

Classroom Cleaning Procedures Update

The original purpose of the pilot program sought to promote the advantages of a Chemical-Free approach while minimizing the disadvantages of typical Chemical Cleaning methods. The program was solely focused on routine/daily classroom cleaning in Lower School (K-6) classrooms typically done by high school students through the Padre Pio Work Study Program.

Below is a comparison of the advantages and disadvantages to both approaches:

| | Chemical-Free Approach | Chemical Cleaners |
|----------------------|---|--|
| ADVANTAGES | Students avoid contact with harsh or unhealthy chemicals | The widely-accepted perception in our society that chemical cleaners are more effective |
| | In addition to removing dirt from surfaces, microfiber cloths can be effective at removing germs from surfaces | Used according to instructions, chemical cleaners are effective at killing various kinds of germs |
| | Green and environmentally safe | Chemical cleaners are widely recommended for use in commercial environments |
| | Seen, by some, as more effective cleaners, even without disinfecting, allowing people to develop naturally anti-bodies to fight future germs/bacteria | Some doctors or physicians believe this approach is more reliable than chemical-free solutions in a commercial environment |
| DISADVANTAGES | The perception that chemical-free approaches are inadequate for cleaning in a commercial environment | Potential to expose students unnecessarily to harsh or unhealthy chemicals that are not good for their growing bodies |
| | Requires specific procedures to be followed to be fully effective | Not environmentally safe and potentially hazardous to those using them without proper precautions |

Because of the advantages and disadvantages of both approaches, we have done our best to consider what we believe is a reasonable approach going forward:

- Saint Agnes School ought to be considered as a commercial setting when establishing policies and procedures for cleaning;
- Following the standard practice of most school maintenance programs, we will reintroduce the use of chemical cleaners to our routine classroom cleaning procedures;
 - It's worth noting that even as we piloted a chemical-free approach for routine cleaning in some classrooms, our maintenance team has maintained standard cleaning procedures in classrooms for all other situations (e.g. blood or other bodily fluids)

- We remain concerned about exposing students unnecessarily to various chemicals found in most cleaning products, and therefore we will introduce precautions to minimize exposure, including:
 - Providing necessary protective equipment (e.g. gloves, etc.) to avoid unnecessary and potentially harmful contact,
 - Wiping down surfaces after chemical products have been used to remove residual chemicals from remaining on the surface.

We recognize that every family takes different approaches within their own homes regarding methods for cleaning, and that this decision will not satisfy everyone. Given what we've learned through this pilot program, and that Saint Agnes ought to operate as a commercial environment, we believe this approach is best.

If you have questions please contact Mr. Karl Hendrickson, Assistant Headmaster.