



*News from Commissioner Jeffrey C. Riley & the
MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education*

On the Desktop - July 2, 2020

Classroom Diagrams and Parametric Dashboard Overview

Dear Superintendents, Charter School Leaders, Leaders of Collaboratives,

Classroom Diagrams

Last week the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education released [comprehensive initial guidance](#) to reopen schools in September. The guidance prioritizes getting students back to in-person learning safely, following a comprehensive set of health and safety requirements. The Department is asking school officials to change classroom configurations to space students farther apart from each other, set up additional classrooms in libraries, auditoriums, and cafeterias, and make scheduling changes.

As reviewed and advised by the Massachusetts COVID-19 Command Center Medical Advisory Board, schools are encouraged to aim for a physical distance of 6 feet when feasible, while 3 feet is the minimum distance allowed as informed by evidence. There is no maximum number for group size, so long as schools adhere to the physical distancing requirements.

Attached is a document that provides an illustrative diagram that could give administrators and teachers ideas about how to space desks to maximize the number of students in a classroom. The diagrams were developed after touring several classrooms in an urban school district and take into account typical desk sizes. The diagrams are intended to help school officials begin to think about how to arrange classrooms to determine what is feasible to return as many students as possible to classrooms, safely.

If you have any questions, please feel free to email the Department at reopeningk12@mass.gov and someone will get back to you as soon as possible.

Parametric Dashboard Overview

In the interest of helping schools and districts make informed reopening decisions, the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA), with the support of CannonDesign architects, has developed a parametric dashboard at <https://www.cannondesign.com/massachusetts-capacity-dashboard/> that enables administrators to study the effect of social distancing on school capacities. The tool allows schools to enter spacing and facility use assumptions and

calculate the effects on capacity and utilization based on data collected for the MSBA's 2016 School Survey and 2019-2020 official enrollment counts. This tool may be used as a supplement to manual measurements of classrooms to ensure that space is being maximized.

The Department will hold a Zoom call about how to use the dashboard at **9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, July 8**. The information is below:

Topic: Parametric Dashboard Overview

Time: Jul 8, 2020 09:30 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/95054472389?pwd=MSs3VnFSMVQyWIFtM0htTUc5VWVRGUT09>

Meeting ID: 950 5447 2389

Password: 289591

One tap mobile

+13126266799,,95054472389# US (Chicago)

+16465588656,,95054472389# US (New York)

Meeting ID: 950 5447 2389

Find your local number: <https://zoom.us/u/acNFeyYFN2>

Sincerely,

Jeffrey C. Riley
Commissioner



To support our priority goal of getting students back to in-person learning, safely, DESE is asking school officials to change classroom configurations to space students farther apart from each other, set up additional classrooms in libraries, auditoriums, and cafeterias, and make scheduling changes.

As reviewed and advised by the Massachusetts COVID-19 Command Center Medical Advisory Board, schools are encouraged to aim for a physical distance of 6 feet when feasible, while 3 feet is the minimum distance allowed as informed by evidence. There is no maximum number for group size, so long as schools adhere to the physical distancing requirements. We encourage schools to physically measure each classroom in addition to using the parametric tool to make sure that space is being maximized to the extent possible.

Classroom Diagrams

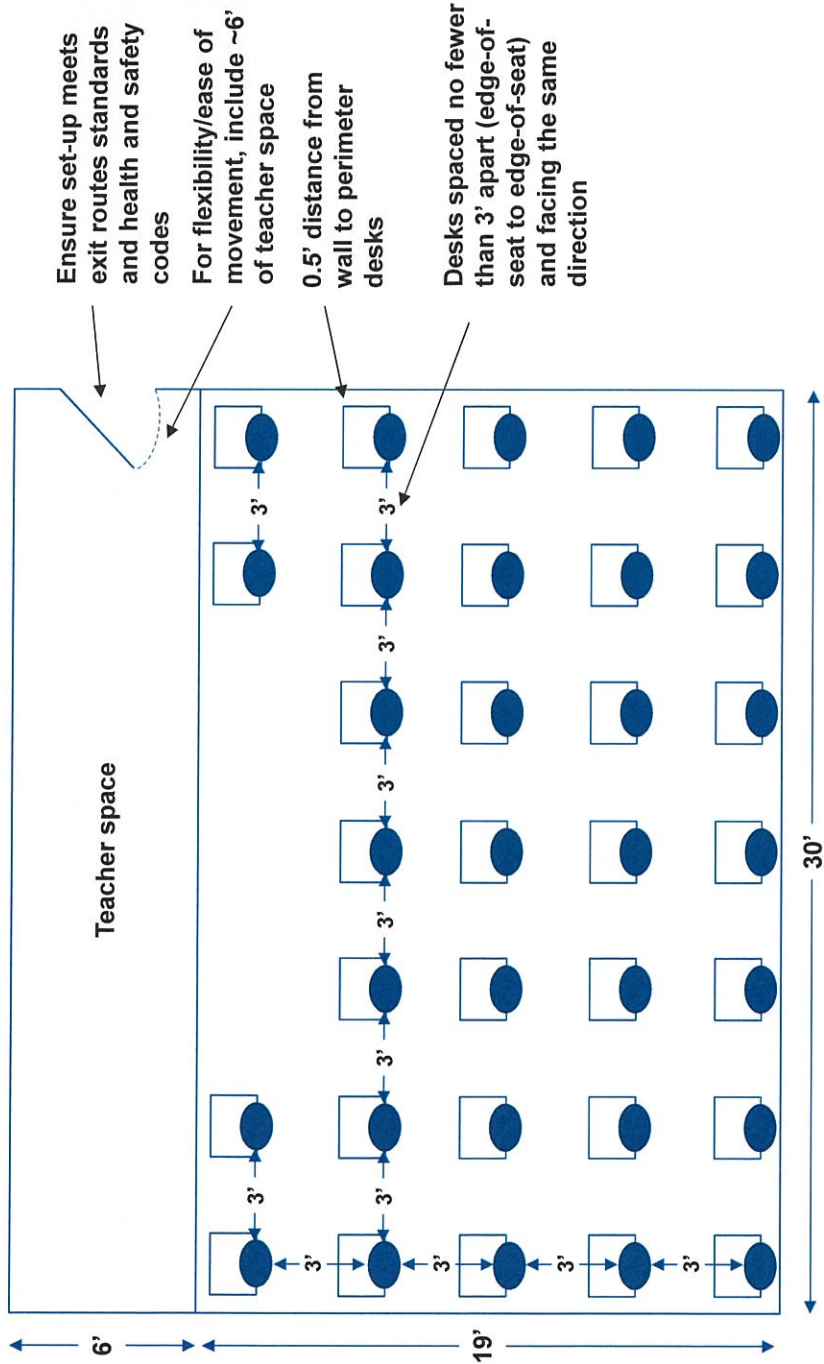
- The illustrative diagrams provide administrators and teachers ideas about how to space desks to maximize the number of students in a classroom, using “seat edge” to “seat edge” measurements.
- The diagrams were developed after touring several classrooms and take into account typical desk sizes.
- The diagrams are intended to help school officials begin to think about how to arrange classrooms to determine what is feasible to return as many students as possible to classrooms, safely.

