August 13, 2018

TO:                    All Principals
FROM:                  MaryAnn May, Ph.D., Chief Fire Official
                        Office of the Chief Fire Official
VIA:                   Leo Bobadilla, Chief Facilities Officer
                        Office of the Chief of Facilities
                        Valerie S. Wanza, Ph.D.
                        Chief School Performance & Accountability Officer

SUBJECT:     ARTWORK

The start of the school year is right around the corner. As you work to make the learning environment inviting, I do want to remind you of the fire code requirements in relation to decorations and the posting of educational materials on walls. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Life Safety Code regulates educational facilities and provides clear direction on what is permitted to be attached to the walls. For any building that does not have fire sprinklers; you can use 20% of the wall space for artwork and teaching materials. For buildings equipped with fire sprinklers; you can use 50% of the wall space.

Please advise staff that when setting up classrooms to adhere to the following to avoid Fire Code violations:

- When placing materials on the walls, provide groupings with 12-24 inches in between (picture two bulletin boards with 12-24 inches between them). This provides a “fire break” between the areas.

- Do not place materials all the way up to the ceiling tiles. If a fire burns through a ceiling tile, it can travel in the void space to other classrooms and affect other areas quickly.

- Do not hang items off your ceiling tiles or ceiling grids.

- Do not paint ceiling tiles. All painted ceiling tiles must be removed immediately.
• Do not decorate exit doors or around the exit doors. These doors are your exits and you want to keep all burnable material from them. In addition, corridors should be treated in the same way. Remember, these are the areas you will be walking through to exit your building and you want to use artwork sparingly.

Please inform your teachers that Fire Safety inspectors will be coming through your schools. They will list any rooms with excessive artwork on the Annual Comprehensive Safety Report. Please note that for rooms that continue to violate the fire code, may be subject to closure until the violation is corrected.

Should you have any questions, or would like for a Fire Safety inspector or myself to visit your school and provide guidance, please contact me at 754.321.4817.

MAM:Idc