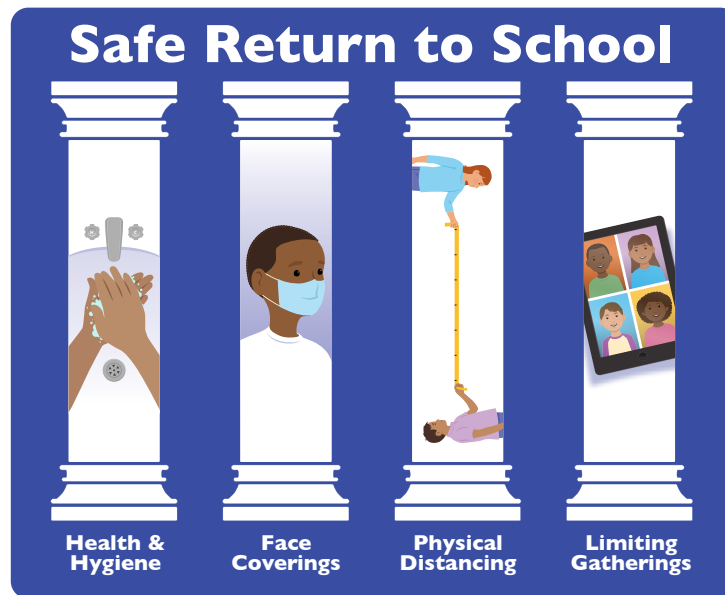


Pandemic Recovery Framework: Healthy Cleaning Companion Document



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I. Background for Cleaning Guidance

This companion document to the Pandemic Recovery Framework for Schools provides guidance on cleaning routines for schools and school-based programs operating in San Mateo County. This document aligns with the Framework and is not meant to be an exhaustive guide.

This document is not intended to revoke or substitute any Federal, State, or County regulations. Programs are responsible for staying current on these regulations as COVID-19 remains a concern in the county. Please visit the following websites for more information:

- [**Center for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\): Guidance on Cleaning, Disinfection, and Hand Hygiene**](#)
- [**California Department of Public Health \(CDPH\): COVID-19 and Reopening In-Person Instruction Framework and Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools in California**](#)
- [**California Healthy Schools Act \(2000\) - California Department of Pesticide Regulation**](#)
- [**San Mateo County Health \(SMCH\)**](#)
- [**San Mateo County Pandemic Recovery Framework for Schools**](#)
- [**United States Department of Labor - Occupational Safety and Health Administration COVID-19 Control and Prevention**](#)

II. Importance of Cleaning and Disinfecting

The CDC reports that COVID-19 is thought to **spread mainly from person-to-person** in the following ways:

- Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
- Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks.
- These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.

While infection primarily occurs through exposure to respiratory droplets carrying infectious virus, there is a low risk of infection through contact with contaminated surfaces or objects (fomites). According to the CDC, the most reliable way to prevent infection from surfaces is to regularly wash hands or use hand sanitizer. Cleaning surfaces regularly and disinfecting surfaces when someone is sick or there is a confirmed COVID-19 case can also reduce the risk of infection.

This document provides guidance for implementing the cleaning practices outlined by the CDE, CDPH, and the CDC for school re-opening. Schools are also required to follow the guidelines set by the **Healthy Schools Act**, which manages the use of pesticides on school sites. Schools should continue to follow their regular cleaning and disinfecting schedule in addition to implementing this guidance. By managing the cleaning of a school site to slow the spread of COVID-19 transmission and minimizing pesticide (disinfectants and sanitizers are classified as pesticides) use, schools can create healthier and safer indoor environments for students and staff.

A. Key Terms

Cleaning: Using detergents or soap and water to physically remove pathogens such as bacteria, viruses, and fungi from surfaces. Cleaning alone does not kill germs. But by removing the dirt, it decreases germs and therefore reduces risk of spreading infection.

Green Cleaning: The practice of using cleaning products and processes that minimize the exposure to toxic chemicals for people and the environment.

Disinfecting: Using chemical agents to destroy, inactivate, or significantly reduce the concentration of pathogens. Disinfecting does not necessarily clean dirty surfaces or remove germs, but it kills germs remaining on a surface after cleaning, further reducing the risk of spreading infection.

B. Types of Surfaces

Porous: Refers to soft surfaces such as carpets, rugs, drapes, or toys. .

Non-porous: Refers to hard surfaces.

