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Subject: **Public Schools -- Plan Review Procedure, Facility Planning Standards, and UCC Enhancements**

Reference: **N.J.A.C. 6:22-5.4 and N.J.A.C. 5:23-3.11A**

On November 7, 1996, Governor Christine Todd Whitman issued a Reorganization Plan which provided for the transfer of the construction plan review staff and functions of the Departments of Education and Health to the Department of Community Affairs (DCA). This reorganization took effect 60 days from that date.

The Uniform Construction Code (UCC) regulations provide a procedure for a municipal code enforcement agency to perform the plan review on a public education facility. This procedure, which can be found at N.J.A.C. 5:23-3.11A, requires:

1. A school district to notify and obtain a release from the Department of Education (DOE) to secure plan review approval from a municipal code enforcement agency.
2. The municipal code enforcement agency providing the construction code plan review to agree to perform the review.
3. The municipal code enforcement agency providing the construction plan review to be appropriately classified for the proposed project.
4. An educational adequacy review to be obtained from the DOE before the permit application is submitted for plan review.

When a municipal code enforcement agency performs the review, the plans must be reviewed for compliance with the UCC. This review must include the public school facilities enhancements at N.J.A.C. 5:23-3.11A(c), as well as the additional applicable facility planning standards found in the DOE regulations at N.J.A.C. 6:22-5.4, Educational Facility Planning Standards, and listed below. [Note: Code enforcement agencies are responsible only for those items included in N.J.A.C. 5:23-3.11A(c) or listed below.]

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The law provides that a municipality performing plan review of public school facilities may charge the plan review portion of the local permit fee, but not the remainder. Inspections performed by the municipality are to be free of charge, as are certificates.

This bulletin provides guidelines for code enforcement agencies reviewing plans and/or inspecting a public school facility. It is divided into three parts. Part I (which updates and replaces Bulletin 91-3) clarifies the plan review procedure for public schools. Part II is an enforcement checklist for Educational Facility Planning Standards (N.J.A.C. 6:22-5.4) intended to simplify local review and inspections. Part III is an enforcement check list for UCC enhancements [N.J.A.C. 5:23-3.11A(c)] in public school facilities.

#### Part I: Public Schools - Plan Review Procedures

Plan review for the following types of projects shall be performed by the DCA. Prior to the release of plans for the following types of projects, the DOE shall ensure that the plans meet the standards for educational adequacy set forth in N.J.A.C. 6:22.

1. New public school buildings, including the creation of a new public school building through the change of use of an existing building;
2. Additions to existing public school buildings;
3. Alterations changing the total number of instructional spaces, the size of any such space, or type of any such space;
4. Installation of mobile units; or
5. Any site or building change or alteration for the purpose of making the site and school barrier free, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 5:23-7, and accessible to the handicapped, pursuant to Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

A school district may exercise the option of applying for UCC plan review to any municipal code enforcement agency instead of the DCA, provided the local agency is qualified through DCA's classification system. Regardless of who performs the UCC plan review, a review for "educational adequacy" (standards other than the UCC) must be performed by the DOE prior to the UCC plan review.

A DOE educational adequacy release form for school construction plans must be furnished by the local school district to the plan review agency performing a plan review. If the agency accepts this responsibility, it should sign the release form and return it to the local school district. The local school district will forward it to the DOE, which will execute its part of the form and return it to the local school district. Whichever plan review option is chosen, the local school district must furnish a fully executed copy of the DOE's release form to the code enforcement agency of the municipality in which the school is located.

If plan review has been performed by the DCA or a municipal code enforcement agency other than the one in the municipality in which the school is located, then a plan release must be supplied to the municipal code enforcement agency as evidence that the school meets the UCC. Municipal code enforcement agencies in the municipality in which the school facility is located are always responsible for permit issuance, construction inspection, and Certificate of Occupancy issuance.

It is important to note that, as is provided by the UCC, only municipal code enforcement agencies that are Class I may perform plan review for Class I or Class II schools; Class II code enforcement agencies may perform plan review only for Class II schools.

Part II: Public Schools - Enforcement Checklist for Educational Facility Planning Standards

The DOE has a number of facility planning standards which are not a part of the UCC. Where a school project requires an educational adequacy review (see Part I of this bulletin for a listing of those types of projects which require such a review), the DOE reviews the project and ensures compliance.