Best Practices for Classroom Setup

- 1. Physical distancing:** To the extent possible, aim for desks to be spaced six feet apart, but no fewer than three feet apart, (edge-of-seat to edge-of-seat) and facing the same direction.
- 2. Teacher space:** Allow adequate **space for teachers** to ensure safe physical distance from students.
- 3. Furniture:** Consider **removing non-essential furniture** out of classrooms. Explore **storage options** in advance.
- 4. Communal areas:** Consider **repurposing communal areas** for additional classrooms.
- 5. Other constraints:** When estimating capacity, consider additional constraints that reduce usable desk space (e.g., emergency fire egress, radiators, immovable furniture, desk/furniture size and type, camera angles for synchronous learning).

Example A1: Fits ~32 individual desks with 3' physical distancing

(Dimensions: 750 sq. ft., 25' x 30'); with all furniture/equipment removed

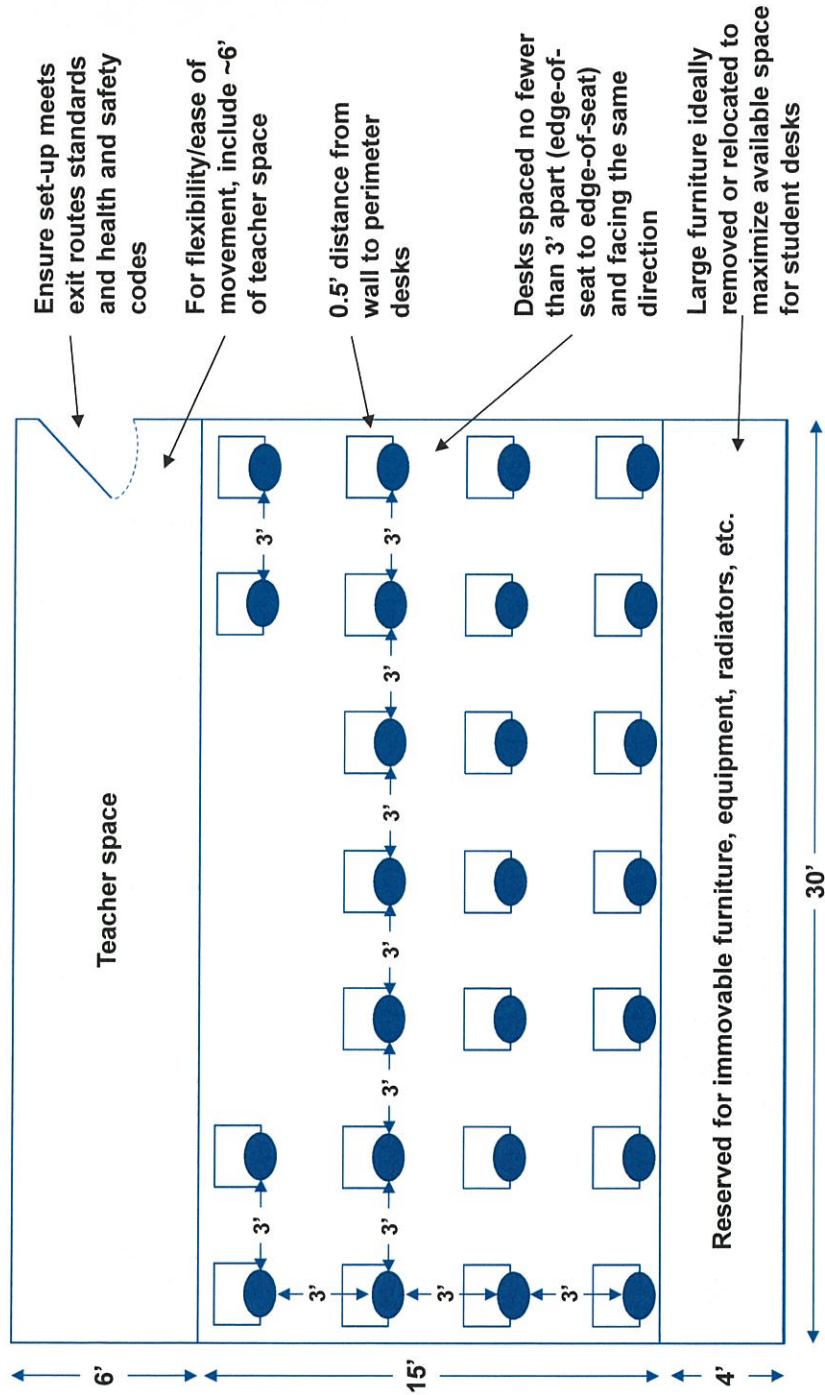


- Estimated 750 ft² capacity: ~32 students (with furniture/equipment removed)
- Capacity estimates will vary depending on classroom shape, desk size/type, immovable furniture, storage capabilities, etc.
- In this scenario, calculated 3' distance based on edge-of-seat to edge-of-seat (desk-to-desk measurement would decrease classroom capacity)¹

¹ Assumed 1.5' seat width, 2' desk width

Example A2: Fits ~25 individual desks with 3' physical distancing

(Dimensions: 750 sq. ft., 25' x 30')



