

# Cleaning With Chronic Health Conditions Or High-risk Students In Mind



*Kaivac is keeping schools clean and healthy for everyone.*

Public schools around the United States must contend with a variety of challenges: Teacher and student morale; student discipline; safety; and now, more than ever before, health. This gets even more complicated when school administrators and custodial departments must ensure that their facilities are hygienically clean enough for high-risk students or students with chronic health conditions.

Those not involved with public schools may not have even heard the terms “high-risk” or “chronic health conditions” when referring to children before. Also known as students with specialized health care needs, the designation is relatively new, going back about 20 years.

The term refers to students up to 17 years of age who are at increased risk for chronic physical, developmental, behavioral or emotional conditions that usually require attention and services beyond that generally required by children. Very often, these high-risk students are similar in intellect and learning ability to other healthier students; however, their health impairments can make learning much more difficult for them.

## **Cleaning For Medically Fragile Students**

Paul Acuff and Damon Raines, environmental services managers for the Catoosa County Public Schools in Ringgold, Georgia — about an hour north of Atlanta — are very familiar with this group of students. According to Acuff, several of the district’s 17 public schools have students with specialized health care needs requiring feeding tubes and may have a range of



ailments that include oxygen dependence, nutritional supplement dependence and heart problems.

“Our job is to have a [cleaning] protocol in place that keeps our schools hygienically clean, not only for children that are at a higher risk, but for all students,” says Raines. “We believe we have accomplished this by transferring our restroom cleaning from conventional to Kaivac No-Touch Cleaning® systems.”

The district now has 25 Kaivac units, according to Acuff, used by about 100 cleaning people in the district’s 1.7 million square feet of school space. The two managers believe the Kaivac system is so important to the health and hygiene of their schools that working with their local distributor, Kelsan Inc., they require all of their custodial workers to complete a training program and be certified in no-touch cleaning.

“The [Kaivac No-Touch] system has proven so effective that, at this time, we do not believe there is a need for implementing any special cleaning programs due to H1N1,” adds Raines. “Should we get a cluster of absences at a school, we will review our cleaning protocol; but right now,

we believe we have everything under control using the Kaivacs.”

## **Other Benefits**

Of course, protecting the health of high-risk as well as all students, teachers and staff attending their schools is the primary concern of Acuff and Raines. But, it cannot be denied they have found other benefits to using the Kaivac system.

“We have experienced a definite increase in worker productivity with the [Kaivac] machines,” says Acuff. “And, our custodial staff likes them so much that should a machine go down, they tell us it’s almost like taking one of their arms.”

The managers agreed there was another benefit to using the Kaivac No-Touch Cleaning system.

“As soon as we walk in the door of one of our schools, we can tell a Kaivac system is being used,” says Acuff. “Not only are there no foul odors, [but] if we smell anything at all it’s a pleasant minty fragrance that reminds us this school is clean and healthy.” *CM*

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