

**NC Department of Insurance
Office of the State Fire Marshal - Engineering Division
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Accessible Path to School Sound Booths

Code: 2018 Building Code
Section: 1103.2.2

Date: September 13, 2018

Question:

The school has a sound booth that is elevated above the main floor level. Since some teachers may use the sound booth along with the students, can the sound booth be considered an employee work area and be exempt from accessible under NCBC 1103.2.2 - Employee Work Areas?

Answer:

No – Regardless of the size of the sound booth, the school has program access requirements under the ADA. This means that students are required to have access into all areas. For example, if the school taught a class in theater lighting, acoustics and design, students could reasonably be required to be in the sound booth as part of their class assignment or a class project.

Question:

Could an additional sound booth be provided at a lower level with the same controls as the sound booth at the higher level and be considered an ‘equivalent facilitation’ or ‘alternate method’ of providing access in lieu of making the higher sound booth accessible?

Answer:

No – The sound booth is located at the higher level for a specific reason. Replicating the controls in a second sound booth in an alternate location at a lower level does not provide the same experience received at the higher level. Access is still required to the upper level sound booth.

Keywords:

Public schools, audio/visual, audio-visual, accessibility