CODES OF SAFE PRACTICES – ADMINISTRATORS

General Campus Safety Rules

A. **Be aware of where you are walking**. Trip and slip hazards – uneven exterior walkways, stacks of paper or boxes, for example, or recently polished and slick floors, or extension cords – are common in all areas of the campus.

B. **Be aware of the location of the nearest fire extinguisher.** It may come in handy. Read the instructions on the extinguisher now, before you need to use it.

C. **Familiarize yourself with the emergency exit procedures.** An emergency plan must be posted near the exit of every room to notify all employees and students of how to exit the room, the evacuation route and where they are to assemble after.

D. **Chairs are not step stools.** Don't use them for that purpose. Use a step stool or ladder when reaching for elevated supplies and materials.

E. **Electric extension cords are to be used only as a temporary source of power.** Extension cords should be unplugged, rolled up and stored immediately after use. This includes cords to classroom appliances and overhead projectors. Improper use of electricity is the second most common cause of fires in schools.

F. **Flammable and combustible liquids may not be stored in classrooms, offices or resource rooms.** These liquids are the third most common cause of school fires.

G. **Be cautious with the use flammable materials.** They may not be attached to windows and doors and no more than 50% of all the wall space may be covered with flammable materials. Window coverings, drapes and curtains may not be installed unless they meet the Fire Marshall's fireproofing requirements. Keep decorations for holidays only.

Office Ergonomic Safety Rules

Administrators don't spend the majority of time at their desks using the computer, as Clerical Personnel do, but you still need to be aware of Repetitive Motion Injuries (RMI) and should take the following steps to reduce the chance of such an injury. As an Administrator it your responsibility to assure all staff follow safe practices, and that includes yourself

A. **Complete a workstation ergonomic evaluation.** If available, utilize an in-house resource to complete the evaluation or complete a self-evaluation (checklist attached).

B. **Make the necessary adjustments to your chair.** Most chairs will have at least two or three adjustment levers to use to change the height and tilts of the seat and backrest. Adjust the chair so you can achieve the most comfortable typing position.

C. **Take the weight on your feet.** Ensure that your feet rest on the ground so that not all the weight is on your lower back. If your feet do not reach the ground, utilize a footrest.

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D. **Type with your wrist at a neutral position.** Adjust the height of chair and keyboard to ensure that, while typing, the shoulders are relaxed, there is a 90-degree angle at the elbow, and the wrist is in a flat position (i.e. no raising or lowering of the wrist from the forearm in order to reach the keys).

E. **Avoid neck and eye strain.** Position the monitor directly in front of you at a distance with its top at eye level. Keep the monitor between 18" and 24" from the eye, and place it at a right angle to the window. If you are entering data from a document, prop the document up or, better still, place it at eye level with the use of a document holder.

F. **Keep the mouse close.** Avoid having to reach either up or out to use the mouse. If possible it should be kept next to and at the same height as the keyboard. Hold the mouse gently and move it with the arm rather than the wrist.

G. **Take your breaks.** Take micro-breaks from typing for 2-3 minutes every half-hour and stop typing for ten minutes after typing uninterrupted for 2 hours. If possible, get outside during breaks for some valuable fresh air and, during the day, regularly stretch the hands, arms and back.

Office Equipment Safety Rules

A. **Electric Powered Equipment can be a shock hazard.** Periodically, check the equipment for frayed cords and defective plugs. Never clean or service electric powered equipment with the power on; always disconnect the equipment from the power source. Don't use the equipment with wet hands or while on a damp floor.

B. **Shut off electrical equipment.** Before leaving the classroom, be sure electrical equipment, like audiovisual equipment, is shut off and unplugged.

C. **Be careful with paper cutters.** Cutters should only be used on a level, unobstructed and clear surface. The finger guard must be in place before using the cutter. The lever should be put down and in the locked position when it is not being used.

D. **Photocopy machines could be harmful to the eyes.** These machines emit an extremely bright light. Always make sure the machine cover is down when operating it.

E. **Close file cabinet and desk drawers when not in use.** File cabinets are unstable with the drawers open and a co-worker or student could walk into an open drawer

F. **Do not change a burnt out projection bulb when the projector is still hot.** Disconnect the projector and wait for it to cool before changing the bulb.

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Materials Storage Safety Rules

A. **Store materials in an organized way.** Do not overload shelves and drawers. Do not store materials on top of cabinets. Materials may not be stored within 36" of the ceiling.

B. **Weight can be a safety hazard.** Heavier items should be stored on the lower shelves at about chest height or lower.

C. **Place cabinets and shelves away from room exits.** They could fall over and block the exit.

D. **Keep aisles and passageways free of materials.** As well as being a trip and fall hazard, they could also impede a quick exit in an emergency.

E. **Keep the storeroom neat.** Everything should have its place in the storeroom. Avoid placing old boxes and files in there on a permanent basis and keep clutter to a minimum.

Lifting Rules

It is just as important to keep your body in shape for the task as it is any other tool you use for other jobs. You can injure yourself just as easily lifting light objects as you can lifting heavier ones if you don't lift properly and your "tool" is not in shape for the job. Lifting is a thinking person's job.

