



HEALTH-SAFETY-RISK MANAGEMENT SERVICES

BOARD OF COOPERATIVE EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

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Classroom Guide

When decorating your classroom please follow the NY State Education Department’s requirements for avoiding fire and safety hazards in schools facilities. These requirements are per New York State Fire Codes. Please, do not bring in any items from home. A School Building is a commercial building, therefore, anything that is rated for residential use only is not allowed inside the building.

Examples of materials rated for residential use only:



Rescue Windows

- Cannot be blocked (for example: books, plants, etc. on the window sill and anything on the floor)
- No stickers, decals, or artwork other than the rescue window sticker
- All window shades and curtains must be fireproofed and must have accompanying certificate stating such

Doors

- Must be free of obstruction and may not have any paperwork or decorations on the classroom door or on door frame
- Doors must be free closing with no door hold open devices including, but not limited to, door wedges, magnets, and pool noodles.
- Classroom door vision panel is not to be obstructed

Furnishings

- Must be fire resistant
- No furniture or personal items can be stored in hallways
- Any carpets and cloth furniture must carry a Class1 fire tag
- All combustibles, including artwork and storage, cannot be within 2 feet of the ceiling



Electrical

- Use of extension cords must be for temporary power use only and must be unplugged from the wall at the end of each day
- Cords cannot be run through doorways, windows, or under furniture or rugs
- Use of power strips is permitted but they cannot be piggybacked (power strip plugged in to a power strip). They must contain a circuit breaker or fuse and be plugged directly into wall plug.
- Electrical adapters that increase the number of outlets are strictly prohibited
- Appliances (such as refrigerators) must be plugged directly into a wall outlet, not a surge protector.
- Any source of water (fish tank, hydroponics, etc.) must be plugged into GFCI outlet



Decorations

- Curtains and decorations shall not exceed 10 percent of the specific wall or ceiling area
- Curtains must also meet the fire rating and testing criteria set forth in NFPA 701
- Decorations shall not obstruct the existing fire suppression and detection system(s) or emergency egress signs or routes
- Decorations on hallway wall must be 2 feet from ceiling, cannot exceed 20% of wall space and nothing can hang from the ceiling.
- Decorations in classroom no more than 50 percent of each specific wall can have artwork or teaching material
- Decorative light strings; Seasonal and holiday light strings are listed to UL 588 and are intended for temporary installation and use up to 90 days. The temporary use restriction will be printed on the listing label and in the manufacturer's instructions.



Air fresheners/ Essential oils/ Diffusers

- Devices that need plugged in or are battery operated must comply with the UL Fire Rating for schools. Additionally, approval to use them is needed prior to use. Essential oils and air fresheners affect Indoor Air Quality and omit Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC's) when used. The VOC's omitted during use has been proven to be a trigger for Asthma and other respiratory attacks. Most of these items are a violation of the Green Cleaning Act. Lastly these items would need to be identified and must retain a copy of the Safety Data Sheet (SDS). They would also need to be added to the Hazardous Communication programs and Right to Know trainings.



Light Filter Shades



- Light Filter shades cannot be installed under ceiling light fixtures
- The fixtures need to be tested as an assembly with the light filters
- Modifying the fixture may void the original listing/labeling
- Nothing should be hanging from classroom ceiling