

USD 453
Procedures and Policy
for
Building décor, furniture, safety/security,
Fire safety, and indoor air quality

June 2023

District Classroom Expectations

The Leavenworth Public School District has adopted a mission: "Preparing every student for success in every classroom, every day". To help achieve this, the Leavenworth Public Schools administration has adopted classroom expectations. These expectations are guidelines to provide safe, professional, and visually pleasing classrooms to enable our children to learn. Factors such as aromatics, excessive furniture, reading areas, decorations, flowering plants, and electrical appliances can all contribute to a cluttered or unsafe work environment. In some cases, lice outbreaks cannot be effectively controlled when we have cloth-covered areas that are shared by many students. Couches, pillows, and other items may harbor allergens or obstructive smells from spaces outside of our school community, and surface areas are able to be effectively cleaned and disinfected by custodial staff reducing the spread of flu, lice, and other transferred illnesses.

These areas also may complicate or prevent safe and timely evacuation of a classroom during a fire or other emergencies posing a life safety issue for our students. Excessive paper products on walls or ceilings may be placed with great intentions but may contribute to fire hazards enabling the spread of fire at a more rapid pace. Not more than 20% of your surface area in a room or hall should be covered with combustibles such as paper.

Electrical appliances pose another hazard to our students. Many rooms with coffee makers, hot plates, or microwaves may be a temptation to some students and hazardous to others. These are all liabilities that are easily avoidable. The focus of this policy is the safety of our staff and students.

The building administration and district representatives will be responsible for monitoring building conditions related to professional appearance and safety. While each building is different, expectations have been set to maintain a professional atmosphere for all staff and students and you may be asked to eliminate certain items to meet these expectations.

It is the intention of this document to help guide staff to provide safe and educational areas for ALL students to the best of our ability. This document will attempt to take all considerations into account to best serve, meet and advance our teaching and learning obligations.

BUILDING REQUESTS

DÉCOR

All requests for a change in building décor will be requested through the process set forth in this document. Failure to get permission in this manner can result in a reduction of building funds as related to the cost of repair/removal. The district will not allow the following changes to be made:

Painting, hanging blinds, whiteboards or chalkboards, use of tape on floors or walls, (scotch, masking, duct, etc.), covering of exterior windows with paper or solid material, stickers or clings on any surface, excessive hanging of pictures that cause damage to walls.

FURNITURE

Furniture not purchased by the school district will not be allowed in the buildings without following the approval process due to liability and safety concerns.

SAFETY

Safety is an important objective in the district. If you have a safety concern related to buildings you should report this to your building administrator and facilities department.

Building safety includes hazardous conditions, general safety concerns, loss of keys, or critical information that can affect the building population should be reported to the building or department administrator immediately

FIRE SAFETY

There are many life safety codes that must be followed. Any violation will be corrected immediately. Non-compliance with these life safety codes will result in the fire department closing the building until corrective actions are made. Our focus on complying with safety codes includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Clear hallways and pathways at all exits
- No decorations that may become obstructive to egress
- No open flames
- No excessive paper in halls or classrooms
- No live seasonal decor, including, but not limited to, Christmas trees, straw, corn stalks, or other items of this nature.
- No combustible storage in boiler/mechanical rooms.

INDOOR AIR QUALITY

Maintaining indoor air quality (IAQ) is very important for healthy learning environments. Because students, staff members, and visitors are subject to multiple allergens and sensitive to certain aromas, the district will not allow or allow only with approval certain items in buildings. These items include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Air fresheners, potpourri, burning candles
- Soft materials (e.g. couches, curtains, and stuffed animals)
- Pets/animals (non-educational and non-service certified)
- Flowering plants
- Carpet squares/scrap, and unbound carpet used on the floor.

FAQS

Non-Compliance may result in a reduction in building supply funds.

Décor

Can I paint my classroom?

- NO, the facilities department performs scheduled painting of all buildings.

Can I hang wallpaper borders in my room or office?

- NO, this creates additional work when it comes time for our scheduled painting.

Can I put borders around my doorway?

- NO, this can create a trip hazard during a fire or emergency evacuation. If these items were to fall into the pathway during an evacuation, they may present a trip hazard and cause an inability to evacuate or cause injury to staff or students.

Can I hang curtains in my room or office?

