All Ventura County Office of Education (VCOE) employees are required to follow these general safety guidelines. Unsafe work practices combined with hazardous conditions are the main ingredients for creating an injury or accident. Ask questions about anything you don’t understand about safe practices. Please work with your supervisor to obtain additional training.

GENERAL SAFE PRACTICES

1. Report all accidents, injuries, and illnesses (no matter how small) to your supervisor followed by the Risk Manager immediately.
2. Report all unsafe conditions and equipment to your supervisor, Principal or Risk Manager. Unsafe conditions and equipment may include, but not be limited to: broken chairs, missing casters, stuck drawers, cracked glass, etc.
3. Clothing that covers the back, shoulders, midriff, and clothing that covers the top portion of the legs when seated shall be worn by all employees. Shorts and skirts must extend past the fingertips while standing. Appropriate professional work attire is expected.
4. In observance of safety standards, employees working with students operating machinery, employees operating machinery (CEC) or Special Education students shall refrain from wearing dangling jewelry or dangling articles of clothing. Tattoos that are offensive or disruptive to the school/work environment must be concealed.
5. Long hair must be tied back when working with students or machinery.
6. Employees working with students must have short non-pointed fingernails.
7. Shoes or boots shall conform to the following guidelines: low heels, non-skid soles, closed toes and backs. Athletic shoes are acceptable for safety purposes.
8. Always wear necessary and/or required protective clothing and/or equipment.
10. Employees shall not use, possess, manufacture, distribute, dispense, or sell alcohol or drugs while on VCOE property or on school business.
11. While driving, it’s illegal to hold and operate electronic devices, including smart phones. A device must be mounted on the dash, the center console or in one of the lower corners of the windshield. It cannot be placed anywhere that impairs a driver’s view or blocks the possible deployment of airbags. Also drivers must use hands free technology, such as voice command or Bluetooth. If they have to touch a screen, the new law only allows for “the motion of a single swipe or tap of the driver’s finger.”
12. Always follow instructions on safety signs and caution tapes. Do not enter construction or remodeling areas unless you are specifically authorized to work there.
13. Always keep workstations clean and orderly. Return materials and equipment to their proper place when finished using them.
14. Use a proper step stool or ladder to reach overhead. Do not stand on any chairs, other furniture or boxes.
15. Throw trash in proper waste containers.
16. Use handrails when going up or down stairs.
17. Never leave anything in aisles, hallways, or on stairways that can cause someone to trip and/or fall. Always keep aisles and passageways clear and unobstructed. Always keep exits clear, unobstructed, well-lighted, and unlocked to permit ready access.
18. Keep all legs of a chair in contact with the floor at all times.
19. When lifting and carrying loads, care should be exercised to avoid overexertion and strain.
20. Maintain 36 inches of clearance around all electrical equipment and panels.
21. Extension cords are for temporary use only. Extension cords are to be unplugged, rolled up and put away at the completion of each job, or at the end of each day. Only use extension cords that have a grounding conductor.
22. Always keep access to fire extinguishers and fire alarms clear, and easily identifiable to permit ready access. In the event of a fire, sound the alarm. Upon hearing the alarm, stop work and proceed to the nearest clear exit. Assemble at the designated location.

23. Clean up small amounts of spilled materials or liquids immediately. Be sure the maintenance department is called to clean up larger spills — notify your Supervisor.

24. Wash your hands thoroughly before eating, and/or drinking.

25. All food storage and consumption should be limited to specifically designated areas, such as a staff lounge or cafeteria. Do not allow overnight storage of perishable food. Do not leave open food storage or food preparation in areas not intended and designated for that use.

26. Read labels and Safety Data Sheets (SDS) for instructions and precautions before using any chemical. Handle, use and store all chemicals according to the manufacturer’s instructions. Be sure that all chemical containers are properly labeled. Always keep chemical containers closed when not in use. Contact the maintenance department for your chemical disposal needs.

27. Do not bring chemicals or other pest management to the sites.

28. Chemical products should not be used directly around students.

29. Avoid chemical contact with skin and eyes. Wash thoroughly after any such contact.

30. Pest infestations should be reported to the maintenance department and Risk Manager.

**CLASSROOM SAFETY**

1. Observe all applicable general safety practices.

2. Clothing that covers the back, shoulders, midriff, and clothing that covers the top portion of the legs when seated shall be worn by all employees. Employees working with students should consider the issue of safety and avoid wearing clothing or accessories which may cause distraction. While clothing may be comfortable, it must be professional and conservative in fit and in length. Shorts and skirts must extend past the fingertips while standing. Appropriate professional work attire is expected.

3. Shoes or boots shall conform to the following guidelines: low heels (not to exceed 1.5 inches), non-skid soles, closed toes and backs. Athletic shoes are acceptable for safety purposes.

4. Call the maintenance department to move heavy office furniture or equipment.

5. Keep desk and file drawers closed when they are not in use.

6. Distribute file storage evenly among the drawers to prevent over-balancing when a file drawer is extended. Store heaviest items closest to the floor and lightweight items above. Do not overload shelves.

