Teacher and Educator Safety

General Safety
- Always follow district policy for handling combative students to avoid injury.
- Store sharp objects, such as pens, pencils, letter openers or scissors, in drawers or with the points down in a container.
- Carry pencils, scissors and other sharp objects with the points down.
- Do not jump from ramps, platforms, ladders or step stools.
- Do not run on stairs or take more than one step at a time.
- Use handrails when ascending or descending stairs.
- Obey all posted safety and danger signs.

Fall Prevention
- Never stand on tabletops, desktops or other furniture to reach high places.
- Use a ladder or step stool to retrieve or store items that are located to a ladder or talk to your maintenance/janitorial staff if you are unsure how to use it.
- Do not use ladders that have loose rungs, cracked or split side rails, missing rubber foot pads or are otherwise visibly damaged.
- Keep ladder rungs clean and free of grease and remove buildup of material, such as dirt or mud.
- When performing work from a ladder, face the ladder and do not lean backward or sideways from the ladder.
- Allow only one person on the ladder at a time.
- Do not stand on the top two rungs of any ladder.
- Do not stand on a ladder that wobbles or leans to the left or right.
- Do not try to “walk” a ladder by rocking it — climb down and move it.

Slip and Fall Prevention
Proper footwear is required.
- Tight-fitting with a closed heel are recommended. (No flip flops or other shoes without a heel strap).
- Flat, soft-sole shoes that provide maximum traction on all types of walking surfaces and in all types of weather are highly recommended.
- High heels and shoes with leather or other hard, smooth-surfaced soles that provide minimal heel-to-surface contact area are not recommended.
- During inclement weather, boots or other appropriate footwear should be worn to work and changed once you arrive and enter the building.

Handling Supplies
Do not block your view by carrying large or bulky items; use a dolly or hand truck or get assistance from a fellow employee.
- Cut away from your body when using knives or case cutters.
- Use proper tools when cutting paper or opening boxes.

Equipment Use
- Keep the paper cutter handle in the closed/locked position when it’s not in use.
- Do not use paper-cutting devices if the finger guard is missing.
- Position hands and fingers onto the handle of the paper cutter before pressing down on the blade.
- Use a staple remover, not your fingers, for removing staples.
- Turn off and unplug office machines before adjusting, lubricating or cleaning them.
Do not use fans that have excessive vibration, frayed cords or missing guards.
- Turn the power switch of the equipment to “off” when it is not being used.
- Open one file cabinet drawer at a time.
- Close drawers and doors immediately after use.
- Use the handle when closing doors, drawers and files.
- Put heavy files in the bottom drawers of file cabinets.
- Do not balance the chair you are sitting in on its two back legs.

Behavior Management Program

School employees often have responsibility for the care and welfare of students that may exhibit aggressive or violent behaviors. Such behaviors can place both parties at risk of injury. How staff recognizes and interacts with a student entering the “crisis cycle” will ultimately define the outcome of the interaction.

A comprehensive, structured and interactive Behavior Management Program is the most effective tool in controlling situations where behavioral problems may arise. The goals and objectives that should be the foundation of any school’s Behavior Management Program are as followed:

1. Reduce the potential for injury to both students and staff. This is accomplished by focusing on the needs and care of individuals during interactions, rather than focusing on physical restraints.
2. Facilitate a positive and proactive relationship with students that treats them with dignity and respect.
3. Create an atmosphere that builds the trust and self-esteem of students while decreasing episodes of aggressive behaviors.
4. Present an objective, understandable and consistent means of assessing the individual’s needs.
5. Emphasize the importance of staff training and use of the behavior support plan as a guide for interactions and care for students served.
6. Focus on proactive interventions with individuals who may be showing early signs of escalation to prevent them from physically acting out.
7. Create a culture that consists

Safe Student Handling & Mobility (SSHM)

Often part of the daily routine for a number of school staff members, safe student handling and mobility is one of their most hazardous job tasks. It is defined as the manual movement, repositioning, or transferring of a student. Its equivalent in the health care industry — safe patient handling — is known as a major factor in causing health care workers to have the highest rate of musculoskeletal disorders. To reduce the likelihood of student handling injuries, United Heartland recommends implementing a comprehensive Safe Student Handling and Mobility program that includes the following:

1. Development and implementation of a written Safe Student Handling and Mobility Program
2. Objective criteria to be determined for the transferring of students
3. Quality assurance through regular observations and injury review
4. Education and training
5. Progressive step disciplinary program

Here at United Heartland, we are committed to helping keep your workforce protected from injuries caused by student handling job tasks. To find out more information on how to implement an effective SSHM program, contact your United Heartland loss control representative.