



Maintaining a Safe Classroom

A model classroom in any district follows strict guidelines to limit the potential for damage and injury. From wall displays and furniture to electrical safety and emergency access, these guidelines help ensure learning spaces remain safe, accessible, and compliant.



Ceiling Decorations

- ✓ The only NFPA-approved ceiling items are fire-retardant magnetic light filters for metal drop ceilings – **nothing else should be hung from the ceiling**

Wall Displays

- ✓ Student artwork may be displayed according to NFPA Standards:
 - Non-sprinkled buildings: Up to 20% of wall coverage
 - Sprinkled buildings: Up to 50% of wall coverage
- ✓ Artwork must be:
 - Hung flat against the wall (no brackets or double-sided display)
 - Positioned to minimize potential flame spread

Carpet Standards

- ✓ All new classroom carpets must be provided using a district-approved vendor
- ✓ Carpets must:
 - Meet NFPA 101 Class II fire rating
 - Be installed per ADA standards (no trip hazards)
- ✓ Avoid throw rugs, retail carpets, or used rugs from home

Upholstered Furniture and Drapery

- ✓ Must be fire-resistive per NFPA standards
- ✓ No furniture or curtains from home or retail sources

Egress and Accessibility

- ✓ Secondary egress window: Maintain a 36-inch clear passage to the door
- ✓ Secondary egress doorway: Maintain 8 feet of clearance
- ✓ Do not block or cover exit signs, pull stations, or fire extinguishers

Hallway and Entryway Clearance

- ✓ Maintain 8 feet of clearance in all hallway egresses
- ✓ Do not store furniture or items in classroom entryways

Extension Cord Use

- ✓ Residential cords are **not allowed**
- ✓ Commercial-grade cords:
 - For temporary use only
 - Must be unplugged and coiled after each use

Electrical Cord Covers

- ✓ Use UL-approved cord covers when cords cross aisles or walkways

Electrical Safety Near Water

- ✓ A ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) is required within 6 feet of any water source
 - Can be either a GFCI plug or GFCI breaker

Sprinkler Clearance

- ✓ Maintain 18 inches of clearance below sprinklers in sprinkled rooms
 - Ensures proper sprinkler operation and minimizes fire spread

Storage Guidelines

- ✓ Store boxes and items only one level high on open shelves
- ✓ No storage on top of closed cabinets with outward-opening doors

Unit Vent Heaters

- ✓ Do not store items in front of or on top of unit ventilators
 - Obstructing airflow causes operational problems and creates maintenance challenges

Electrical Panels

- ✓ Maintain a 36-inch clearance in front of all panels
- ✓ Consider painting yellow caution lines around panels for guidance

Transformers

- ✓ No storage allowed on top of electrical transformers

Hazardous Items

- ✓ Items such as beanbags, Styrofoam, or similar materials are **not permitted**
 - These are fire hazards and emit toxic fumes
 - They also create trip hazards

HVAC Clearance

- ✓ Do not store supplies or equipment on or within 36 inches of HVAC units

Emergency Drills

- ✓ Conduct and document fire, tornado, and lockdown drills in accordance with State guidelines

Holiday and Decorative Materials

- ✓ Standards:
 - All decorative materials (including Christmas trees, drapes, curtains, etc.) must be non-flammable or flame-retardant by approved means
 - Decorations must not conceal or obstruct:
 - Exit doors
 - Exit lights
 - Fire alarms
 - Hose cabinets
 - Fire extinguishers
- ✓ Flammable Materials Restrictions:
 - No cotton batting, straw, dry vines, leaves, or similar materials unless made flame retardant
- ✓ District-Wide Requirements:
 - All holiday decorations and lights must be removed before extended breaks
 - Decorations must be flame-retardant per fire chief-approved treatment or process
 - Live trees are not permitted unless made flame-retardant
 - Artificial trees are allowed if flame-retardant
 - Decorations and trees cannot block exits or emergency equipment
 - Christmas tree lights:
 - Must be UL approved
 - Must be unplugged after school hours
 - Cannot hang from ceilings or touch combustible materials (paper, plastic, etc.)