



## **Position Statement on Physical Safety in the Art Classroom [Adopted April 2014; Reviewed and Revised March 2017]**

NAEA believes that physical safety is a priority in the art classroom. For safety in art instructional spaces, it is essential that the administrators of the facility (schools, cultural institutions, or other community programs) be in compliance with all of the occupational regulations and training requirements. The school district, cultural institution, or community program operating the facility must comply with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) rules including the training of art educators and staff and considering the ratio of class sizes. The physical, instructional, and student work space and student to teacher ratio must also be considered by the school/district in order to establish a safe learning environment.\* The art educators/staff of all facilities where visual arts are offered need to be trained in order to be prepared to protect the students as well as themselves.

It is the responsibility of the art educators/staff to teach, model, post, and practice safety procedures, require student competency, and enforce the practice of safety with all students at all times. The goal is to make safety a part of students' basic approach to the art classroom every day and in all of their future artistic activities. Safety and creativity are not mutually exclusive.

Safety in the art classroom includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Provide appropriate supervision for all classroom activities
- Know the properties and hazards associated with all material and equipment used in the classroom.
- Ensure that educators and students know and implement the proper procedures for operating equipment, using protective gear and materials
- Ensure that all safety equipment is present and in good working condition
- Provide protective gear and equipment and instruction in its use by both educators and students.
- Comply with all applicable building, electrical, fire, and ventilation codes
- Know and implement precautions for using, storing, and disposing of materials
- Know first aid information and practice proper procedures
- Use the least hazardous materials available
- Avoid exposure to toxic materials
- Document safety issues/concerns and inform appropriate authorities
- Know and address student allergies

Despite all best efforts, accidents or reactions to materials may occur. Art educators/staff should comply with the facility's emergency procedures as provided in required annual update training.

\*From ratios adopted by the NAEA Board, March 2011