 - Do not block air supply or exit grills
 - Do not turn off ventilators – work with maintenance staff to fix noisy units, control temperatures, control drafts.
 - In with the fresh, out with the stale: if your classroom doesn’t have mechanical ventilation then at least open windows and/or doors frequently to provide a quick “flush-out” of the stale air.
 - Request a ventilation system that supplies the state code minimum of 15 cubic feet per minute per person outside air at all times the school is occupied.
- Monitor your windows – they should not show condensation except on the very coldest of days – condensation suggests either a moisture problem or not enough ventilation (or both!).
- Notify maintenance if you smell odors or particle matter from other zones in the building: shops, science, laminator, locker room, graphics, custodial, storage areas, combustion equipment, kitchen, buses at the curb, etc. - - Air should move from “clean areas to dirty areas”
- Install walk-off mats that provide “4 good footsteps” at all outside entry doors.
- Hallways should be hard-surface, not carpet.
- Make sure there is an Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) person assigned that ALL IAQ (moisture, odor, mold, etc.) issues are directed to.
- Make sure ALL teachers and staff knows who to contact for Indoor Air Quality concerns in the school.
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For more information contact:

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