

# ISSA CLEAN STANDARD

## Measuring Cleaning Effectiveness in K-12 Schools

### BUILDING SERVICE CONTRACTOR TIPS

The Clean Standard: K-12 offers building service contractors who clean schools a valuable tool to effectively compete in the new marketplace. Successful companies recognize that today's reality demands a new approach to selling – an approach based on positioning a company as a true facility solutions' partner; becoming the "go-to" resource for information and innovation; and differentiation. The Clean Standard: K-12 is a key resource in any business service contractor's tool box; helping them solidify relationships and position themselves as an indispensable business partner.



### WHAT IS THE CLEAN STANDARD: K-12?

Based on the philosophy of "Clean, Measure, Monitor" and an emphasis on high-performance cleaning, the Clean Standard: K-12 establishes a framework to help schools objectively assess the effectiveness of the cleaning process at their facilities, thereby contributing to the quality of the indoor environment for the benefit of students and staff. The Standard focuses on:

- The desired levels of cleanliness that can reasonably be achieved;
- Recommended monitoring and inspection procedures to measure the effectiveness of cleaning;
- How to use the measurement and inspection results to assess and improve cleaning processes and products, ultimately resulting in a clean, healthy and safe learning environment.

The Standard specifically provides "ranges of clean" based on ATP testing, thereby adding an objective, quantitative element to determining whether a facility is truly clean. Further, the Standard contains sample audit forms that should be used to assess cleanliness from a traditional "sight, smell, and touch" perspective.

Ultimately, the Standard is an integral part of a broad strategy to improve the physical environment of schools; premised on health and safety.



## SO HOW EXACTLY CAN WE USE IT?

While the Standard applies specifically to K-12 school facilities, it provides a valuable tool for building service contractors. As we seek to “change the way the world views cleaning” and demonstrate the true value of cleaning, the Standard serves as a resource that can demonstrate that cleaning is properly treated as an investment in health, safety, the environment and the bottom line.

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## GO-TO EDUCATION RESOURCE AND BUSINESS PARTNER - THE STANDARD PROVIDES CREDIBILITY TO THE PROFESSIONAL BUILDING SERVICE CONTRACTOR

- Many school customers are no longer looking for a service provider who simply cleans the building. Rather, they are looking for a “partner” who serves as a true business advisor and can help them meet their bottom line goals. The Standard provides a “partnership platform” that is scientifically based and focuses on products, procedures, training and measurement. This helps solidify and create long-term relationships.
- A school customer is looking for information on the latest innovations and processes. Securing an understanding of what the Standard entails positions the building service contractor as an “expert” who is well versed in effective cleaning processes and products and who is, therefore, a dependable resource in delivering efficiency and improving operations.
- The Standard can help customers understand “why we clean” by providing a platform for the connection between cleaning, health, and student absenteeism and performance.
- In a service market that is largely fragmented, it can be very tough for cleaning organizations to differentiate themselves. By investing in standardization and demonstrating a commitment to being the best one can be, a company can create a foundation of excellence and set themselves apart.
- The Standard also works in concert with the ISSA Cleaning Industry Management Standard (CIMS) and CIMS-Green Building criteria to help building service contractors position themselves as capable of delivering comprehensive management and operations expertise. By combining the management and sustainability elements of CIMS/CIMS-GB with the measurement and monitoring protocols of the Clean Standard, contractors are prepared to assist school customers with all aspects of running their business.



## VALUE-ADDED SERVICE - GOING BEYOND BASIC SERVICE AND PRICE

- Positioning oneself as an indispensable business partner requires providing value beyond basic services. The Standard provides an opportunity to offer total facility management solutions which are greatly valued by customers. One service that has traditionally been provided by contractors is the performance of a site based assessment of current cleanliness levels and overall conditions and the Clean Standard helps a contractor take it one step further. Specifically, a contractor can use the Standard and its sample audit forms to perform assessments, identifying areas - especially high touch points - that may need attention.
- As part of an effectively managed cleaning organization's commitment to quality, the organization likely has assumed the responsibility for measurement and monitoring activities, or at least closely assists customers with these key activities. Cleaning contractors who position themselves as a true expert on the program become trusted members of the team. A seminal question that must be asked is "Is the area being cleaned effectively or do we need to consider a different approach?" The Standard positions contractors to work with their customer to answer this question.
- The Standard also allows the contractor to better assist in the development of cleaning specifications and bid requirements. As members of the "team," salespersons can now use the Standard to define what is to be included in a bid from a product and system standpoint. They can also help define expectations and key performance outcomes.

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## VALIDATION - SETTING A BAR AND MAKING SURE IT HAS BEEN MET

- The Standard sets a bar for schools and cleaning contractors to aspire to in terms of the cleanliness of facilities. Once the goal has been established, the Standard allows contractors to easily demonstrate the effectiveness of products, processes, and systems. Without an objective goal, contractors have a very difficult time validating that their products and processes meet the customers' needs.
- This is especially important as contractors introduce new and innovative products. The unfortunate truth is that many school customers may be predisposed to use an antiquated process which can unknowingly put students and teachers at risk. While customers may be skeptical, the Standard can immediately show that the new product (or process) works...possibly even better! In this respect, the Standard fosters innovation and can further set a company apart.

- Along the same lines, the Standard allows a contractor to compare products and processes to ensure that the most effective products and processes are being used. By integrating measurement into the process, contractors better understand which are best used in a particular situation.
- Even if products and processes are effective, there is always the possibility that the workers are not using them correctly. The Standard should be used to analyze operations to ensure that products are being used, systems have been implemented correctly, and workers are performing their tasks as expected. The Standard should, therefore, be a key component of an internal training program and should be used to prove that a cleaning professional is cleaning effectively.
- The Standard should also be used as part of a comprehensive training program to help cleaning workers understand the connection between cleaning and health, the importance of their jobs, and, ultimately, why we clean. The Standard should be used to stress that they are “not just janitors!”
- The Standard can lead to an increase in cleaning and additional sales. By basing staffing levels on a well-defined outcome, contractors can demonstrate the true value of clean and show the benefits associated with an increased and robust cleaning regimen. The Standard, therefore, helps contractors connect with school administrators, business managers and principals and demonstrate how cleaning has a positive impact on the bottom line.



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