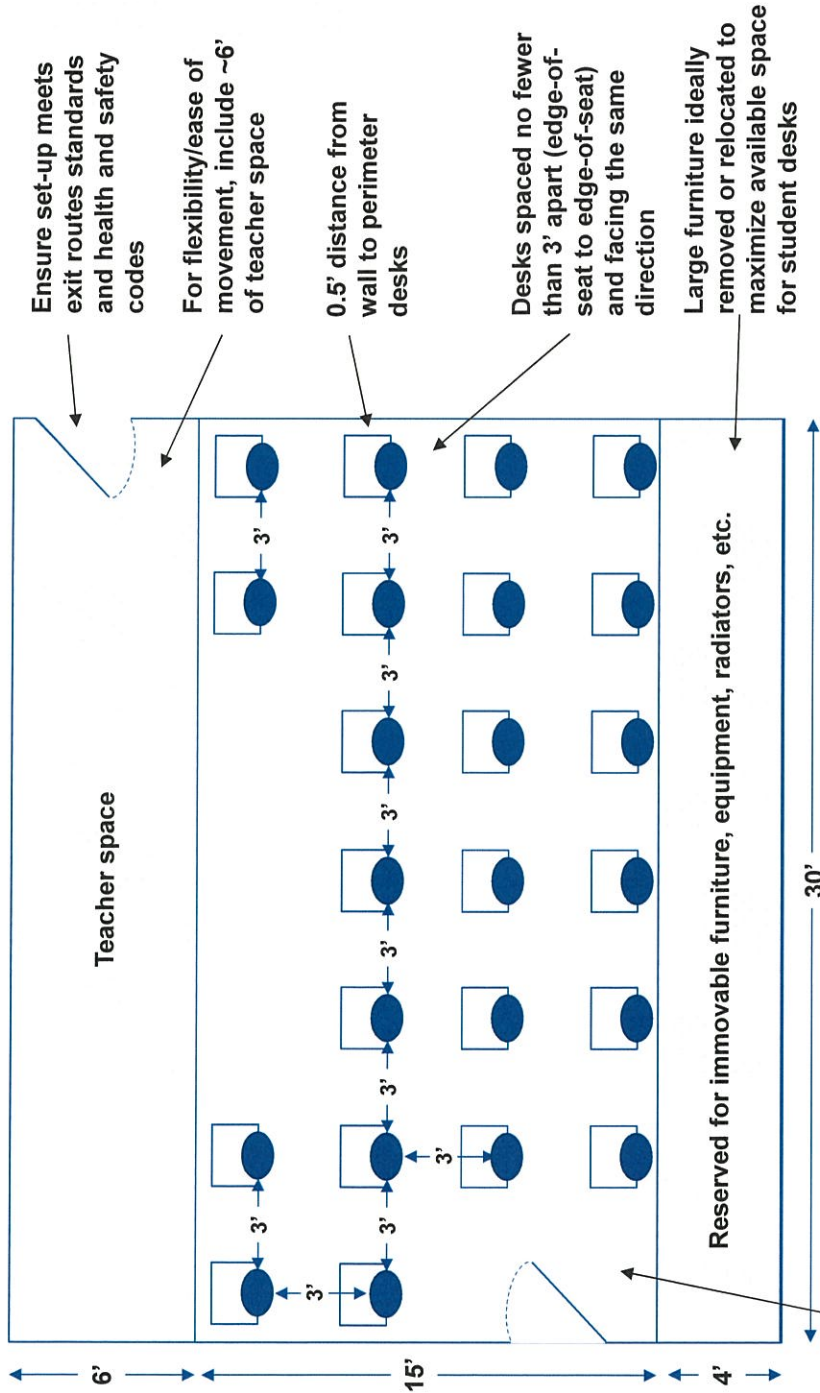
• Estimated 750 ft² capacity: ~25 students

- Capacity estimates will vary depending on classroom shape, desk size/type, immovable furniture, storage capabilities, etc.
- In this scenario, calculated 3' distance based on edge-of-seat to edge-of-seat (desk-to-desk measurement would decrease classroom capacity)¹

¹ Assumed 1.5' seat width, 2' desk width

Example A4: Fits ~23 individual desks with 3' physical distancing

(Dimensions: 750 sq. ft., 25' x 30')



Potential reduction in number of desks if classroom has a door outside of the teacher space



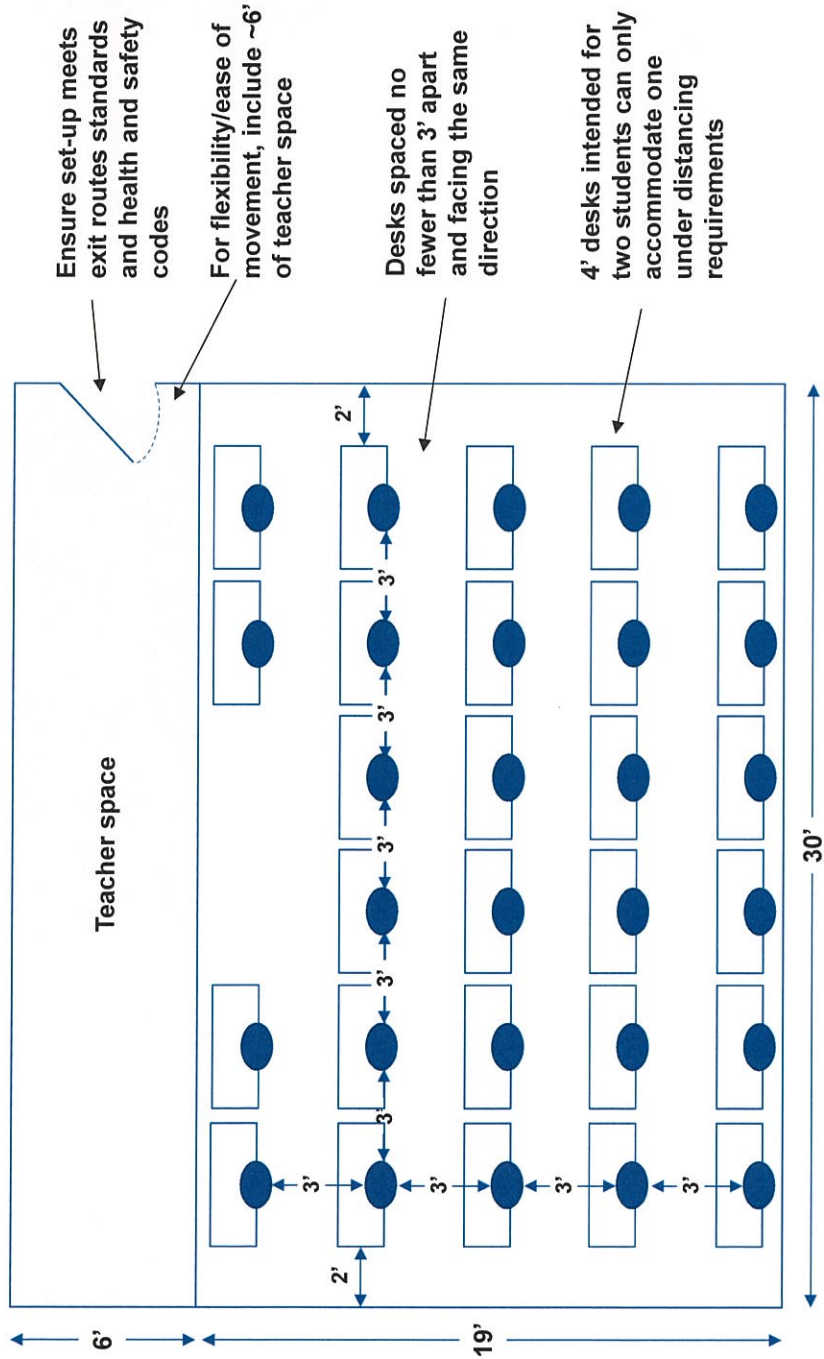
• Estimated 750 ft² capacity: ~23 students

