

New Hampshire Partners for Healthy Schools

Classroom Cleanout Checklist:

TIPS ON HOW TO GET STARTED:

1. Place three signs in your room labeled: KEEP, RECYCLE/GIVE AWAY, TOSS
2. Ask yourself:
 - a. When was the last time I used this item?
 - b. Could someone else use these materials better or is there a better place for them?
 - c. Is it just a piece of junk?
 - d. Am I emotionally attached to it; can I toss it?
3. Remember:
 - a. More is not always better; it's just more.
 - b. Free does not mean you have to take it or that it's any good!
4. Get students involved; have them help wipe materials down and pack them up.

CLEANING CHECKLIST:

- Clean items with a damp cloth and let them dry before packing, or use a microfiber dust cloth.** Microfiber cloths remove 90% of bacteria without chemicals so books can be wiped clean without chemicals or water. These cloths can be washed and reused many times. (See reverse side for more tips.)
- Remove all food and beverages,** and clean refrigerators.
- Remove all bulletin board hangings and coverings** (especially all construction paper), and materials on the walls and ceilings.
- Remove all plants/animals/fish tanks.**
- Remove any household humidifiers and air purifiers,** and do NOT bring them back next year! Household humidifiers and air purifiers aren't made to function in classrooms. Humidifiers, if not properly taken care of, create mold problems, and some air purifiers make ozone, which shouldn't be inhaled.
- Remove any "stinky" dry-erase board markers.** Purchase **low-odor** dry-erase board markers for next year. Read the directions for the dry-erase board cleaner. The cleaning solution is typically supposed to be used after erasing the board; otherwise it burns the writing into the board. Avoid using the cleaning solution during school hours.
- Take home and launder all stuffed pillows, animals, cloth/curtains.** Consider alternatives for next year that are fire/flame retardant. For necessity items, make a schedule for regular laundering to reduce dust accumulation, dust mites and other potential allergens.
- Unblock any heating vents, unit ventilators or radiators** so that the custodial staff can access and clean them. Do not put materials back in a place where they will block a radiator, unit ventilator or heating vents.
- Inventory your cleaning supplies. Remove all aerosol sprays, air fresheners, and household cleaning supplies.** Avoid using spray adhesives, contact cements and volatile paints. Return any custodial supplies to the custodians. Check with custodians to see if they have cleaning supplies that have been approved for use during school hours. Microfiber cloths or wet wipe disposable cloths are your best choices if cleaning needs to take place during school hours. Again avoid any type of spray – do not use them even when kids are out to lunch or at recess because they stay in the air long after they are used.
- Report any water leaks, stains, damp material, or "musty" or "moldy" smells immediately** including stained ceiling tiles as they can harbor mold.



MORE TIPS ON PACKING ITEMS THAT WILL BE RETURNED TO THE ROOM:

1. Clean/dust all items before packing.
2. Pack materials in plastic totes and boxes - avoid stacks of loose paper.
3. Take time to weed out the things you haven't used in over a year. Ask your self, "When was the last time I used it?"
4. Books that are discolored due to age are deteriorating and should be tossed. If there are old books you want to keep, consider laminating them. This will prevent further deterioration and allow for easy clean up if soiled. If appropriate, it may be useful to laminate and spiral bound them; this will make them easier to photocopy.
5. Organize your materials into binders and protect them either through lamination or with plastic sleeves if possible.
6. Don't store lots of unnecessary paper, especially construction paper that is over two years old and duplicate materials. Consider forming a co-op with other teachers to buy these items in large supply and have them centrally located so they are used up annually.
7. Don't forget to clean out filing cabinets and closets too.
8. Consider rotating materials in and out of the classroom throughout the coming school year to reduce clutter and keep students interested (i.e., Only bring out ½ or ⅓ of the books for the story corner and switch these out twice a year. This will not only give you an opportunity to clean this space but will rejuvenate interest. You can do this with toys, games, decorations, art supplies and many other things in the classroom).

If you follow these tips, you will come back to a cleaner, healthier, clutter-free classroom.

Have a great summer!!!!

