March 16, 2020

TO:       Deputy Superintendent
Complex Area Superintendents
Principals (All)
Custodians
School Health Aides

FROM:  Randall M. Tanaka
Assistant Superintendent

SUBJECT: COVID-19 – Enhanced Cleaning and Disinfecting of Schools and Offices During Spring Break 2020 and Beyond

On Sunday, March 15, 2020, the Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) announced the extension of its spring break through Friday, March 27, 2020 for all public and charter school students. As part of the Department’s COVID-19 plan, schools and offices are tasked with proactively cleaning and disinfecting schools and offices, in particular classrooms and common use areas.

What preventative steps should schools and offices take for COVID-19?
Schools and offices should continue performing routine cleaning. Specific high-risk locations warrant cleaning and disinfection at least daily.

Routine Cleaning: As part of standard infection control practices in school or office settings, routine cleaning should be continued. Routine cleaning of school settings include but are not limited to:

- Cleaning high contact surfaces that are touched by many different people, such as light switches, handrails, and door knobs/Handles.
- Dust- and wet-mopping or auto-scrubbing floors.
- Vacuuming of entryways and high traffic areas.
- Removing trash.
- Cleaning restrooms.
- Wiping air conditioner vents.
- Spot cleaning walls.
- Spot cleaning carpets.
- Dusting horizontal surfaces and light fixtures.
- Cleaning spills.
Specific high-risk locations within a school warrant cleaning and disinfection before a confirmed case of COVID-19 occurs in a school or office. For example:

- **Health Office**
  - Clean and disinfect health cots and other furniture regularly (after each student use).
  - Cover treatment tables and use pillow protectors.
  - Discard or launder coverings after each use.

- **Staff Lounges and Meeting Rooms**
  - Clean and disinfect tables and chairs regularly.

- **Athletic Rooms**
  - Establish a regular cleaning schedule for shared environmental surfaces such as wrestling mats or strength-training equipment.
  - Disinfect mats and other high-use equipment at least daily.

- **Other Frequently Touched Surfaces**
  - Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at least once daily after students/adults have left for the day. (e.g., classroom desks and chairs; tables, countertops, and chairs/benches; door handles and push & pull plates; handrails; kitchen, sink, and bathroom faucets; light switches; handles on equipment; buttons on vending machines and elevators; telephones; desktops, computer keyboards and mice; shared office supplies, like pens and pencils; and window handles & latches.)
  - Physical education equipment.
  - Board games, toys, etc.

**Cleaning and Disinfection:** Cleaning removes germs, dirt and impurities from surfaces or objects, while disinfecting kills germs on surfaces or objects. *(If a laboratory confirmed case of COVID-19 was symptomatic while in the school- or office-setting, custodial staff should perform cleaning and disinfection of frequently touched areas throughout the school and/or office.)*

**Step 1: Cleaning** - Always clean surfaces prior to use of disinfectants in order to reduce soil and remove germs. Dirt and other materials on surfaces can reduce the effectiveness of disinfectants. For combination products that can both clean and disinfect, always follow the instructions on the specific product label to ensure effective use.

**Step 2: Disinfection** – Cleaning of soiled areas must be completed prior to disinfection to ensure the effectiveness of the disinfectant product.
- For disinfection most common EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective.
- Schools and offices may use this Vendor List to purchase some of the materials on the referenced EPA-approved product list below. Refer to each Vendor List to see what items are available for purchase:
A list of products that are EPA-approved for use against the virus that causes COVID-19 may be found at the following website: https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2. Follow the manufacturer’s instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., concentration, application method and contact time, etc.)

Additionally, diluted household bleach solutions can be used if appropriate for the surface. Follow manufacturer’s instructions for application and proper ventilation. Check to ensure the product is not past its expiration date. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser. Unexpired household bleach will be effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted. Prepare a bleach solution by mixing:

- 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach per gallon of water or
- 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water

Label directions must be followed when using disinfectants to ensure the target viruses are effectively killed. This includes adequate contact times (i.e., the amount of time a disinfectant should remain on surfaces to be effective), which may vary after application. Disinfectants that come in a wipe form will also list effective contact times on their label.

For disinfectants that come in concentrated forms, staff should carefully follow instructions for making the diluted concentration needed to effectively kill the target virus. This information can be found on the product label.

Also, refer to: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Interim Guidance for Childcare Programs and K-12 Schools at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-schools.html

Our School Custodians: Our school custodians play a critical role in ensuring the safety and cleanliness of our schools and offices. They are trained to use disinfectants in a safe and effective manner. Staff are reminded to ensure procedures for safe and effective use of all products are followed. Staff do not need to wear respiratory protection (e.g., masks) while cleaning. Safety instructions are listed on product labels and include personal protective equipment (e.g., gloves) that should be used.

Used Glove Disposal – Place all used gloves in a bag that can be tied closed before disposing of them with other waste. Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds immediately after removing gloves or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available. Soap and water should be used if hands are visibly soiled.

Cleaned and Disinfected Rooms – Set up a tracking system or post on the door that a room has been cleaned and disinfected with dates.
• **Track cleaning products, materials and cost** – Keep copies of purchase orders. Should federal reimbursements become available, the Department will collect this COVID-19 cost information from schools and offices.

Please note that special guidelines and protocols will be activated if an individual with laboratory confirmed COVID-19 was symptomatic in a school- or office-setting.

Thank you in advance for your dedication and commitment to ensuring the safety and cleanliness of our schools and offices. For questions, contact our office at 784-5000.

RMT:to

c: Superintendent
   Communications Branch
   Hawaii Government Employees Association
   United Public Workers