- Capacity estimates will vary depending on classroom shape, desk size/type, immovable furniture, storage capabilities, etc.
- In this scenario, calculated 3' distance based on edge-of-seat to edge-of-seat (desk-to-desk measurement would decrease classroom capacity)¹

¹ Assumed 1.5' seat width, 2' desk width

Example B1: Fits ~28 4' dual desks with 3' physical distancing

(Dimensions: 750 sq. ft., 25' x 30'); with all furniture/equipment removed

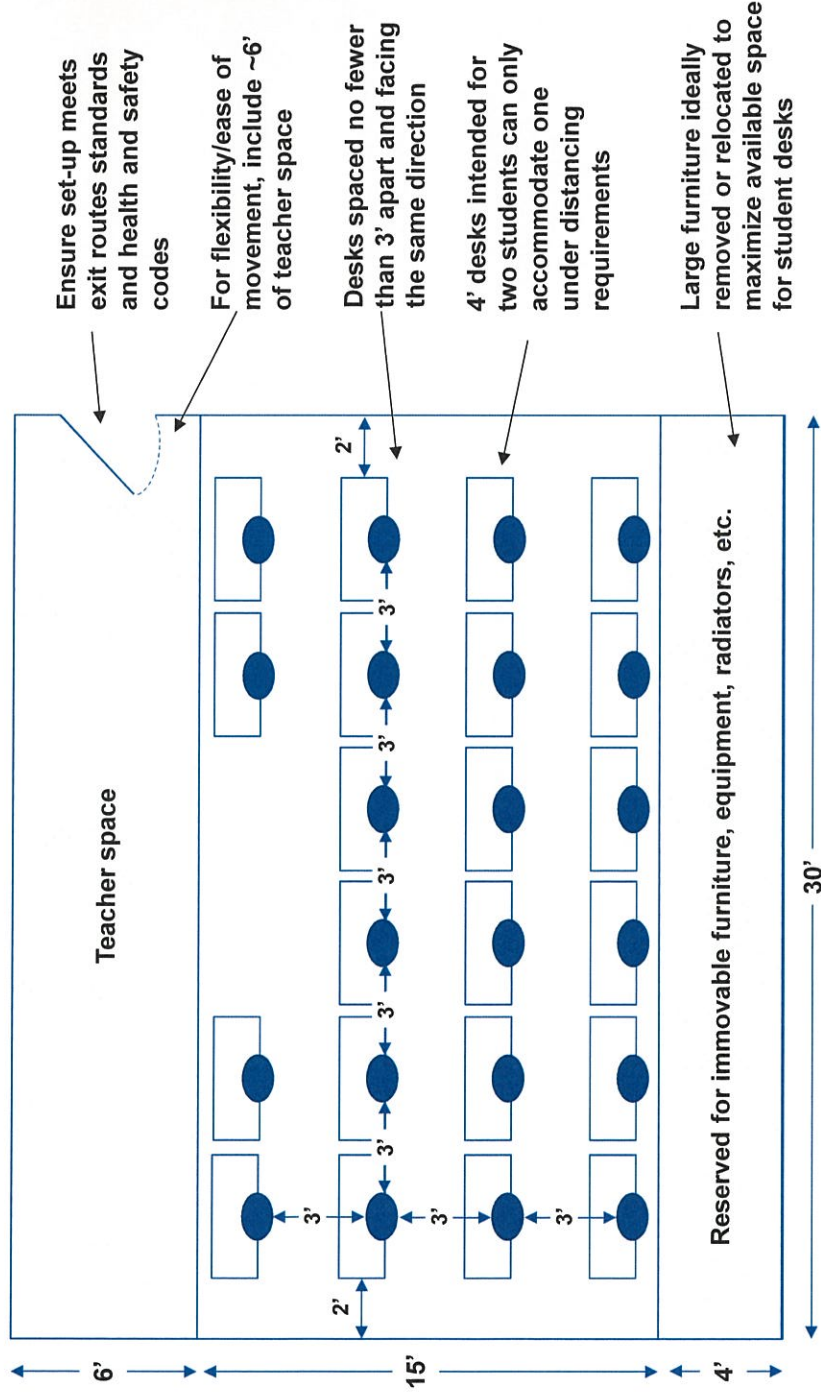


- Estimated 750 ft² capacity: ~28 students (with furniture/equipment removed)
- Capacity estimates will vary depending on classroom shape, desk size/type, immovable furniture, storage capabilities, etc.
- In this scenario, calculated 3' distance based on edge-of-seat to edge-of seat (desk-to-desk measurement would decrease classroom capacity)¹

¹ Assumed 1.5' seat width, 4' desk width

Example B2: Fits ~22 4' dual desks with 3' physical distancing

(Dimensions: 750 sq. ft., 25' x 30')



