Guidelines For
An Asthma Friendly Classroom

General Cleanliness

- Keep classrooms uncluttered so custodians can clean them.
- Make sure that classroom is dusted and vacuumed thoroughly and regularly.
- Remove trash daily.
- Do not keep food in the classroom overnight.
- Eliminate the use of air deodorizers and avoid wearing scented personal care products.
- Keep the room free of pests and don't use unauthorized pesticides.
- Avoid using scented cleaners – use least-toxic, unscented, low-odor cleaners. Instead of bleach, consider less toxic alternatives.
- If bleach is required to control infection, dilute bleach and avoid exposing children to fumes.
- Clean spills quickly, or contact maintenance staff.
- Avoid using pillow and area rugs or carpets for sitting.

Animals

- Avoid having furry or feathered animals in the classroom; consider having reptiles or fish instead.
- If there are furry animals in the classroom, keep them in cages; do not let them roam freely in the classroom.
- Clean cages regularly.
- Keep animals away from air supply vents to avoid circulating allergens throughout the room.
- Keep students with asthma, allergies, or other sensitivities away from animals and habitats.
- Store animal food in tightly sealed containers.

Ventilation:

- Make sure air vents and windows are not blocked by books, papers or furniture.
- Consider opening windows to improve airflow.
- Check portable fans, ensure that they are kept clean and not blowing fumes from a science experiment, art project or animal cage toward students.
- If you are considering an air-cleaning device, do your homework before investing by visiting http://www.epa.gov/iaq/pubs/residair.html. Your first line of defense is to reduce indoor asthma triggers and to provide proper ventilation.

Art Supplies:

- Use nontoxic supplies, which will be labeled AP Nontoxic, CP Nontoxic, or Health Label (without warning conditions) by the Art and Craft Materials Institute.
- Follow label instructions for ventilation
- Follow good safety, handling, and storage practices.
- Schools should never use hazardous materials without specialized training.
- Work with maintenance staff to ensure that fume hoods and local exhaust fans function properly to decrease exposure to pollutants.

Science, Industrial, and Vocational Education Supplies:

- Read labels and identify precautions regarding fumes and ventilation, and store supplies away from the main classroom ventilation system.
- Request information and Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) from suppliers and manufacturers and follow recommended safety, handling, and storage instructions.
- Have appropriate procedures and supplies available for spill control.
- Label chemicals accurately with date of receipt, or preparation date and relevant precautions.
- School personnel and students should not use hazardous materials without specialized training.

Limit Excess Moisture :

- Check to see that windows, windowsills, and window frames are free of condensation.
- Check that cold water pipes are free of condensation.
- Check that the interior surfaces of walls that face the outside are free of condensation.
- Leave space between furniture and walls facing the outside to prevent moisture and mold.
- Check that areas around and under classroom sinks or in classroom lavatories are free of leaks.
- Check that ceiling tiles or walls are leak-free (discoloration may indicate periodic leaks) and free of visible mold.
- Alert maintenance staff if any condensation, leaks, or mold are identified. Moldy or musty odors may indicate hidden mold in walls and storage spaces.
- Maintain low indoor humidity, below 60% relative humidity (RH), ideally 30-50%, if possible.