III. Developing and Implementing a Cleaning Plan

In order to provide students and staff with cleaning practices that are safe, equitable, and grounded in a balanced and practical approach, school communities should develop cleaning practices that utilize the following phases:

A. Phase 1 - Planning for Reopening

The CDC, CDE, and CDPH address the need for certain planning measures for a school to be ready to reopen. The following cleaning procedures are included as recommendations for schools to consider during the planning phase of reopening.

Supply Procurement: It is critical that schools purchase registered and approved cleaning and disinfecting supplies. Additionally, each school will need to procure sufficient supplies for the health and safety of students, staff, and faculty including hand sanitizer, face coverings, and essential protective equipment.

Training: Additional training is required for staff responsible for cleaning and disinfecting.

Reduced Risk: Develop a plan to reasonably and practically limit the use of shared objects, especially porous materials such as toys.

B. Phase 2 - Implementing and Reviewing

Plan for the continuous improvement and review of cleaning guidelines and procedures in compliance with current health orders and applicable guidelines.

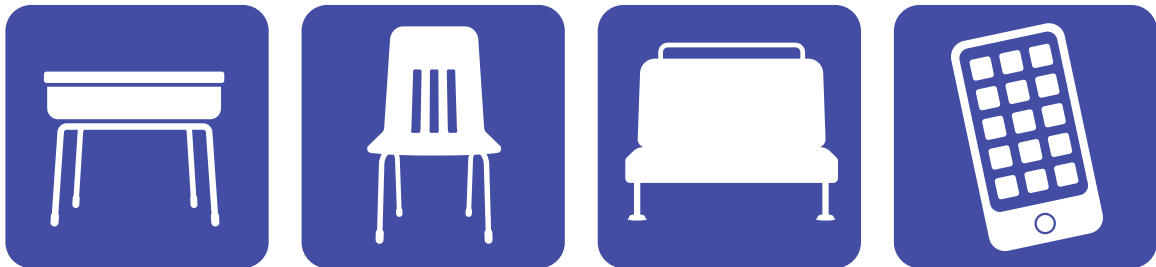
IV. Important Considerations

Guidance about frequent disinfection has changed significantly since the start of the pandemic. Back in early 2020 at the beginning of the pandemic, disinfection was touted as a key safety component. However, health experts have learned more and believe that frequent disinfection poses more of a health risk to children and students as a result of exposure to chemicals while also proving to have limited to no impact on COVID-19 transmission.

A. Cleaning Practices

Frequency of Cleaning High Touch Surfaces: Schools should identify the most frequently touched surfaces. These surfaces should be cleaned frequently, at least daily:

- Desks and Tables
- Chairs
- Seats on a bus
- Electronics such as keyboards, phones, headsets, copy machines



- Door Handles and Handrails
- Light Switches
- Drinking Fountains
- Restroom Surfaces, Sink Handles, Toilets
- Toys, Games, Art Supplies, Instructional Materials



You may want to clean more frequently in shared spaces if certain conditions apply that can increase the risk of infection from touching surfaces:

- High transmission of COVID-19 in your community,
- Low number of people wearing masks,
- Infrequent hand hygiene, or
- The space is occupied by certain populations, such as people at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

Cleaning of Shared Objects: Limit the use of shared materials in order to minimize the risk of disease transmission as much as practicable. This includes keeping students' personal belongings separated, individually stored, and sent home each day to be cleaned.

Outdoor Areas:

- Spraying cleaning products in outdoor areas – such as on sidewalks, roads, or groundcover – is not necessary, effective, or recommended.
- High-touch surfaces made of plastic or metal, such as grab bars, play structures, and railings, should be cleaned regularly.
- Cleaning of wooden surfaces (such as wood play structures, benches, tables) or groundcovers (such as mulch and sand) **is not recommended**.

Food Service: It is recommended that schools update standard operating procedures, provide additional training for food service workers, and implement the policy of cleaning between meal service times. The CDE recommends serving meals in classrooms or outdoors instead of cafeterias or group dining rooms where practicable. Additionally, sharing can be reduced by avoiding the sharing of food, utensils, and family-style meals and serving individually plated or bagged meals

where practical. The CDC has provided additional [Guidance for School Nutrition Professionals](#).

B. COVID-19 Guidance for Disinfecting School Facilities

Disinfection with specified products is only required for schools after a case has been identified in spaces where the case spent a large proportion of their time. Disinfection should only be done when students are not present.

