

2.12 CLASSROOM SAFETY

Catastrophic Risks

The greatest catastrophe associated with a classroom environment is fire.

Common Hazards

Most frequently reported accidents include:

- ?? Slips/trips/falls involving spilled liquids, foreign objects and electrical cords
- ?? Struck by/against file cabinets, furniture and equipment
- ?? Cuts from paper cutters
- ?? Falls from chairs
- ?? Back injuries from moving heavy objects
- ?? Exposure to classroom chemicals

Accident Prevention

To minimize the potential for accidents to occur in classrooms, these procedures should be followed:

- ?? Teachers and aides should review the “Classroom Safety Rules” and sign the form to indicate their understanding of them. This signed form should be forwarded to the School Personnel Office to be maintained within the employee's personnel file.
- ?? A formal documented inspection should be completed monthly using a checklist developed by the teacher. A sample checklist is provided in this manual which can be adapted for use. Completed inspection checklists should be maintained by the administration for a period of three years.
- ?? Any volunteers who will regularly work in a classroom should be trained in “Classroom Safety Rules”.

Other Considerations

- ?? Use, storage and disposal of classroom chemicals (copier, toner, inks, white-out™, duplicating solvents and mimeograph inks) should comply with manufacturers' recommendations and the Chemical Hazard Communication Program.
- ?? There should be restricted access to classrooms by outside visitors.
- ?? Lock up all sensitive materials.
- ?? In the interest of good fire protection, paper, cloth or other combustibles should not be stored near heat or ignition sources.
- ?? Proper precautions should be taken with small electrical appliances; follow manufacturers' recommendations - especially for coffee pots, hot plates, typewriters, and computers.
- ?? Furniture should be arranged for easy and direct access to an exit in the event of an emergency.
- ?? Aisles and corridors should be kept clear of obstructions such as coats, lunch boxes, sports equipment, books, etc.
- ?? Terrariums, aquariums and animal cages should be constructed with safe material such as Plexiglas and should be free of sharp edges, wires or splinters.
- ?? The proper care and handling of animals, fish, etc. should be carefully supervised.

CLASSROOM SAFETY RULES

1. Telephone and electrical cords should not be in aisles, walkways or any other means of egress.
2. Insure that the guard on the paper cutter is positioned appropriately when not in use and sharp objects such as scissors, knives, scalpels, etc. are properly used and stored.
3. Be aware of the school's evacuation plan and of at least two means of egress from the building.
4. Report and/or remove any floor mats or rugs with curled or torn edges; also, report any hazards on stairs, steps or floors which may result in someone falling.
5. Report any deficient chairs, desks or other furniture.
6. Keep all legs of the chair firmly on the floor. (Don't tip back on two legs!)
7. Never have more than one drawer of a file cabinet open at one time (the weight of more than one open drawer may compromise the stability of the file cabinet.)
8. Never climb on shelves, chairs or other furnishings to reach items in high places. Use a step stool.
9. Insure that storage shelves are bolted to the wall and/or that file cabinets are bolted together/or to the wall.
10. Contact Maintenance Department to remove any electrical cords which are frayed.
11. Do not relocate furniture or other heavy equipment. Contact the Maintenance Department for assistance.
12. Report any exterior hazards (icy steps, sidewalks, inadequate lighting, etc.).
13. Avoid using temporary wiring, such as extension cords.
14. Turn off small appliances at the end of the day.

Staff Signature

Date

CLASSROOM SAFETY INSPECTION (sample)

School _____

- | | | |
|---|-----|----|
| 1. Are restricted areas of the classroom clearly defined as such by doors, furniture and/or signs? | Yes | No |
| 2. Are paper, cloth and other combustibles stored away from radiators? | Yes | No |
| 3. Are classroom chemicals used, stored and disposed of according to manufacturers' recommendations? | Yes | No |
| 4. Are telephone and electrical cords positioned and secured to eliminate trip/fall hazards? | Yes | No |
| 5. Is the guard on the paper cutter locked in place when not in use? | Yes | No |
| 6. Are aisles, doorways and other means of egress unobstructed? | Yes | No |
| 7. Are all chairs, desks and other furniture free of broken parts and in good condition? | Yes | No |
| 8. Are file cabinets bolted together or to a wall? | Yes | No |
| 9. Are storage shelves bolted to the wall? | Yes | No |
| 10. Is a step stool available to assist staff and students to reach items in high places? | Yes | No |
| 11. Are all electrical cords unfrayed and in good condition? | Yes | No |
| 12. Are floor mats and rugs free of tears, curled edges and other deficiencies? | Yes | No |
| 13. Have all staff/students reviewed the "Classroom Safety Rules"? | Yes | No |
| 14. If No's are checked, follow up is needed. The principal should designate the appropriate corrective action, such as a work order. | | |

Inspector

Date