• Estimated 750 ft² capacity: ~22 students

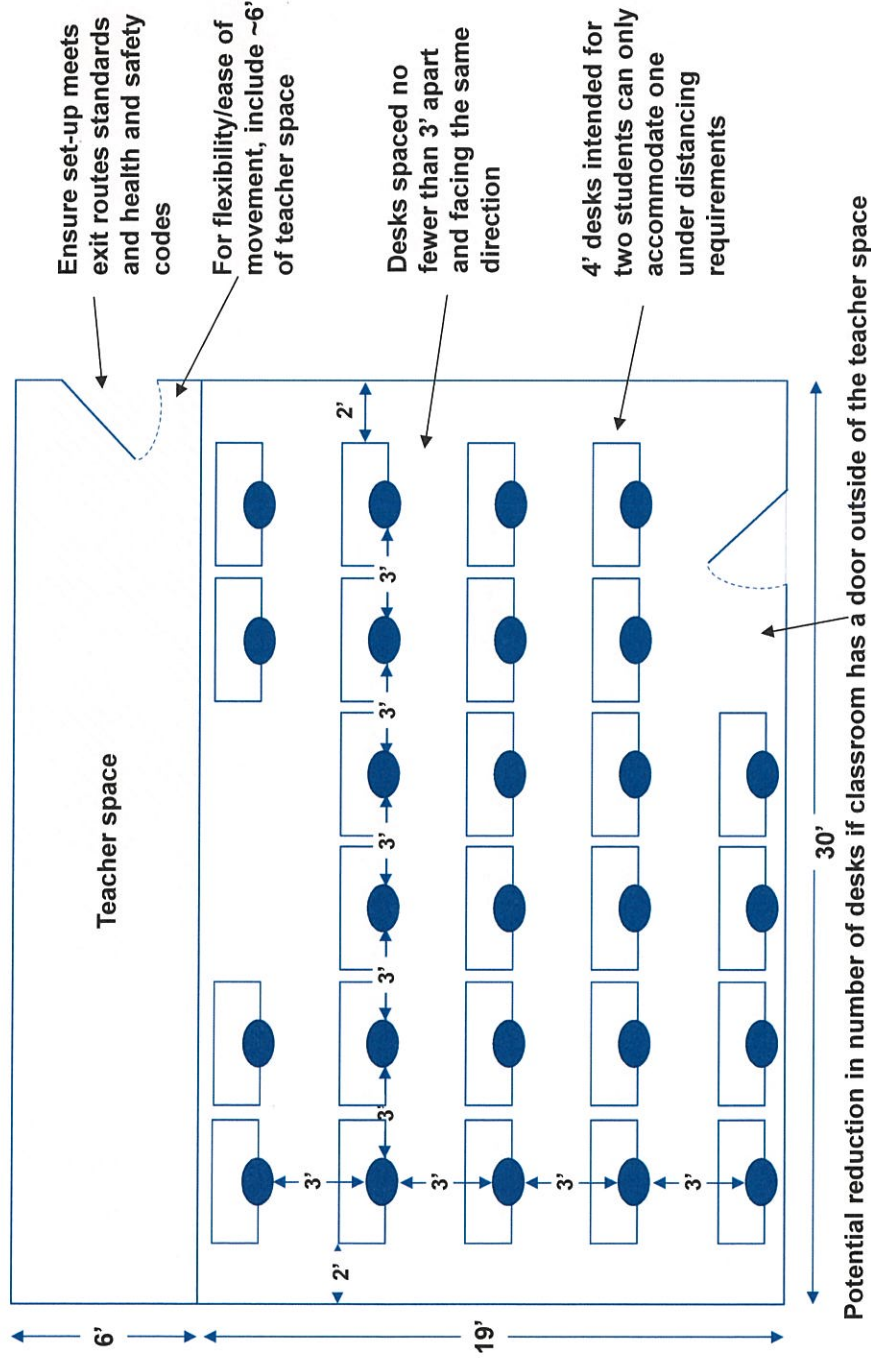
• Capacity estimates will vary depending on classroom shape, desk size/type, immovable furniture, storage capabilities, etc.

• In this scenario, calculated 3' distance based on edge-of-seat to edge-of seat (desk-to-desk measurement would decrease classroom capacity)¹

¹ Assumed 1.5' seat width, 4' desk width

Example B3: Fits ~26 4' dual desks with 3' physical distancing

(Dimensions: 750 sq. ft., 25' x 30'); with all furniture/equipment removed

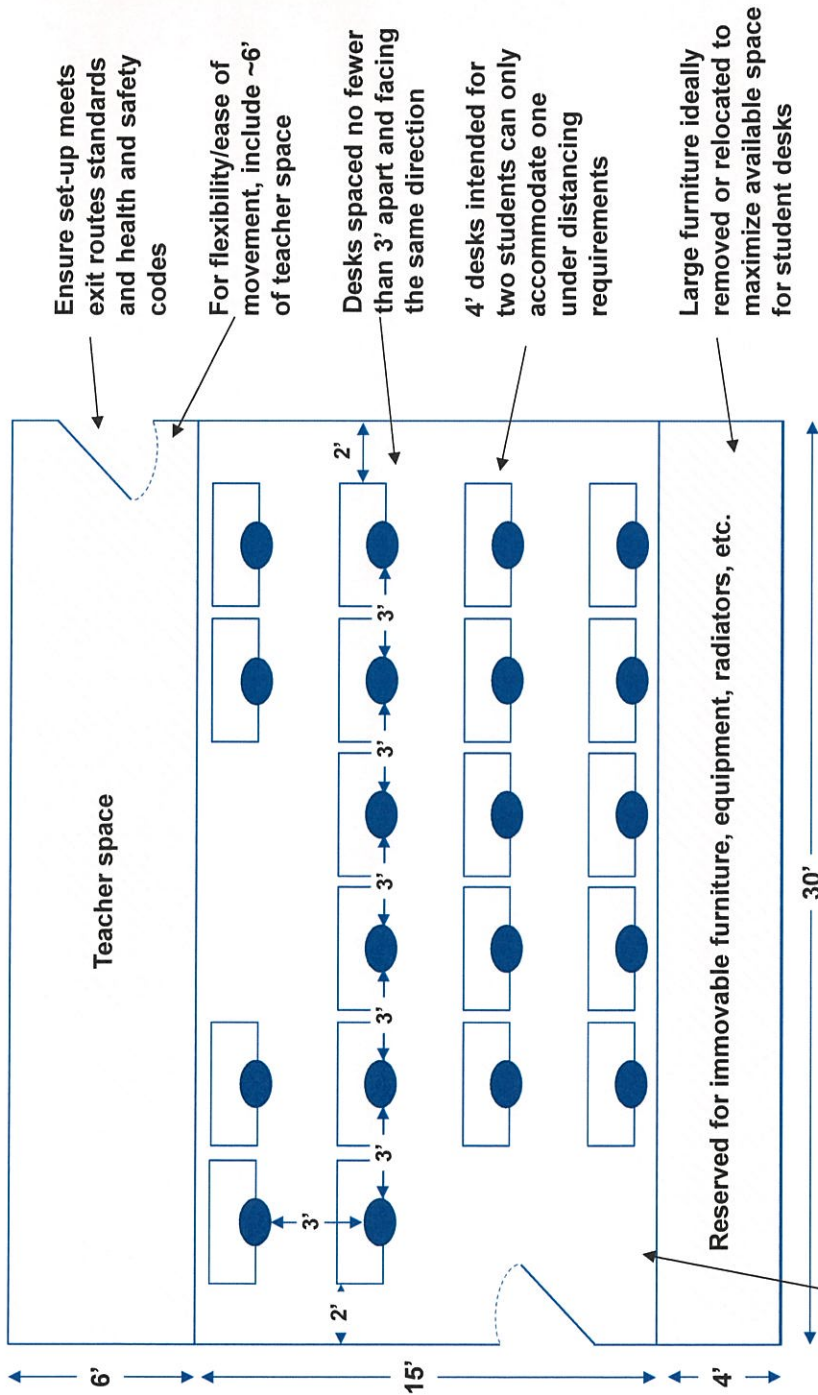


- Estimated 750 ft² capacity: ~26 students (with furniture/equipment removed)
- Capacity estimates will vary depending on classroom shape, desk size/type, immovable furniture, storage capabilities, etc.
- In this scenario, calculated 3' distance based on edge-of-seat to edge-of seat (desk-to-desk measurement would decrease classroom capacity)¹