- All products must be kept out of the reach of children and stored in a space with restricted access.
- Ensure proper ventilation during disinfecting. Introduce fresh outdoor air as much as possible by opening windows where practicable. If using air conditioning, use the setting that brings in fresh air.
- To reduce the risk of asthma and other health effects related to disinfecting, programs should select [disinfectant products on the list N](#) with asthma-safer ingredients (hydrogen peroxide, citric acid or lactic acid) as recommended by the US EPA Design for Environment program.
- Follow label directions for appropriate dilution rates and contact times. Provide workers training on the chemical hazards, manufacturer's directions, Cal/OSHA requirements for safe use, as applicable and required by the Healthy Schools Act.
- Areas used by a sick person should be shut off and not used until after cleaning and disinfecting.
- See [Appendix C](#) for more guidance on choosing green disinfectant products.

C. Health and Safety for Staff and Students

Staff: Trained facilities staff need to be equipped with the appropriate essential protective equipment for the safe handling of hazardous chemical disinfectants, including but not limited to: gloves, eye protection, and masks. Employers should review OSHA regulations on [Control and Prevention](#) to protect workers from the spread of viruses. Staff should additionally follow instructions on labels of cleaning supplies and keep all disinfectants out of reach of children. The Healthy Schools Act requires anyone using any pesticide at a school or child care center to complete Healthy Schools Act training once per year.

Students: To protect the health of students, conduct thorough disinfection when children are not present. Spaces should be ventilated as much as possible after being disinfected before students use those spaces. *Only staff that are Healthy Schools Act trained can use disinfecting sprays or wipes.*

Individuals Who Are Immunocompromised: Students, staff, and faculty who are medically fragile and/or immunocompromised are at greater risk should they contract COVID-19. Schools may need to plan for the cleaning of areas to meet the unique needs and requirements of individuals who are immunocompromised.

D. Airflow

In general, ventilation systems that provide air movement in a clean-to-less-clean flow direction reduce the distribution of contaminants and are better at protecting occupants.

Ventilation: Ventilate indoor spaces using outdoor air as practical and safe to increase air flow as much as possible. Airing out spaces as much as possible before students arrive is important for healthy indoor air quality. In addition, it is important to consult an HVAC professional to investigate the ability to safely increase the percentage of outdoor air supplied through the HVAC system. Visit the [American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineer's website](#) to learn more.

APPENDIX A

Cleaning and Disinfecting Responsibility Chart

This chart outlines possible responsibilities for cleaning and disinfecting schools for specific stakeholder groups.

Responsibilities	Students	Faculty/Teachers	Facilities Staff
<p>CLEANING Refers to the removal of dirt and impurities, including germs, from surfaces.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep rooms tidy and easy to clean Take personal belongings home at end of day to be cleaned Put items on a designated table that need to be cleaned May sweep a classroom May use soap, water, and a paper towel (or baby wipe) to help clean a surface 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep rooms tidy and easy to clean Take personal belongings home at end of day to be cleaned Separate items into designated disinfecting area when relevant May use soap, water, and a paper towel (or baby wipe) to help clean a surface 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold the majority of responsibility for physical cleaning of surfaces with mops, towels, cleaning products, etc. Routine deep cleaning of rooms: floors, windows, etc.
<p>DISINFECTING Works by using EPA-registered chemicals to kill germs on surfaces.</p>	<p>Students may NOT take part in disinfecting responsibilities.</p>	<p>Faculty/teachers that have been trained in Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use disinfectants Use disinfecting wipes 	<p>Facilities staff who have been trained in IPM practices can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use disinfectants on classroom surfaces after they have been cleaned Clean and disinfect bathrooms Restock cleaning supplies in classrooms for teachers and students

The cleaning and disinfecting of a school site to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 should be the principal responsibility of trained custodial staff. However, by creating

a culture of tidiness and collaboration, schools can engage students in supporting the community and save time. It should be noted that any involvement of students and teachers is optional, and must be limited to cleaning only. Student involvement in cleaning will vary based on their age and ability.

