

Purpose/Background

There may be present or desired for purchase, in a school facility or on school grounds, items intended for use in enhancing the learning environment that are, however, considered non-standard items. RVS strive to develop an optimal student learning and staff work environment within prescribed Building & Fire Code, and Occupational Health & Safety Standards.

A range of health and safety factors influence the jurisdiction's support or rejection of such items in Rocky View Schools' (RVS) facilities or on RVS grounds. This does not refer to non-standard items requiring alterations to the building/grounds, which must follow Administrative Procedure 5405 Alternations to School Buildings, School Grounds or Other Division Facilities.

Procedures

1. Principals are to ensure that staff intending to purchase or bring non-standard items in the school facility or on school grounds, are informed of the necessary steps for approval.
2. Form AF5305 **Request to Place Non-Standard Items in Schools** must be completed and approved by the Principal prior to purchase and placement of non-standard items in the school.
3. Principal approval must consider the purchase, inventorying, monitoring and maintenance of the item prior to an item being authorized. Decisions will be based in consideration of:
 - 3.1. Demonstrating sound pedagogical requirements with clear curricular, pedagogical, and preferably research-based need rather than want.
 - 3.2. Safety and fire hazards, or the potential to create hazards.
 - 3.3. Health issues related to potential for dust, allergens, lice, cleanliness and ease of cleanliness.
 - 3.4. Storage capacity for non-essential (including non-standard items) items relative to the availability of usable student space and other space(s) throughout the school.
 - 3.5. School purchased assets must be inventoried, monitored, and maintained in the context of the availability of funds and supervision time required by delegated staff.
 - 3.6. Increased energy costs incurred by the jurisdiction related to the presence of non- standard items must be accounted for in school-based budgeting.
4. Principal approval will be made following the signature and comments of the Head Building Operator, OH&S Site Representative and Schools Department representative.
5. If a non-standard item was approved the health and safety standard of the item must be reviewed by the Principal each September.
6. Copies of completed form AF5305 are to be kept on file with the Principal, Head Building Operator, and OH&S Site Representative.
7. Any non-standard item or excessive accumulation of non-standard items, in any area of a school or facility, may be deemed unacceptable by the Principal, Supervisor of Caretaking, the Director of Maintenance, or the Occupational Health & Safety Officer, under the criteria outlined in the purpose of this procedure, and may require removal.
8. Disposal of non-standard items will be at the cost of the school.

Resources:

- School Act
- Internal Process: Guidelines for Non-Standard Items in Schools
- Form AF5305 Request to Place Non-Standard Items in Schools
- Caretaking Department Workflow
- Standards of Cleanliness
- Caretaking Levels of Service
- Preparation for Summer Cleaning
- RVS AF5305 Request to Place Non-Standard Items in Schools

Appendix A

Below is a chart of items that are considered non-standard. This is not an all-inclusive chart but will provide a background of some common non-standard items.

Item(s):	Conditions:	Concerns:
Teacher Desks	There should only be one teacher desk per adult in a classroom	Classroom space
Animals	Only for educational purposes	Concerns: allergies; other health issues (diseases carried by animals, salmonella, etc.); safety of students; health and safety of the animal; who looks after an animal; who will clean up after an animal; procedures if an animal dies while in the classroom (disposal, emotion of students); fear of animals.
Aquariums	If required, for educational purposes	Requires regular maintenance and cleaning; power consumption; requires care during Christmas, convention, spring and summer breaks.
Area Rugs	There is an approved product based on testing by RVS Maintenance	Needs to be cleanable and able to withstand use
Cabinets	There is a standard amount of RVS supplied storage units per classroom. There should be no storage on the tops of upper cabinets	Can become too close to ceilings and fire sprinklers; Occupational Health and Safety issue about safe lifting; unstable shelving that is improperly stacked.
Candles/Open Flames	Only allowed if part of a science experiment	Fire hazard; scented candles can be bad for people with respiratory problems.
Cardboard	Only a limited amount specific to a current student project or event should be in the classroom. Store 'just in case we need it' cardboard in storage rooms	Fire hazard; clutter and tripping hazards; space use.
Ceiling Mobiles	Not allowed	Fire hazard; damage to ceiling
Chairs	There may be a need to have a reading corner chair	Needs to be a hard, cleanable surface
Christmas Trees	No cut real trees. Artificial trees are allowed if proper cleaning and storage is provided.	Dry trees are a fire hazard; artificial trees will collect dust after several years of use, which can create health issues
Decorations	An exit doorway cannot have flammable materials on it	Obstruction to exit doors or access to doors; creating a fire hazard at the exit door.
Electrical Appliances	e.g., coffee pots, kettles, hot plates, toaster ovens, Christmas lights, electric signs, neon signs): Not in classrooms	Power consumption; fire hazard if damaged; clutter; burn hazard to students; leftover foods can attract pests; damage to building if signs/lights are secured to walls or ceiling.
Electric Clock	One per classroom as purchased by school or RVS, no personal clocks.	Power consumption; clutter; damage to walls if wall mounted
Extension Cords	Must not be use multiple in a chain. Must be	Create tripping hazards; splitters can