- NO, this soft surface is hard to maintain and keep clean. This affects the indoor air quality. The district will provide a reasonable window covering for exterior windows that provide privacy or energy conservation as determined best on a room-by-room basis. Interior windows may receive different types of coverage as determined necessary. Do not cover internal or external windows. Internal windows can be covered when, and only when, a lockdown is called.

What is the best fastener to use for papers I want to display?

- In most cases, cork strips/ boards are the best way to display paperwork. Depending on the wall surface, putty, painter's tape, plastic tape, or scotch removable tapes may be used. Push pins and staples may be used on some wall surfaces that are cloth or foam. Whatever is used, be sure that your fastener does not cause excessive damage to the walls. If you have a product that you would like to use, permission may be given by your administrator.

Can I put stickers or clings on windows or walls?

- NO, this may detract from the appearance of the facility. It may also cause damage to the surfaces. Do not cover internal windows with stickers or clings. Internal windows can be covered when, and only when, a lockdown is called.

Can I hang my diploma and or certificates on the wall?

- YES. You may request the use of a ladder or assistance in hanging these from your custodial staff. An area of the room may already be set up for such displays, we request that you use these areas if provided to limit the number of holes in the walls. Please keep in mind any damage to personal items will be your responsibility.

Can I hang anything I want wherever I want on the walls?

- NO, the content of items displayed in the classroom should of course be visually pleasing and related to educational material.

Can I cover my exterior windows?

- NO, requests for blinds should be made to your administrator, if approved they will forward the request to the facilities department for review. The district will provide reasonable window covering for exterior windows that provides room darkening for AV use or energy conservation as determined best on a room-by-room basis. In some cases, window coverings may be requested to be left open to aid in the night security of the building.

Can I hang crafts, decorations, or papers from light fixtures?

- NO, light fixtures are not designed to support items hung from them and can result in accidental opening or release of lens or cover causing injury to staff or students.

Can I hang crafts, decorations, or papers from my ceiling grid?

- YES, with discretion you may use the grid work which is adequately supported to hang such items. **Clearance from floor to bottom of your hanging item must not be less than (7') seven feet** and is subject to weight and type of material used as well as coverage of the ceiling surface. Anything beyond hanging a few paper crafts, approval from the director of facilities will be required as fire codes and weight may become an issue. There should be no hangings in halls as this can limit the visibility of fire exit signage and accelerate the spread of fire in your escape route as well as block cameras used for security purposes.

Can I use markers or tape on my classroom or gym floors?

- NO, a marker cannot be removed without stripping the surface down. This is an unnecessary expense that may be charged back to the building budget. Masking, scotch or duct tapes will not be allowed on floors either. Removal of the tape may peel the finish off requiring stripping and refinishing of the floor surface.
 - The exception is the use of painter's tape or tempera paint as these can easily be removed without damage.

Can we have a classroom pet such as a hamster, rabbit, etc.?

- Possibly, if it is for an educational section and approved through the request process you may have these types of animals in your class while your curriculum requires their observation. Again, these animals affect the air quality in your rooms and buildings, they will be the first objects to be removed in the event of a complaint of air quality. Curriculum needs should be requested from your building administrator, and the administrator should notify the director of facilities as well as the head custodian of the location.

Can I grow houseplants in my classroom?

- Possibly, but many flowering house plants can contribute to poor air quality. Non-flowering plants will be allowed with the considerations below. Flowering plants for experiments and curriculum will follow the same notification as the use of classroom pets. We have experienced several cases where students were allergic to plants that were located in classrooms. Growing plants can also cause water damage to district furniture or building surfaces and floors.
 - Damages created by plants will be billed to the building fund.
 - The number of plants should be reasonable so as not to interfere with the normal cleaning of rooms.
 - If an IAQ complaint is made, plants in these areas will be removed in order to determine the IAQ problem.

Can I plug in air fresheners?

- NO, plug-in air fresheners are a potential electrical hazard and can create poor indoor air quality. The strong aroma can create indoor air quality issues for some students.

Furniture

Can I bring in my old couch/furniture for reading?

- NO, items such as couches, bean bags, futons, and other soft furniture can cause issues with indoor air quality. With many children suffering from allergies, it only makes sense not to introduce these items to the learning environment. These items also create obstructions in the classroom for emergency egress and complicate the cleaning process.

Can I bring in new furniture I purchase like bookcases or tables?