¹ Assumed 1.5' seat width, 4' desk width

Example B4: Fits ~20 4' dual desks with 3' physical distancing

(Dimensions: 750 sq. ft., 25' x 30')



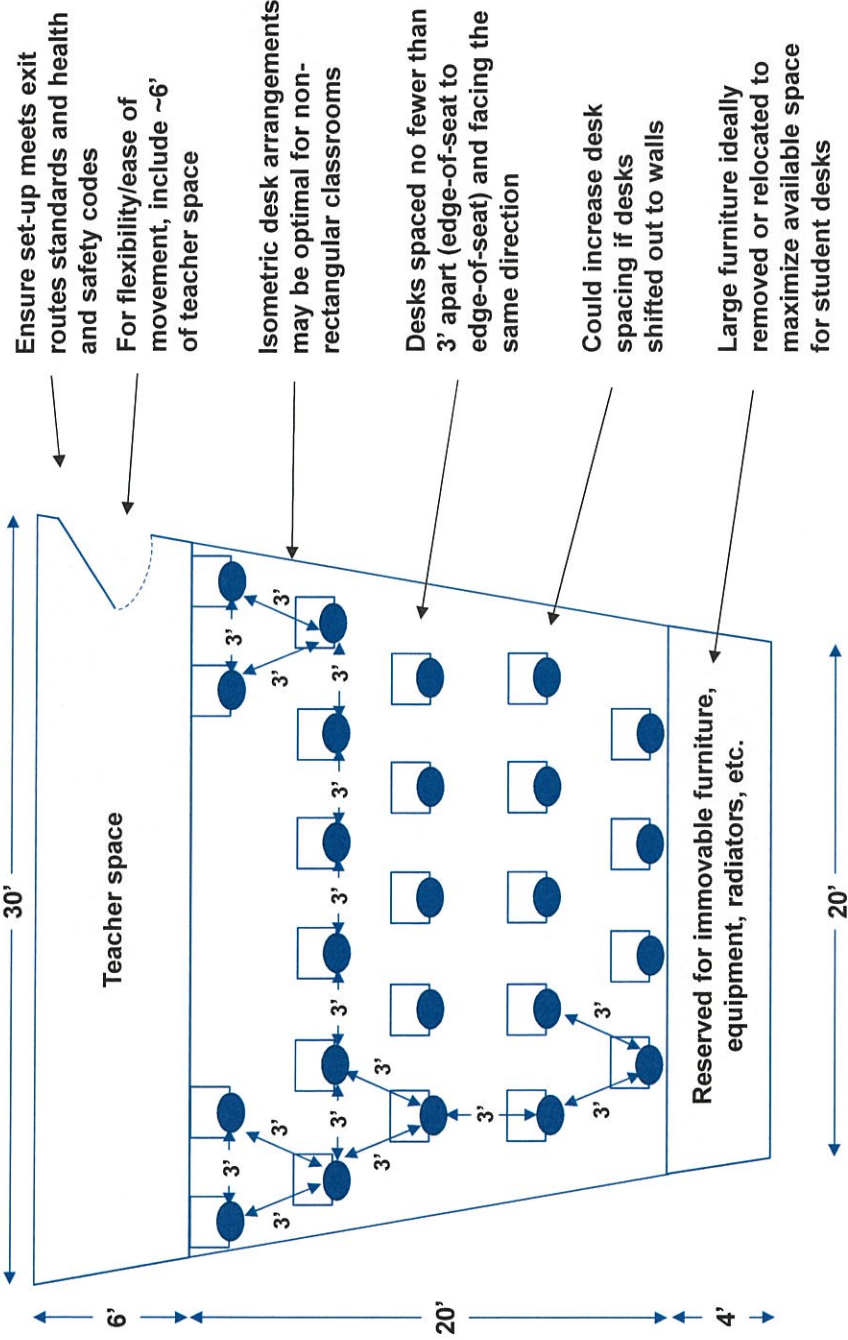
• Estimated 750 ft² capacity: ~20 students

- Capacity estimates will vary depending on classroom shape, desk size/type, immovable furniture, storage capabilities, etc.
- In this scenario, calculated 3' distance based on edge-of-seat to edge-of seat (desk-to-desk measurement would decrease classroom capacity)¹

¹ Assumed 1.5' seat width, 4' desk width

Example C2: Fits ~24 individual desks with 3' physical distancing

(Dimensions: 750 sq. ft., 30' at widest / 20' at narrowest x 30')

