

## **SAFETY INFORMATION FOR SAFELY PACKING AND STORING INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIAL**

At the end of each school year a number of accidents/injuries are reported due to improper packing and moving of materials prior to and just after the end of school. These accidents/injuries include back sprains/strains from lifting and moving large boxes, large sacks of books and trash, etc. Other accidents/injuries include (struck by) injuries where boxes that are in poor condition are used and the bottom falls out or the sides tear while being lifted and/or carried. In an effort to help reduce the risk of these accidents/injuries the following procedures should be followed.

- Eliminate the need for moving boxes when possible. If you will be using the same room next year store as many supplies as possible on countertops, bookshelves or in the room closet and cubby-holes. This will reduce the amount of lifting and carrying required therefore will help reduce the exposure to injury.
- Select manageable boxes: In some cases we find large boxes such as toilet paper boxes used for storing materials. Unfortunately maintenance and custodial staff must move these in order to refinish floors. This has accounted for a number of injuries in this school district.

### **Boxes should be:**

1. In good condition because of a damaged box may collapse or have the bottom fall out resulting in injury to employees and damage to materials.
  2. A manageable size such as a standard computer paper box. They are large enough to hold a fair amount of materials and if not over filled, boxes should not weigh more than 40 lbs. (when loaded with products such as books, forms, etc.).
  3. Filled to allow the boxes to be stacked for transporting with a dolly and will save space in storage.
  4. Lid type boxes, this helps reduce overloading and aids in stacking.
  5. Boxes with built in handles that greatly reduce the chance of the box being dropped.
- Where to fill boxes. This is important because if box is filled in the wrong place it may have to be lifted two or three times as opposed to once or even not being lifted at all.

### **Here are some tips in how to plan ahead:**

1. If the box is to remain in the room fill the empty box in the storage place or as close to its storage place as possible. If it is to be stored on a shelf, fill the box on the shelf or on a nearby desk so it doesn't have to be lifted off the floor.
2. If the boxes must be moved from the room use a dolly or other material handling equipment. Fill the first box on the floor placing the next box on top of the first to fill. Maximum three in a stack. The stack should not exceed shoulder height.
3. If the box must be carried, fill it on a desk or counter about waist height. Again, do not over fill. Boxes should be carried one at a time. In general it is safer to make extra trips than to carry greater loads. Better yet use a cart.
4. Be sure to communicate with the custodian or whoever may have to move the boxes and use dollies or other material handling equipment, to avoid carrying boxes. Do your part to help reduce accidents/injuries before leaving for the summer!!