Factors that influence the time it takes to clean classrooms include:

- **Schedule:** The amount of time needed for cleaning will be influenced by how often new individuals or groups of people are using a room. Cleaning is recommended to occur between uses.
- **Age of Students:** Younger students will take longer to assist with cleaning. Early education and primary school classrooms generally have more surfaces that need cleaning (carpets, toys, games), and non-porous items that take additional time to clean.
- **Number of Shared or High-Touch Materials:** Shared materials need to be cleaned more frequently, which will increase the time it takes to clean a room.
- **Types of materials in a classroom:** Porous surfaces take additional time to clean. The steps for cleaning porous surfaces might include laundering. Non-porous materials can be physically cleaned more quickly.
- **Ventilation:** Outdoor air or HVAC ventilation systems change the airflow inside rooms, causing surfaces to dry faster or slower.
- **Size and Configuration:** Larger rooms or campuses require additional time to clean. Additionally, the configuration of desks and other materials in a room will impact the time needed to maneuver around those objects.
- **Clutter:** If custodial staff need to move objects in order to clean, it will take additional time to clean a room.
- **Staffing:** The ratio of custodial staff to classroom spaces will increase or decrease the time needed for a full facility to be cleaned.
- **Confirmed Case(s) of COVID-19:** Cleaning and disinfecting must occur when there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the school community. If multiple cases occur within a 14-day period, consider increasing your cleaning schedule in consultation with San Mateo County Health.

APPENDIX B

Multi-Use Instructional Room Cleaning Considerations

School sites often have classrooms dedicated to physical education, arts integration, and creativity. Some examples of these classrooms are: gymnasiums, libraries, computer rooms, maker spaces, art rooms, wood shops, learning kitchens, science laboratory rooms, and robotics labs. These types of rooms are typically shared between classes or an entire school. Wherever practical, these spaces need additional cleaning as well as limiting the sharing of materials. The following are optional cleaning strategies and examples of ways they could be implemented.

Cleaning Strategies

Design/Redesign Spaces: Rooms are designed or redesigned to maximize ventilation and for physical distancing. For example:

- Classes use wood shop space on a “sign-up” system. Scheduling accounts for extra time to clean the space before next class.
- Maker spaces are redesigned so that tools that might be used for similar projects are placed in closer proximity to each other, maximizing physical distancing.
- Physical education is done outdoors when safe and practical.

Check-Out Systems: Materials are “checked out” by classes as needed. Materials can then be cleaned when returned before being sent to other classes.

Have a designated table where students can place materials they have used for cleaning by trained staff. This way, students help in the identification of materials that need cleaning.

Materials are shared only within one class. Materials should be routinely cleaned on a weekly basis, when visibly dirty, or shared outside of their class.

Materials are only used by individuals. Materials only used by individuals should be routinely cleaned. For example, cubbies designated for individual students to store their share of materials.

APPENDIX C

COVID-19 Green Cleaning Sample Guidelines

The following is a sample of green cleaning guidelines that have been developed by other agencies and could be used as models for a school district's policy. Any guidelines taken from these samples should be adapted to follow state and local guidance.

California Department of Public Health: [Healthy Cleaning for Asthma-Safer Schools: a How To Guide](#)

EPA: [Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools Action Kit](#)

This toolkit by the Environmental Protection Agency provides guidance on the steps to develop and implement a sustainable indoor air quality (IAQ) preventive maintenance plan for your school district.

Healthy Green Schools: [COVID-19 Webinar Resources](#)

Sample procedures and guidelines from United States school districts and universities: ATP Testing Procedures; Cleaning, Healthy, and Safety Procedures; Disinfection Checklist; Essential Worker Authorization; External Communications; Products & Equipment; Quarantine Procedures; Training Procedures

Washington State Department of Health: [Classroom Cleaning Tips for Teachers](#)

Frequently-asked questions and tips for teachers for cleaning their classrooms.

When choosing cleaning and disinfecting products, refer to the [EPA-Registered and Approved Disinfectants \(N\)](#). Be cognizant of “allergy friendly products.”

EPA's Design for the Environment program has reviewed and approved these seven active disinfectant ingredients as being safer than other EPA List N chemicals, but just as effective:

- hydrogen peroxide*
- citric acid

* *The combination of hydrogen peroxide and peroxyacetic acid is a designated AOEC asthmagen, so avoid products that contain both.*

- lactic acid
- ethyl alcohol (also called ethanol or just alcohol), or
- isopropyl alcohol
- peroxyacetic acid*
- sodium bisulfate

While many products on the list are effective against the SARS-CoV-2 virus, those whose active ingredients are quaternary ammonium compounds sodium hypochlorite (bleach) ortho-phenylphenol (2-phenylphenol), and thymol may not all be green or allergy friendly.

The [Environmental Working Group](#) is a national agency that reviews and researches products to aid consumer choice.