

On The Alert!

Date: March 1, 2017
Attention: ASCIP Members
Affected Department: Risk Management/District Administration
Applicability: K-12 Districts and Community College Districts

Theatrical Flying

Over time, theatrical productions have advanced to include flying effects, such as in productions of *Peter Pan*, *The Little Mermaid*, and *The Wizard of Oz*, just to name a few. In order to achieve the flying effects, flying rigs are used to fly scenery and/or performers. A flying rig allows horizontal and vertical movement by paying out lift lines to varying lengths and/or through the use of tracks. Flying rigs require specialized equipment and techniques operated by experienced crews. Automated flying rigs, which synchronize multiple point hoists, are becoming increasingly common as motor control systems become safer and more sophisticated. 'Flying' effects require strict risk management, safety and loss controls including:

- 1. Proper Equipment and Training.** A flying system should meet theatrical rigging standards as developed and maintained by [USITT](#) and [PLASA](#). Use an experienced flying effects company to train students/actors on how to properly wear a safety harness and allowable movements in flight, to train crews on how to safely operate the flying controls, and to provide the district/school guidance on the type of flying rig to use.
- 2. Proper Harnesses.** It is critical that students are fitted and trained in harness use and that each harness is inspected before each use.
- 3. Strict Flying Rules.** Never allow unauthorized individuals or students to use the harnesses. Never allow flying over the audience, and limit flying height to as low as aesthetics dictate, but never more than 10 feet above the stage or the theatrical flying effects company's recommended height, whichever is lower.
- 4. Designate a Safety Inspector.** This person will be responsible for documenting equipment inspections – checking anchor points, cables, harnesses, etc.
- 5. Rescue Procedures.** Emergency rescue procedures should be in place.
- 6. Require Paperwork.** A form similar to [ASCIP's Sample Form](#) titled Theater 1 should be signed by all adult and minor participants and volunteers. In addition to the Theater 1 form, minor students and their parents should sign forms Theater 2 and 3; adult participants should sign forms Theater 5 and 6; and volunteers should sign forms Theater 4, 5, and 6. Completed and signed copies of all of these forms **must** be prerequisites for participation in plays, including, as applicable, theatrical flying. See ASCIP's [Sample Theater Participation Forms](#).

Please contact your ASCIP risk services consultant at (562) 404-8029 to discuss further.