Simplified and Clear Definitions of Fire Code & Safety Issues

20 Square Foot per Student Space Requirement
Twenty (20) square feet of net floor space is required for each student desk in a classroom. Net floor space is defined as the total floor area utilized by non-student occupied desks and furnishings subtracted from the total floor space in any given room.

Classroom Artwork and Teaching Material
Wall displays of student’s art, and/or teaching aids that are attached to the wall surface cannot cover more than 50% in a building that is equipped with an automatic fire sprinkler system and 20% in a building without an automatic fire sprinkler system, of the usable space of that wall surface. Chalk boards and White boards are not flammable and therefore are not to be considered in the total percentage. Bulletin boards, because of their flammable nature must be included in the percentage calculation. Each wall should be considered as 100 percent and independent of the other walls in the classroom for this calculation. A “wall surface” is defined as the area from the floor to the ceiling and corner to corner, of “usable” space. Unusable space is defined as the areas of a wall that are blocked by bookcases, desks, tables, or similar items. Art work or decorations cannot be from floor to ceiling. There must be areas of separation. Any items which are attached to the ceiling, are to be included in the allowed artwork and teaching materials calculations per wall. Life safety devices can never be covered i.e. Exit signs, fire horn/strobes, smoke detectors, etc.

Exit Corridor / Hallway Artwork and Teaching Materials
Each wall of a hallway or corridor cannot have more than 20 percent of that wall space covered with wall displays, child art, and teaching aids. (807.4.3.2 IFC) It is preferred that art be kept to the bulletin boards provided in hallways.

Hanging Teaching Aids, Students Prepared Art Work, etc. from the Ceiling
Do Not attach anything to any ceiling light fixture, fire alarm sensors, fire strobe lamps, sprinkler heads or overhead pipe runs.
Teaching Aids, child prepared art work, etc. may be hung from the ceiling but they will be included in the Artwork and Teaching Material calculations. The lowest part of the display items cannot hang any closer than 7 feet to the floor.*

* NOTE: If your school is alarmed with burglar motion detectors in the classroom or corridor, movement of hanging items from the ceiling may cause the burglar alarm to activate.

Three Dimensional Artwork
Dimensional art work is not allowed in schools, the amount of paper used to create the art and scrunch and twisted paper creates air channels into the art and increases the fire load. This will include trees, vines and other objects made out of paper.

Placement of Combustible Material on the Classroom Door
Classroom exit doors cannot have paper, teaching aids, or decorations attached to either side of the door. Glass panels, in a classroom door, cannot be covered or have the view into the room obstructed. This includes paper, decorations, and furniture.
18 Inch Rule around the Classroom Exit Door to the Hallway/Corridor
There cannot be any combustible/flammable material within 18 inches of adjacent space around the door. This includes the walls on both sides of the door as well as the wall space above the door. The Fire Exit Route Map is the only thing that can be placed within this 18-inch section of the wall. The map should be placed next to the classroom exit door. See “Placement of the Room Evacuation Map”.

Placement of the Room Evacuation Map
The fire evacuation route map is the only thing that can be placed within the 18-inch wide area around the door. The map should be placed next to the classroom exit door approximately 60 inches off of the floor. The map may be placed on either side of the door, but primarily should be on the right side.

Storage Distances from the Ceiling
All storage in the classroom or in storage areas cannot be closer than 24 inches to the ceiling. (If the building is fully sprinklered the storage must be no closer than 18 inches from the sprinkler head—this will still be approximately 24 inches from the ceiling)

Classroom Exit Door Clearances
All exit doors in a classroom, whether to the outside of the school building or into a corridor hallway, must be kept clear of any obstructions. There must be a minimum of 36 inches of clearance, in a semi-circle shape, at each door to allow for a quick and safe exit from the room.

Clearance at Fire Alarm Pull Stations
Do not obstruct access to and visual contact with the fire alarm pull station. There must be a minimum of 36 inches of clearance, in a semi-circle shape, from the pull station.

Clearance at Electrical Panels
Do not obstruct access to and visual contact with the electrical panel. There must be a minimum of 36 inches of clearance, in a semi-circle shape, from the electrical panel.

Clearance at Fire Extinguisher Locations
Do not obstruct access to and visual contact with the fire extinguisher. There must be a minimum of 36 inches of clearance, in a semi-circle shape, from the fire extinguisher.

Use of Extension Cords/ Surge Protectors
Extension cords may not be used as a permanent source of power. Surge protectors are permitted but cannot be “piggy-backed” one to another. All Extension cords and surge suppressors must be UL listed and in good repair. Household (two prong, non-grounded) extension cords are prohibited from use. Caution must be taken to ensure that the use of the surge protector does not cause additional safety issues, such as trip hazards.
Use of Portable Heaters
Use of such devices must be approved by the District Energy Services or the Building Administrator. Any such device must be of commercial grade and UL listed. Any heater used in the Jordan School District must be equipped with a tip-over switch.

Use of Step Stools and Ladders in the Classroom
A step stool or ladder must be used when working at a level above your ability to reach easily. Teachers and students should never stand on chairs or furniture.

Candles in the Classroom
Candles, the burning of incense or other types of flames is not allowed in the classroom. Plug-in scented oil warmers, candle warmers and wax melting devices are not allowed in any state owned and insured building.

Decorating for Holidays, Special Events, etc.
All decorations and the placement of decorations must meet the Artwork and Teaching Material calculations as well as any other applicable fire codes. (i.e.: Live Christmas Trees, live wreaths, etc. are prohibited.) Flame resistant Christmas trees and other decorations cannot block or impede egress.
Create paper is highly flammable and should not be used as decorations.

Area “Play Tents” in classrooms
Play tents and canopies in classrooms are not allowed. Nor can you hang tarps or other items that would block the fire sprinkler system.

Storage in mechanical rooms and boiler rooms
No combustible material can be stored in boiler rooms, mechanical rooms or electrical rooms according Fire code. A lot of schools see this as extra space but the space and clearance is there for safety reasons.

Kiln Rooms
Another room that needs special attention is a Kiln room. It is recommended that no combustibles be within 18 inches of the Kiln. No combustibles can be stored on a Kiln. No flammable liquids should be stored in the kiln room. Only non-combustible shelving should be used in a Kiln room.
There must be an automatic exhaust fan that operates whenever the kiln is on, to remove toxic fumes from the room.

If you have any questions or concerns please call JSD Risk Management Department.