- NO, do not bring in personal items. USD 453 is not responsible for these items and if not properly fastened or constructed for commercial use it can create a liability for the district and will be removed.
- Furniture needs should be reviewed with your building administrator and budgeted based on the need in a classroom.

Can I change my room configuration to suit my teaching style? (Teacher desk, Computer desk)

- NO, consideration for classroom configuration goes through many steps. Principals, administration, and department directors determine the best setup to allow for egress, technology support, dimensions of rooms, and type of furniture utilized. Moving furniture affects more than the furniture. Movement of technology, communications, and fixed equipment is very expensive and therefore not allowed.
- YES, you may arrange your student desks for group work etc. while considering the egress of the room. The main concern is the fixed equipment in the room.

Can I have a refrigerator, microwave, coffee pot, toaster, hairdryer, hot plate, or other electrical item like this in my room?

- NO, unless express permission from the Director of Facilities is given these items are not allowed in classrooms. Refrigerated medicines should be stored in the nurse's office and not in a classroom. The district will work with the building administration to determine and provide reasonable support for strategically placed refrigerators and microwaves to allow adequate staff support.

Safety

Can I light candles in my room or office?

- NO, in accordance with the Kansas State Fire codes, no open flame may be used in a classroom or office area. If candles are found burning or burnt they will be removed from the building immediately.

Can I have access to the building after hours?

- YES, upon completing training for entering and exiting the building and addressing security needs, teachers will be granted access to their building according to the negotiated agreement. It is your responsibility to correctly disarm and arm the building alarm when coming in on a weekend or non-workday. Failure to do this will result in police dispatch and may be charged to the building budget.

I lost my keys, what do I do?

- Alert your building custodian, secretary, principal, and service center immediately. The service center/board office can deactivate your FOB badge if one was issued and becomes lost. You will be expected to make every effort to locate your lost keys and it may take several weeks/months to replace them. Building security is very important and the service center will treat this accordingly.

Can I have a live Christmas tree, wreaths, or straw in or close to the building?

- NO, Fire Code does not allow these items to be housed in or around a school due to fire risk. If found these items will be removed immediately and taken to the service center.

Can I bring my pet to school? What if it is a work day and no students are in the buildings?

- NO, unless your dog is a certified therapy dog that has been approved by the board of education.

Can I move my phone in my classroom?

- NO, these are placed by the technology department, any changes would need approval by the Director of Technology

LEAVENWORTH PUBLIC SCHOOLS DISTRICT PROCEDURES

Key Needs

Master keys are controlled from the Service Center.

Regular day key use is handled from your building files. (A day key fits classroom doors, etc.)

Requests to duplicate keys are handled by request through the Service Center.

Reissuance of exterior keys may not be granted to the same individual. Broken keys should be presented at the time of request.

All buildings will have spare keys that will be accounted for annually. It is the office's responsibility to account for these keys at the end of the year. Additional keys may not be issued if the system is not maintained appropriately.

Buildings with automated locks will receive an electronic key called a FOB. You will be required to have an alarm code and understand the procedure for securing the building if entering after hours or on non-work days.

Teachers that want to work on weekends will coordinate entry with building administration. Please reference **SAFETY** "Can I have access to buildings after hours" for an explanation and how it works with the negotiated agreement. Failure to disarm the building will generate an alarm call causing a response from the police and or district personnel. This charge for employee response may be charged to your building.

Security

Security is everyone's responsibility, not just the building custodians. Before leaving for the day, close and lock windows and doors.

Direct specific questions to your Building Crisis Management Team (BCMT)

Request for New Equipment/Furniture

All curriculum items must be requisitioned through the building principal. Once approved it must be requested through the business manager at the Board Office.

Flags are furnished and disposed of by the Facilities office

All furniture requests will be directed to the Director of Facilities by the building admin. Requests will be considered and if determined necessary, will be purchased through the Facilities office. Limitations may be placed on types and styles of furniture. A list may be provided to the building administration with pre-selected furniture that provides the best pricing and consistency for the district.

Whiteboard, Bulletin Board Requests

Requests for whiteboards and bulletin boards will be requested through the building admin and Director of Facilities. These items come from the building budget so permission must be given by the building admin.

Surplus or storage

All items that are surplus should be sent to the Facilities office for disposal or storage. All items sent to storage will be put into general storage and cannot be stored for individual buildings. There is no guarantee it will be available for the same school once put in storage.

