SUPPORT SERVICES

Student/Staff Safety

Safe Operation of Dangerous Equipment by Staff and Students

The purpose of this regulation is to ensure that employees do not place themselves, or students, in perilous situations by unsafe operation of dangerous equipment, such as ladders, motorized portable lift equipment, ADA chairlifts, audio/visual technology carts of the size shown on Attachment I, gym divider curtains, retractable bleachers, or electronic room partitions as defined herein.

Staff are not permitted to operate any of the aforementioned equipment unless they have been trained by certified personnel in the Offices of Facilities Services or Risk Management and Security Services.

Students are not permitted to operate any of the aforementioned equipment. Students who are enrolled in courses and/or activities that necessitate use of this equipment shall be trained and supervised by a certified Prince William County Public Schools (PWCS) staff member, and/or sponsor, prior to use.

For portable audio/visual technology carts, schools shall distribute to all staff the attached Consumer Product Safety Alert, issued by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. Schools shall incorporate it as part of their procedural guidelines.

For electronic room partitions, schools shall distribute to all staff the mandatory safety procedures as specified in the “Code of Virginia” § 22.1-138, amended effective July 1, 2019:

1. No students shall be present in the room during the operation of the electronic room partition.
2. The room shall be locked or otherwise inaccessible to students during the operation of the electronic room partition.
3. Only trained PWCS personnel are authorized to operate the electronic room partition.
4. Two operators are required to operate the electronic room partition.

Schools shall train administrators, physical education staff, and custodial staff on mandatory safety and operating procedures for electronic room partitions.
The Associate Superintendent for Finance and Risk Management and the Associate Superintendent for Support Services (or designees) are responsible for implementing and monitoring this regulation.

This regulation and related policy shall be reviewed at least every five years and revised as needed.
Teachers Should Not Let Children Move or Play Near TV or Audiovisual Carts

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) again warns the nation's school teachers not to allow children to move or play near TV or audiovisual carts because they can tip over and kill or seriously injure children.

CPSC has become aware of several incidents in schools involving the tip-over of loaded TV or audiovisual carts. Most of the carts were loaded with a TV set on the top shelf. Others were loaded with a projector, and in one incident the equipment was not known. All of the reported deaths involved tall slant-top carts (approximately 50 inches high). While available information indicates most accidents involved carts with slanted tops, CPSC is concerned about the safety of flat-topped carts as well.

In most of the cases, a teacher asked the young students (ranging in age from 7 to 11) to move a cart to another room. The cart overturned when it apparently hit a child's foot while being pulled or when the child stepped on the front of the cart for a ride. Typically, two children were moving the audiovisual cart, one child pulling from the front and the other child pushing from the back. The child in front was the one who was injured or killed. In one incident in which the cart was not being moved, a young girl suffered permanent brain damage when she climbed on or fell into a cart and the cart and TV fell on her.

To avoid injuries and deaths from TV or audiovisual cart tip-overs, follow these safety rules:

- Do not let children move a TV or audiovisual cart: only adults should move them.
- Do not allow anyone to step or ride on the TV or audiovisual cart, because this can cause it to overturn.
- Plan ahead when TV or other audiovisual equipment is needed, so it can be moved by an adult before and after class.
- Do not let children play near TV or audiovisual carts.