The DOE review is based on schematic plans. Some of the facility planning requirements would not be shown on schematic plans, while others might not show on plans at all. These items need to be checked during the review of final plans or during field inspection. Final plan review and inspection are the responsibility of local code officials. Even though these items are not UCC requirements, local code officials are required to ensure compliance.

The following checklist itemizes the educational facility planning standards local code officials must verify during construction code plan review or inspection. The delineation of responsibility shall be in accordance with the appropriate subcodes. Code officials are authorized to cite violations, if any, under the DOE regulations, as shown in parentheses. Code officials must enforce these requirements just the same as any other UCC requirements applicable to schools.

Any deviation from any of the facility planning standards listed below that is not shown on the approved schematic requires the approval of the DOE. When variations from these facility planning standards are granted by the DOE, this must be evidenced in a letter from the DOE, a copy of which shall be provided to the code official.

1. All the facilities indicated on the construction code plan must match the filed schematic plans that received final educational approval by the DOE. This schematic plan is a prior approval. A copy must be furnished to the code official by the applicant at the time of application for permit or plan review. [6:22-5.4(b)1]
2. Instructional rooms with windows shall have no exterior obstructing wall within 20 feet of a classroom or library window wall. [6:22-5.4(b)2]

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3. Inner courts shall have a minimum width of 20 feet. [6:22-5.4(b)3]
4. Concrete floors in all instructional areas, except shops, shall be covered with a resilient floor covering. [6:22-5.4(b)4]
5. Power tools and machines in shops which generate dust shall be provided with dust collecting equipment. Such equipment shall be either single- or multiuse vacuum packs, or a central dust collection system. Installed systems shall comply with the applicable National Fire Protection Association Standards and New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection rules codified at N.J.A.C. 7:27-81. [6:22-5.4(b)5]
6. The ceiling height of an academic classroom or other instructional space containing more than 300 square feet in area shall average nine feet six inches, and no part of the ceiling or other obstruction shall be lower than eight feet in height. Instructional spaces of less than 300 square feet and areas of larger spaces devoted to clothing alcoves, storage, or work space may have a ceiling eight feet in height. [6:22-5.4(b)6]
7. Clear ceiling height in other areas shall be as follows: [6:22-5.4(b)7]
 

Gymnasium.....	22 feet
Auxiliary Gymnasium.....	14 feet
Music Room (Vocal and/or Instrumental).....	12 feet
and 8 feet from the highest riser to the ceiling	
Multipurpose Room.....	18 feet
Cafeteria.....	12 feet
Industrial Arts Classroom.....	12 feet
Industrial Arts and Vocational Education Shop.....	15 feet
Library/Media Center.....	9½ feet
8. Public school corridors shall have a minimum ceiling height of eight feet. [6:22-5.4(b)8]
9. The storage of pesticides in instructional greenhouses shall be in a locked metal cabinet and vented to the exterior. Drinking fountains shall not be located inside the greenhouses. [6:22-5.4(b)10] (The code official must check that there is a lockable-type cabinet provided for this purpose and that there is no drinking fountain inside the greenhouse.)
10. Wherever chemicals are stored for laboratory use, an eyewash fountain or similar device capable of providing a 15-minute continuous water flow shall be provided. [6:22-5.4(b)11]
11. The minimum horizontal dimension of any instructional space shall be 10 feet in every direction. [6:22-5.4(b)12]
12. Doors from all spaces used by students and school staff excluding lavatories, janitor’s closets, instructional spaces under 300 gross square feet, and locker rooms shall swing into the corridor and shall have a safety vision panel of 1/4-inch glazing, which is not less than 100 square inches. [6:22-5.4(c)]