7. Loose blades, thumbtacks, and other sharp objects should be stored in small boxes, not loose in drawers. Sheath scissors, letter openers, razor blades, or other sharp tools before storing. If sheathes are unavailable, cutting or sharp ends should be stuck in foamed-polystyrene blocks.

8. Paper cutters and other cutting tools are to be properly used and properly maintained. Paper cutters should be operated on a level, unobstructed and clear surface. Paper cutter blades are to be kept in locked position when not in use. Do not cut too many papers at once.

9. Use multi-outlet strips instead of extension cords and do not place them across the floors or working areas that are open to use. Never plug a multi-outlet strip into another multi-outlet strip.

10. Flammable liquids are to be stored in approved flammable liquid storage cabinets. Non-combustible liquids should be stored in secondary containment to minimize spills.

11. Art materials in grades kindergarten through sixth must be labeled with the AP Nontoxic label or a label to indicate conformance with ASTM D-4236.

12. Artwork and teaching materials used for decorations must not cover more than 25% of available wall space. Combustible materials should be distributed in a manner that will not create a continuous fuel source for a fire. Combustible decorations should not be hung on doors or windows. Ceilings should be kept free of decorations at all times. Three-dimensional artwork is to be constructed from non-combustible materials or treated to be flame retardant. In accordance with the State Fire Code, a qualified person must complete flame retardant treatment.

**NURSES AND OTHER HEALTH STAFF**

1. Observe all applicable general safety practices.

2. Observe all applicable safety practices for Classroom Safety.

3. Use universal precautions when exposed to bodily fluids. Sharps containers are available in all health offices.
4. Use proper lifting and student transfer techniques.

5. Containers of bleach and bleach solutions should be clearly labeled and in a secure cabinet. Other liquids should be stored in secondary containment to minimize spills.

**GRAPHICS, MAINTENANCE & WAREHOUSE**

1. Observe all applicable general safety practices.
2. Observe all applicable safe practices for Classroom Safety.
3. Clothing worn around moving equipment must be tight fitting. Long hair must be restrained to prevent entanglement with machinery. Jewelry must not be worn when working with moving equipment.
4. Wear clothing that will protect skin from sharp objects, cutting equipment, moving parts, flying debris, hot surfaces, etc.
5. Use proper lifting and material handling techniques.
6. Call the maintenance department to move heavy office furniture or equipment.
7. Operate machinery or equipment only after being trained and authorized. Ensure the area around the machinery or equipment is free from clutter and well lighted. Before using machinery or equipment, ensure guards are in place on equipment that requires guards.
8. Report inoperative machinery or equipment to the department supervisor. Any equipment that appears defective, gives a shock, sparks, or smokes should be turned off, unplugged and reported.
9. Follow proper lockout tag out procedures. Machines and equipment should not be cleaned, repaired, serviced and/or adjusted while operating.
10. Electric machines or equipment and connections should not be touched with wet hands or operated on damp floors.
11. Before jammed paper is pulled from a machine or equipment, the motor is to be turned off to avoid getting hands in the feed rollers.
12. Rags with oil or solvent are to be stored in covered metal containers and removed from the site daily.
13. Follow forklift operating rules. All materials are to be stacked, racked, or piled in such a manner which prevents tipping, falling, collapsing, rolling, or spreading. Inspect pallets and their loads for integrity and stability before loading and/or moving. Do not stand or climb on pallets or pallet racks.
14. Shrink-wrap or band materials on pallets before storing on the top of pallet racks.
15. Keep storage of materials below specified load weight limits.
16. Replace movable guard railing after materials have been elevated onto mezzanine storage.
17. Only properly trained and authorized employees are allowed to drive district vehicles. Employees shall wear proper seat belts while driving district vehicles and/or while passengers in district trucks. Passengers are not permitted in or on the bed of trucks, on forklift trucks, tractors, or other landscaping equipment. Have a clear view behind a vehicle before traveling in reverse. Use a spotter when rear vision is obstructed. Vehicles are to be parked in designated areas and are not to block entrances or obstruct traffic.
18. Use the buddy system when changing light bulbs or performing other minor electrical tasks.
19. Wet floor surfaces and/or spills must be posted for slipping hazard and dried as soon as possible.
20. Flammable liquids are to be stored in approved flammable liquid storage cabinets. Non-combustible liquids should be stored in secondary containment to minimize spills.
21. Ensure combustion engines have enough fuel before use. Only add fuel to cool engines.
22. Inspect machinery and tools before using. Report damaged, worn, or loose equipment to the department supervisor. Do not remove or alter equipment safety guards or safety devices in any way. Turn off equipment when not in use or left unattended.
23. Keep all electrical cords flat.
24. Use the right tool or equipment for the assigned task. Keep tools clean and sharp.
25. All compressed air is to be directed away from the operator and any other people.
26. Take precautions to avoid exposure to outdoor temperature extremes.

*Revised: March 27, 2017*