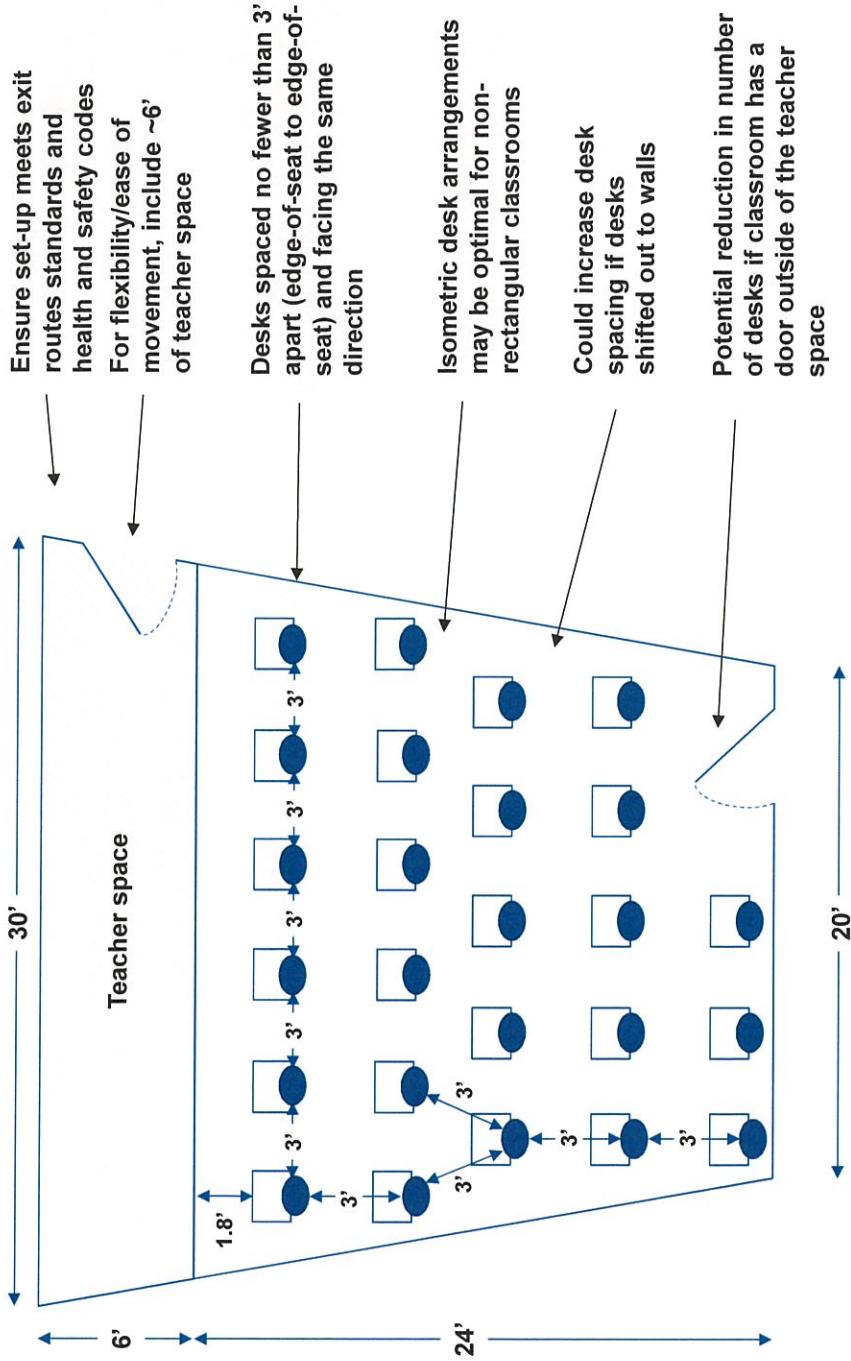


- Estimated 750 ft² capacity: ~24 students
- Capacity estimates will vary depending on classroom shape, desk size/type, immovable furniture, storage capabilities, etc.
- In this scenario, calculated 3' distance based on edge-of-seat to edge-of-seat (desk-to-desk measurement would decrease classroom capacity)¹

¹ Assumed 1.5' seat width, 2' desk width

Example C1: Fits ~25 individual desks with 3' physical distancing

(Dimensions: 750 sq. ft., 30' at widest / 20' at narrowest x 30')



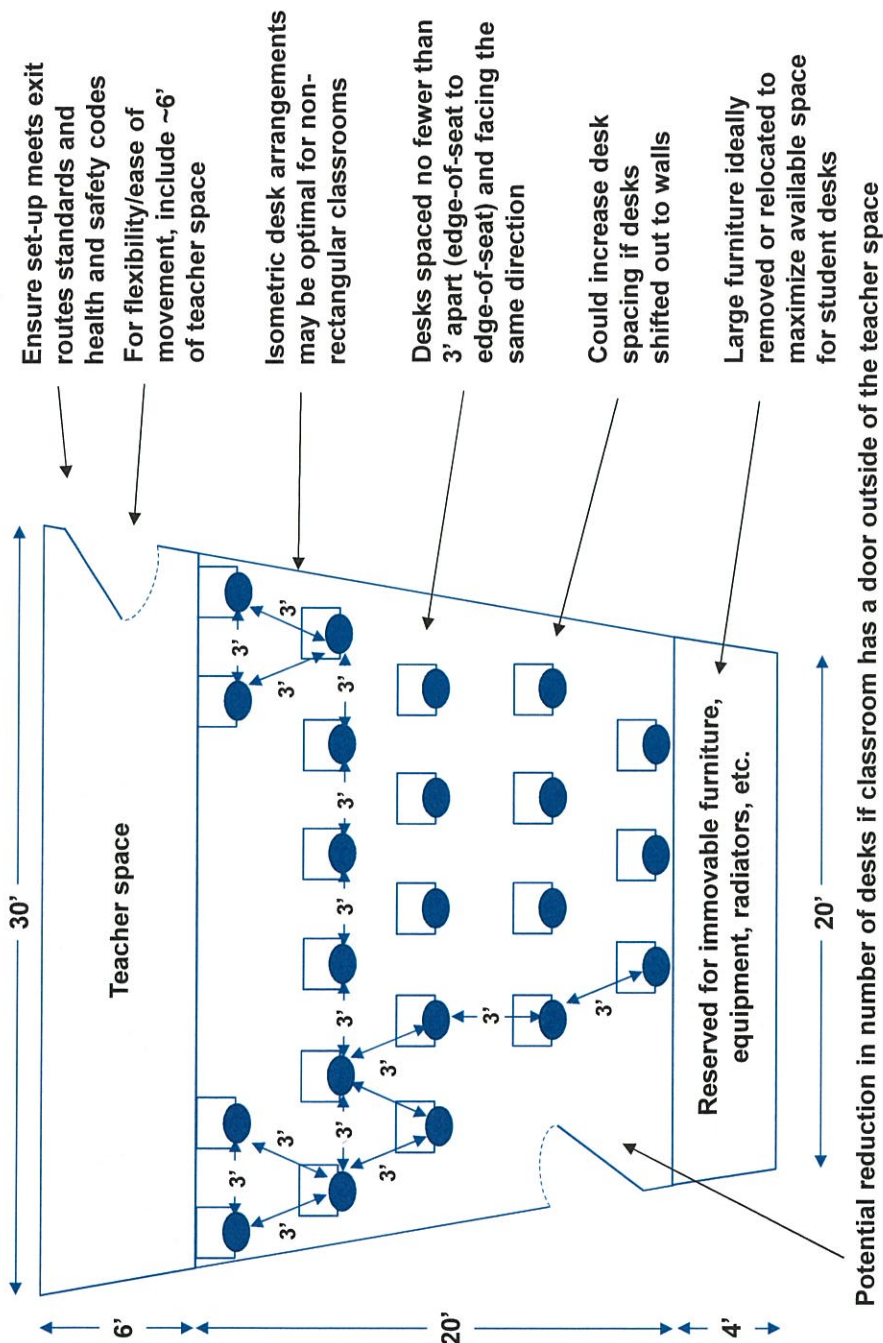
• Estimated 750 ft² capacity: ~25 students

- Capacity estimates will vary depending on classroom shape, desk size/type, immovable furniture, storage capabilities, etc.
- In this scenario, calculated 3' distance based on edge-of-seat to edge-of-seat (desk-to-desk measurement would decrease classroom capacity)¹

¹ Assumed 1.5' seat width, 2' desk width

Example C2: Fits ~22 individual desks with 3' physical distancing

(Dimensions: 750 sq. ft., 30' at widest / 20 at narrowest x 30')



- Estimated 750 ft² capacity: ~22 students
- Capacity estimates will vary depending on classroom shape, desk size/type, immovable furniture, storage capabilities, etc.
- In this scenario, calculated 3' distance based on edge-of-seat to edge-of-seat (desk-to-desk measurement would decrease classroom capacity)¹