13. Windowless classrooms and other occupied instructional spaces (excluding gymnasiums, auditoriums, and cafeterias), which do not have operable windows equal to at least four percent of the floor space, shall be air conditioned. [6:22-5.4(d)]
14. Glazing in fire-rated assemblies shall be in accordance with the Building Subcode. All other interior glazing shall be safety glazing. [6:22-5.4(e)]
15. An electric, solenoid, key-operated, gas shut-off switch and a check valve shall be installed in the line supplying gas to each classroom, laboratory, shop, or other area(s) where gas is used by students. [6:22-5.4(e)]
16. Science rooms, laboratories, shops, and other instructional spaces (with the exception of home economics rooms) in which an open flame and/or the use of hazardous chemicals occurs shall be equipped with an emergency safety cold-water shower and a floor drain, or a self-contained water receptacle or catch basin. [6:22-5.4(e)]
17. Electrical requirements are as follows: [6:22-5.4(f)]
  - A. Push-type emergency cut-out switches shall be provided within shops to de-energize the electrical supply to nonportable machinery and shall be surrounded with clear, unobstructed floor space of at least 36 inches. These switches shall be provided on the basis of one for each 1,000 square feet or fraction thereof of floor area in the shop, but in no case less than two. Reset of the interrupted service shall be a key-operated switch located within the shop. The cut-off and reset circuits shall be designed and installed to negate the possibility of the control circuit being de-energized, thereby being inoperative.
  - B. All nonportable, motorized equipment and machinery shall be provided with magnetic-type switches to prevent machines from automatically restarting upon restoration of power after an electrical failure or activation of the above emergency cut-off.
  - C. Instructional spaces shall be provided with not fewer than seven duplex outlets remotely located.
  - D. Large group areas such as assembly rooms, auditoriums, and other large group instructional spaces shall be provided with convenience outlets, as indicated on the schematics.
  - E. All 125-volt, single-phase, 15- and 20-amp receptacles, when installed outdoors where there is direct grade-level access, shall have ground fault circuit interrupter protection. This shall apply to, but is not limited to, all outlets on the exterior of buildings, athletic and playing fields, track areas, picnic areas, tennis courts, and other similar areas.
  - F. All 125-volt, single-phase, 15- and 20-amp receptacles, when installed within a six-foot radius of sinks, shall have ground-fault circuit interrupter protection. This shall apply to, but not be limited to, classrooms, home economics laboratories, art rooms, science laboratories, vocational

education shops, industrial art shops, photography wet areas, lavatories, shower rooms, and other wet areas.

- 18. Installed artificial lighting intensity shall comply with the following minimum foot candles which shall be maintained on the task at any time. (Note: Code officials should verify that the lighting, which is required to be noted on the plans, is as listed below; they are not required to measure the intensity of the lighting installed.) [6:22-5.4(g)]

<u>Locations</u>	<u>Minimum Acceptable Foot Candles</u>
Classroom and instructional areas -- study halls, lecture rooms, art rooms, offices, libraries, conference rooms, work rooms, shops, laboratories, and secondary school cafeterias -----	50
Drafting, typing, and sewing rooms -----	70
Reception rooms, gymnasiums, auditoriums, primary school cafeterias, all-purpose rooms, and swimming pools -----	30
Locker rooms, washrooms, toilet rooms, corridors containing lockers, and stairways -----	10
Corridors without lockers and storerooms -----	5
Classrooms for the partially sighted -----	70

- 19. Plumbing and ventilation requirements are as follows: [6:22-5.4(h)]
  - A. The number of plumbing fixtures and the ventilation requirements shall be based on the relevant provisions of the UCC.
  - B. Pupils housed within an instructional space which is in excess of 300 square feet shall not be required to travel through any other space except a corridor to reach a general pupil toilet room. General pupil toilet rooms are those which are designed and labeled for pupil use, contain at least two of each required fixture, and are directly accessible from a corridor or an open plan instructional space.
  - C. There shall be at least one general toilet room for each sex on each floor occupied by pupils, or all instructional rooms shall have individual toilet rooms. Where classrooms, shops, or physical education rooms are provided with self-contained individual facilities (water closets, lavatories, and drinking fountains), the pupil capacity of these rooms shall not be counted in computing the number of fixtures required in the general pupil toilet rooms.
  - D. An individual toilet room shall be provided in each classroom identified on the plans or schematics as early intervention, pre-kindergarten, and kindergarten classrooms and shall meet the following criteria:
    - (1) The individual toilet room shall be located and equipped in such a

