APPENDIX o:   
INFORMATION SHEET: WHY CAN’T I BRING IN DISINFECTANTS OR OTHER PRODUCTS FROM HOME?

Did you know that some common cleaning and disinfecting products may cause headaches, rashes, cancer, and asthma?

We decided that in order to clean our school AND keep everyone healthy, we needed to make some changes. And we did: we’re now using asthma-safer and greener cleaning products in accordance with the California Department of Public Health’s (CDPH) *Healthy Cleaning and Asthma-Safer Schools: A How-To Guide.* We are impressed with how well these products clean! They are safer for staff and students, and improve the air for everyone, especially our asthma sufferers.

We learned that bleach, strong deodorizing fragrances, some disinfectants, and bathroom cleaners may be bad for our health, our environment, and our equipment. They may also contribute to indoor air pollution and can harm aquatic life. We learned that many cleaning products labeled “green” may not actually be asthma-safer or greener. That’s why we’re using products that have been certified by two third-party organizations, Green Seal and UL ECOLOGO, to make sure we’re using the right ones.

Disinfectants are pesticides, designed to kill germs. We are still disinfecting our school—but only when necessary. We learned that regular cleaning with microfiber removes up to 99% of germs, so it is generally not necessary to disinfect school classrooms, including desks, floors, and walls.

We created an Infection Control Plan that includes cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting in a routine, systematic way. This is the best way to ensure the health and safety of our school community. When there is an outbreak of an infectious disease, we will clean even more often than our regular routine, especially on surfaces touched by a variety of hands (like door knobs and shared equipment). And disinfectants are always used after cleanup of body fluids like blood or vomit or if warranted by specific outbreak circumstances.

How can you help?

Simple: Refrain from bringing in cleaning products from home and using any kind of disinfecting wipes or sprays. Please do not bring in plug-ins and air fresheners, either. All teachers will also receive asthma-safer products for use in their classrooms. If a teacher asks for hand sanitizers, please make sure they contain at least 60% alcohol.

If you have any questions or if you need anything specific done, please ask and contact us at <INSERT DEPARTMENT NAME, PHONE NUMBER, CONTACT PERSON, EMAIL>.

Countless schools in California have adopted healthier and more environmentally friendly cleaning practices, and we are proud to be one of them. Thank you for your commitment to creating asthma-safer schools for our children and staff!