Item(s):	Conditions:	Concerns:
	secured and out of the way (not a tripping hazard)	overload circuits and create fire hazards; cords must not be frayed or damaged.
Electric Heaters	Buildings are kept at average comfortable temperatures. There should be no need for additional heaters except if there are special heating system issues	Power consumption; ensuring the unit is safe; who makes sure the unit used safely (fire hazard if close to combustible material); burn hazard to students; fire hazard if left on while unattended.
Empty Juice and Milk Containers	Centrally stored, not in the classroom (unless removed daily)	Odor; flies and pests
Exercise Equipment	Only in fitness rooms or as required by Student Services	Maintenance of equipment; safe use of equipment; lack of space.
Eye Wash Stations	Required for science rooms and other areas where hazardous materials are handled.	Must be RVS approved; requires regular maintenance
Fabric Maps and Wall Hangings	Fire Code	Must be flame resistant and stay within fire code guidelines.
Fridges	Only in a foods lab, science prep room or a sports room, never in any other classroom	Old fridges are a safety hazard; old fridges are significant power consumers; regular cleaning is required
Humidifiers, air cleaners, de-humidifiers	Only with a doctor's note	Creates a health hazard if not maintained; power consumption; not really effective in large areas anyway.
Lanyards	All lanyards used by RVS, and on school board property, shall be of the breakaway type	Non-breakaway lanyards present a significant choking risk
Mechanical System Changes (ex. altering vents)	Not allowed	Procedure F1A for alterations must be followed if deemed necessary by the Facility Administrator
Microwaves	Microwaves should only be in lunch areas	A procedure to insure hot food can be removed from the oven safely; new purchase only (no discards); require periodic testing; requires regular cleaning
Mini-Vacuums, Hand-held vacuums	Only for Kindergarten play areas	Clutter; power consumption
Mood lighting	Lighting levels are mandated by codes and industry standards to provide adequate light levels for the task. Limited additional light may be considered if there is a specific task required for educational value (reading corner)	Lower light levels can damage eyesight or cause eyestrain
Painting or otherwise altering surfaces in a school	School staff or parents are not to alter anything in a building (including painting walls or ceilings). The written permission from the Director of Maintenance is required before	Damage to the building; improper finishes can be a fire hazard; changes may affect mechanical systems or fire safety systems

Item(s):	Conditions:	Concerns:
	anything is altered in a building	
Plants	Not all plants are good in student environments	Poisonous plants; flowers and the scent can be bad for students with allergies; some plants can have pests; watering can damage surfaces (overflow); plant soil can generate moulds.
Printers, scanners, computers and photocopiers	Retain only what is required for educational purposes. Remove old equipment that has been replaced, do not store unused equipment in classrooms	Space use; power consumption
Scents, electric air-fresheners, incense, cleaners, flowers, and paints	Only approved cleaning products may be used.	Scents or products with odors can affect people with allergies and asthma
Stereos, ghetto blasters	only as required for educational program	Loose wires, power consumption, disruption to other people in the building.
Tackboards	Flammable material is limited to an area that is equivalent to 20% of all the wall surfaces. Tack boards should approximate this amount of area. Miscellaneous items taped to the wall will damage painted surfaces and drywall partitions	Fire hazard/fire code prevents more than 20% wall area covered
Toys	Cleaning and sanitization is required	Health concerns
Water Filters	Only where approved by RVS	Requires regular maintenance
Window Treatments	The school or school staff must not install any curtains or blinds. Replacement or repairs must be requested from the Supply Management Department	Damage to building; unapproved materials may be a fire hazard or safety hazard.