- way as to ensure privacy for the pupils.
- (2) Rooms identified as pre-kindergarten and kindergarten classrooms shall contain a junior/juvenile-size water closet suitable for children's use, equipped with an open front seat, and a lavatory (sink) with a flood rim height no greater than 26 inches from the floor. Standard round-bowl juvenile water closets with front opening are permitted.
  - (3) Rooms identified as early intervention on the schematic plan shall provide a diaper/clothes-changing area.
  - (4) In lieu of providing an individual toilet in each classroom, toilets may be provided adjacent to or outside the classroom, provided they are readily accessible, and the toilet room and signage are visible to a child from the classroom door.
- E. The entrance to toilet rooms and locker rooms shall be screened to prevent visibility into the room.
  - F. Water closets shall be separated by individual stall partitions, including doors, which shall be of a smooth, impervious material to permit effective cleaning.
  - G. Floors of all toilet rooms, shower rooms, and drying rooms shall be watertight and impervious to moisture. Floors shall be provided with an integral cove base at least four inches high.
    - (1) Flooring materials, except for use in showers, of ceramic tile, quarry tile, sheet vinyl, and plastic coatings designed for this purpose shall be deemed to meet this requirement. Resilient tiles or exposed concrete are not acceptable in toilet rooms.
  - H. Where showers are provided and where locker room benches are provided, benches shall be 30 inches apart. One shower head shall be provided for each 10 students (based on the capacity/occupancy of the gym/locker room, as shown on the approved schematic), with a shower head height of six feet. Twelve square feet of bathing area per shower head shall be provided.
  - I. Rooms identified on the schematic plan as pre-kindergarten and kindergarten classrooms shall be equipped with a drinking water facility.
  - J. Rooms identified on the schematic plan as arts and crafts classrooms shall be equipped with a water source, sink, and appropriate sink trap.
20. Industrialized/modular educational units, vans, trailers, and/or other mobile units shall comply with the following: [6:22-5.4(i)]
- A. Have a certificate label and data plate affixed by the manufacturer, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 5:23-4A. These must indicate that the units meet the educational construction standards for BOCA Use Group E.
  - B. Have a ceiling height as follows:
    - (1) Vans and other mobile units -- seven feet,

(2) Trailers -- seven feet six inches, minimum.

- C. Have provisions for the storage of students' clothing.
- D. Have floor covering of either carpet, which meets the requirements of the UCC, or asbestos-free vinyl tile.

Part III: Public Schools - Enforcement Checklist for UCC Enhancements

The DCA, or the municipal code enforcing agency performing construction code plan approval and/or inspection, shall be responsible for enforcing the following UCC enhancements in public school facilities [N.J.A.C. 5:23-3.11A(c)]:

1. An automatic fire alarm system shall be installed in all new buildings of Use Group E (educational), as designated in the BOCA National Building Code/96 Section 918.4.1 and in accordance with the applicable National Fire Protection Association standards. The system shall utilize:
  - i. Combination fixed-temperature and rate-of-rise devices in classrooms and other spaces not covered in ii below;
  - ii. Devices to detect abnormal visible smoke densities or gaseous products of combustion in corridors and exit stairs;
  - iii. An automatic fire suppression system and, in areas where suppression is deleted, automatic detection devices; or
  - iv. A combination of the above three types of detection devices, except that a fixed-temperature detector shall be permitted in approved locations, such as in a boiler room or incinerator.
2. Manual fire alarm boxes, in addition to BOCA/96 Section 918.5 requirements, shall be provided in the natural path of escape from fire near each exterior door from the corridor, kitchen, heater room, and other exits that are required to serve 50 or more persons. Additional fire alarm boxes shall be located in the main office, stage, at each stairway entrance from a corridor or place of assembly, and near one exterior exit in each section of a place of assembly. It shall not be necessary to traverse more than 200 feet of unobstructed horizontal distance on the same floor in order to reach a fire alarm box.
3. Each instructional space and room of assembly which is illuminated with the use of high-intensity discharge (HID) sources, such as mercury vapor, high-pressure sodium, and metal halide lamps, shall also be provided with a second source of illumination to provide illumination instantly upon activation of the circuit. All HID lamps shall be of the fail-safe type, which will permanently extinguish within 15 minutes after the outer glass of the bulb is broken. All lamps shall be provided with a glass or plastic lens to protect the bulb.
4. All school buildings shall be equipped with a mechanical air supply and exhaust ventilation system which will provide, during periods of occupancy, standard tempered outdoor-air supply and mechanical exhaust at the minimum rates

set forth in the Mechanical Subcode, as amended.

If there are any questions or concerns, please call the Uniform Construction Code Assistance Unit at (609) 984-7609 for clarification.

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