¹ Assumed 1.5' seat width, 2' desk width

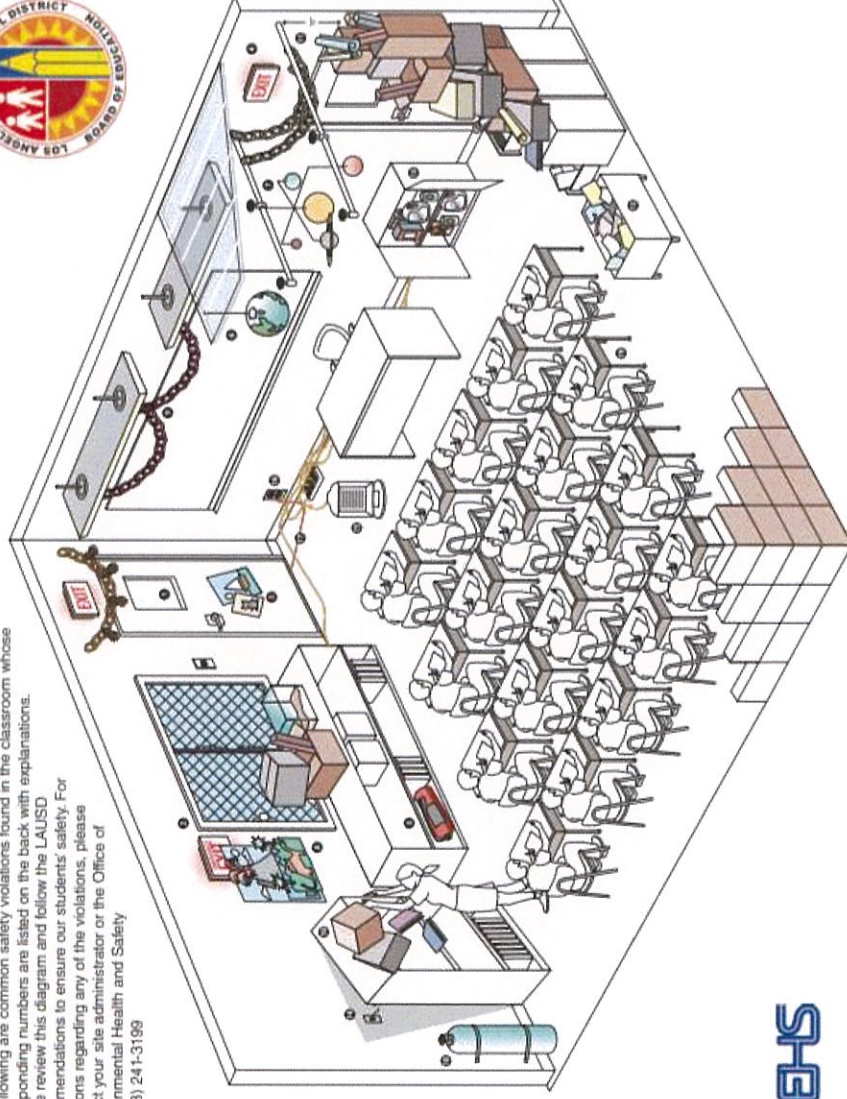
Appendix

DRAFT for discussion only

Example – Common Safety Violations in School Classrooms (1/2)

Common Safety Violations in School Classrooms

The following are common safety violations found in the classroom whose corresponding numbers are listed on the back with explanations. Please review this diagram and follow the LAUSD recommendations to ensure our students' safety. For questions regarding any of the violations, please contact your site administrator or the Office of Environmental Health and Safety at (213) 241-3199



Source: Dennis-Yarmouth regional school district

DRAFT for discussion only

Example – Common Safety Violations in School Classrooms (2/2)

Common Safety Violations in School Classrooms

- 1** Classroom exits shall remain clear and not blocked by any obstructions, such as cabinets that open into the exit path.
 - 2** Classroom emergency exit windows shall not be blocked by items stored under or in front of the windows.
 - 3** Classroom fire extinguishers shall be mounted in plain view and not blocked or hidden.
 - 4** Exit signs for emergency window exits shall be visible at all times. Illuminated exit signs, when provided, shall be illuminated at all times.
 - 5** Classroom exit doors shall not have decorations on the door.
 - 6** Decorations or classroom materials that are suspended from ceilings shall be treated to be flame retardant and never impede an exit.
 - 7** Suspended or hanging decorative items from fire sprinkler pipes is not allowed.
 - 8** Flame retardant classroom wall decorations shall not extend out from the walls or cover exit signs.
 - 9** Suspended decorative or instructional items from classroom ceiling lights is not allowed.
 - 10** Material stored on top of shelves or cabinets may not be closer than 3 feet to the ceiling. This material shall also be secured so that, during an earthquake, it will not fall. Unlabeled or unrestrained materials shall be removed.
 - 11** Materials stored on top of shelves or cabinets may not be closer than 18" to automatic sprinkler heads.
 - 12** Excess paper and other supplies, shall be stored in an orderly manner in approved storage closets and not in open classrooms.
 - 13** Hazardous materials, such as cleaning products and chemicals used for instruction, shall be stored in approved secure locations and always kept out of reach of children. Science chemicals and very hazardous materials must be kept in hazardous materials cabinets.
 - 14** All bookcases and cabinets shall be secured to walls.
 - 15** Approved portable heaters shall be positioned so that they are not close to combustibles.
 - 16** Do not plug more than one extension cord and one power strip into an electrical outlet. Extension cords shall be removed and stored at the end of the school day. Extension cords may not be put into permanent use. Extension cords and power strips may not be plugged in series.
 - 17** Extension cords may not be extended from one classroom to another or create a tripping hazard.
 - 18** All compressed gas cylinders shall be attached with restraints to prevent them from overturning.
 - 19** Do not exceed the classroom occupancy load by putting too many students or desks in the room. (20 square feet per student.)
- Most classrooms safety violations can be avoided by keeping classrooms clean, neat and well organized. Do not try and store more materials than your room was designed to safely handle. Do not obstruct the existing fire safety systems that are there to protect all occupants. Do not try and exceed the capacity of the room's electrical system with plug strips and extension cords. Always look out for conditions that have the potential to hurt students.**
- In addition to the illustrated classroom violations, there are some fire/safety violations that occur outside of the classroom. If you notice any of the following, please notify your site administrator.*
- Do not store items in basements or under stairs unless the entire area is sprinklered.
 - When storing items in closets or workrooms, maintain a 3 foot (36") clearance around all water heaters, electrical panels, fire alarms and portable fire extinguishers.
 - Parking of vehicles on campus shall be limited to official parking stalls only.
 - Do not park vehicles on school grounds in such a way as to block paths or egress and access or any fire lanes.

Source: Dennis-Yarmouth regional school district

DRAFT for discussion only