A. **Before you lift something, prepare yourself and plan the move.** Make sure you are limber and physically fit enough to do the task safely. Daily exercises will keep your body ready for lifting and help you feel better. Size up the load to make sure you can handle it safely. If you think the load is too bulky or too heavy, ask someone to help you or try to break it up into smaller, more manageable loads. Use a hand truck or dolly if necessary. Plan your route and make sure the path is clear of trip, slip, and fall hazards.

B. **Use proper body mechanics when lifting.** Stand close to the object with your feet about shoulder width apart. Squat down, bending at the hips and knees. Keep your back straight. As you grip the load, arch your lower back inward by pulling your shoulders back and sticking your chest out with chin tucked in. Be sure to keep the load close to your body. When you set the load down, squat down, bending at the hips and knees, keeping your lower back arched in.

C. **Turn, don't twist.** Twisting is not the thing to do. Instead of twisting, turn your whole body in the direction that you want to go. Twisting when carrying a load puts a lot of undo stress on your back.

D. **Push, don't pull.** Whenever you have to move something that is on a cart, a dolly, or a hand truck, push the load. Pushing puts less strain on your back.

E. **Don't store heavy objects higher than your waist.** If heavy objects aren't stored higher than your waist than you won't have to lift them higher than your waist. Lifting objects overhead puts a lot of undue stress on your back. It's one of the surest ways to injure your back.

F. **Lift like a pro and avoid the pain.** Learning how to lift and carry safely is one of the most important things you can do for your back. It's not hard to put these suggestions to use, and the payoffs will be well worth the time and effort you put into it.

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OFFICE WORKSTATION EVALUATION

Date:
Employee Name:
Location:
Reason:

Evaluator:
Title:
Department:
Hours a day at VDT:

CHAIR

	Yes	No
Does employee know how to make adjustments to chair position?	☐	☐
Is employee sitting at a height they find comfortable?	☐	☐
Are employee's feet resting on the floor?	☐	☐
(If not, is there a footrest available?)	☐	☐
Is the backrest at an angle and height that provides optimum lumbar support?	☐	☐
Does employee use backrest while typing (i.e., no tilting forward)?	☐	☐
Are thighs parallel to the floor or better still, sloping down slightly?	☐	☐
Is there pressure on the back of the employee's knees?	☐	☐
Are armrests used just for rest periods, and not while typing?	☐	☐

Comments/Adjustments/Equipment Needed:

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KEYBOARD

	Yes	No
While typing, are upper arms within contact of torso?	☐	☐
Are shoulders relaxed?	☐	☐
Are forearms parallel to the floor (i.e., 90° angle at the elbow)?	☐	☐
Are wrists and hands straight and in-line with the forearm?	☐	☐
Are wrist rests used just for rest periods, and not while typing?	☐	☐

Comments/Adjustments/Equipment Needed:

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MONITOR

	Yes	No
Is the top of the monitor at or slightly below eye level?	☐	☐
Is monitor between 18 and 24 inches from the eyes?	☐	☐
Is monitor directly behind keyboard?	☐	☐
Is monitor clean and free of glare?	☐	☐
Is monitor at right angles to windows?	☐	☐
Is a document holder used when appropriate?	☐	☐

Comments/Adjustments/Equipment Needed:

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KEYING/MOUSE TECHNIQUE

	Yes	No
Is a light keying touch used?	☐	☐
Does the employee move arms, not wrists when reaching for distant keys?	☐	☐
Do the hands and wrists "float" over the keys?	☐	☐
Is the numeric pad used for cursor control?	☐	☐
Are keystroke alternatives used instead of the mouse whenever possible?	☐	☐
Is the mouse held gently (instead of the death grip)?	☐	☐
Is the mouse moved with the arm rather than the wrist?	☐	☐
Is the mouse as close to the keyboard as possible?	☐	☐
Is the mouse switched periodically to the other hand?	☐	☐
Does the employee use a light touch when clicking?	☐	☐

Comments/Adjustments/Equipment Needed:

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SCHEDULE/BREAKS/EXERCISE

	Yes	No
Has employee recently worked more than 8 hours a day for an extended period?	☐	☐
Does the employee stop typing for 10 minutes after typing uninterrupted for 2 hours?	☐	☐
Does the employee take micro breaks (2-3 minutes) every half-hour?	☐	☐
Does the employee vary their posture regularly during the day?	☐	☐
Does the employee stand up and walk around during the micro breaks?	☐	☐
Does the employee regularly stretch (particularly the hands and wrists)?	☐	☐
Does the employee focus on distant objects at least every 7 minutes?	☐	☐

Comments/Adjustments/Equipment Needed:

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DESK ORGANIZATION

	Yes	No
Is the floor around the desk cluttered (preventing leg movement)?	☐	☐
Is the desktop cluttered (resulting in cramped typing positions)?	☐	☐
Is other needed equipment (e.g., 10-key machine) accessible without reaching?	☐	☐
Does the employee use a headset if required to use phone while typing?	☐	☐
Is there minimal reaching above the shoulder and below the waist?	☐	☐

Comments/Adjustments/Equipment Needed:

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OTHER

	Yes	No
Does the employee feel informed about the hazards of computer use?	☐	☐
Are they knowledgeable about controlling those hazards through correct workstation setup, modifying their schedule, and using better technique?	☐	☐
Do they know the procedure for reporting physical problems?	☐	☐

Comments/Adjustments/Equipment Needed:

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