All items are considered district property once they are stored and equal consideration will be made for requests of items.

Energy Conservation

Most schools are operated with building automation. At a district level, we maintain room setpoints and schedules. Adjustments may be made when necessary after evaluation of the request.

Each room has a wall-mounted thermostat, in most cases there is either a slide switch on the right side or two buttons on the face of the device. These allow the occupant to adjust the temp by 2 degrees up or down.

The Following Items Have Been Restricted for Use in the Buildings District Wide

- Live evergreens such as Christmas trees, wreaths, straw, etc.
- Carpet samples, remnants, or unbound carpets.
- No tape on whiteboards, painted/varnished surfaces, or floors.
- Felt tip pens, markers, etc. are not to be used on floors.
- NO hanging of any items on light fixtures.
- The hanging of items from the ceiling grid is subject to weight and type of material. Fire code restricts the amount of combustible material in a corridor or classroom. Clearance of no less than seven feet will be between the floor and the bottom of the item hung from the ceiling.

Requisitions for Repairs and Borrowing of Equipment

Requests for building repairs should be directed to the Facilities office through custodial staff. In some cases, the Principal may need to authorize your requests.

Requests to borrow equipment from other buildings such as risers, wrestling mats, etc. should be initiated by you and sent to the building principal from whom the items are being loaned. The loaning principal must authorize the request. An electronic request will be filed by the requesting party accompanied by electronic or otherwise written permission by the loaning principal.

You may also request the use of risers, chairs, tables, etc. that the Facilities office provides when requested by the facility use form and/or your head custodian.

Mowing and Snow Removal Procedures

Mowing is done during regular duty hours in a scheduled format. Buildings are listed in sequence on this schedule. We try to avoid mowing around areas where students are playing.

Snow removal normally starts at 4:30 a.m. or sooner.

We operate a salt and sand spreader on parking lots and driveways only.

Ice melt is provided to the head custodian for use on sidewalks. It should only be used according to direction as overuse is very damaging to interior floors, carpet, concrete, and grass.

The entrance and sidewalks adjacent to the building are the responsibility of the building custodial staff.

Custodial Staff Meetings and Workshops

Custodial meetings are called as needed. These meetings are normally held in the morning from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. The frequency varies but is generally about every six weeks.

Storage of Pop Cans/ Recyclable Food Containers

Collection of soda cans or recyclable food containers should be collected outside or at specific intervals during the day such as lunch or school events and promptly removed by student recycling groups or staff sponsors to reduce the chances of pests. If at any time this collection process adds to the duties of the custodial staff or results in an increase in pest activity, it will be required of the building principal to eliminate this program.

Refrigerators and Other Personal Belongings in Classrooms

In some buildings small refrigerators, microwaves or other personal items of this nature have been brought into the classroom. Please remember that unless items of this nature have some educational significance in the classroom or there is some other verifiable reason for having them there, such items are not allowed and should be removed immediately. Permission from the building admin and the Director of Facilities must be given.

Fire/Life Safety

The Fire Department does an annual inspection of your building. The Facilities department conducts spot inspections and responds to concerns that are

brought forward. If you have any concerns contact the Facilities office. All life safety code violations will be corrected immediately.

Requests for paint

Painting is conducted throughout the district on a predetermined schedule by the Facilities department. Requests for painting will be considered but not guaranteed.

At no time are staff members allowed to paint their rooms themselves. Improper painting may lead to additional costs in correcting the area or damage to carpet, trim, or floor covering.

A common district color will be used for a majority of wall surfaces. This allows the facilities department to cover areas quickly when the schedule requires.

No murals are allowed to be painted on walls, if permitted, murals may be painted on plywood and then hung in selected and approved areas.

If a room is found to be painted by any method other than the approved manner, the building administration will be held accountable. The building supply fund may be reduced for the cost of material and labor required to correct the problem.

Plantings

All plantings or plans for plantings around the building will require approval from the Director of Facilities and Grounds coordinator. Areas of educational growing e.g. pumpkins, sunflowers, etc. will be placed at the rear/side of a building and maintained by the school designee. These exact locations will be determined by the Director of Facilities and Grounds coordinator. If at any time proper weeding or maintenance is not performed, this area will be mowed and maintained by facilities.