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## BULLETIN 00-3

*(Supersedes Bulletin 91-3)*

Issued: April 2000 Revised: January 2014  
Subject: Public Schools -- Plan Review Procedure, Facility Planning Standards,  
and UCC Enhancements  
Reference: N.J.A.C. 5:23-3.11A and N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6 and 6A:26-8

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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 Department of Education (DOE) and Department of Health (DOH) 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. DOE approval prior to the release of plans for projects subject to DOE review.
2. The code enforcement agency in the municipality in which the project is located, if appropriately classified, is to be given the right of first refusal concerning the plan review of the project.
  - i. Another agency may provide the plan review service if that agency agrees to perform the review.
3. The municipal code enforcement agency providing the construction code plan review is to be appropriately classified for the proposed project.
4. An approval should be obtained from the DOE before the permit application is submitted for plan review. However, a plan review may be performed as long as a DOE approval is obtained before permit issuance.

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. 6A:26-6.3 and 6.4, 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.)

The law provides that when a municipality performs a plan review of public school facilities, it may charge for the plan review portion of the local permit fee. 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 four parts. Part I clarifies the plan review procedure for public schools. Part II contains an enforcement checklist for Educational Facility Planning Standards for permanent public schools (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6.3 and 6.4) and is intended to simplify local review and inspections. Part III contains enforcement checklists for UCC enhancements (N.J.A.C. 5:23-3.11A(c)) in public school facilities and public preschool facilities respectively. Part IV contains an enforcement checklist for educational facility planning standards as they apply to temporary school facilities (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-8.1).

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

Plan review shall be performed by the DCA or an appropriately classified municipal agency. A DOE approval shall be submitted prior to the release of plans for projects subject to DOE review pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:26-3.

A school district may exercise the option of applying for UCC plan review to an appropriately classified municipal code enforcement agency instead of the DCA, provided the local agency is qualified through DCA's classification system. If the district chooses to use a municipal agency, the district is to apply to the agency, in which the project is to be constructed, to allow right of first refusal. If the local agency chooses to not review the project, another qualified agency may be requested to provide plan review services. Regardless of who performs the UCC plan review, an approval must be issued by the DOE prior to the UCC plan review.

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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 in which the school is located. The municipal code enforcement agency in the municipality in which the school facility is located is always responsible for permit issuance, construction inspection, and Certificate of Occupancy issuance.

The municipal code enforcement agency is required to have the appropriate classification (Class 1, 2 or 3 per N.J.A.C. 5:23-4.3A) to perform plan review of new projects, reconstruction projects, changes of use, additions to or the installation or alteration of fire protection systems within existing schools. All other projects, including repairs, renovations or alterations may be reviewed by any class enforcing agency.

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

The DOE has a number of facility planning standards that 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 checklists that follow itemize the educational facility planning standards local code officials must verify during construction, whether code plan review or inspection. Checklist one and two apply to permanent public schools, checklist three applies to public preschool facilities and checklist four applies to temporary public school facilities. 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 is to be provided to the code official.

### ***CHECKLIST 1 - PERMANENT PUBLIC SCHOOLS***

1. Schematic plans: All the facilities indicated on the construction code plans submitted 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. (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-5.4(b)2)
2. Exterior walls: Instructional rooms with windows shall have no exterior obstructing wall within 20 feet of a window wall. (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6.3(b)2)
3. Inner courts: Inner courts shall have a minimum width of 20 feet. (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6.3(b)3)
4. Concrete floors: Concrete floors in all instructional areas, except shops, shall be covered with a resilient floor covering. (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6.3(b)4)
5. Power tools and machines in shop rooms: In shops, power tools and machines that generate dust shall be provided with dust collecting equipment. Such equipment shall be either single- or multi-use vacuum packs, or a central dust collection system. Installed systems shall comply with the applicable National Fire Protection Association Standard 664-98 and New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection rules codified at N.J.A.C. 7:27-8. (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6.3(b)5)
6. Ceiling heights, general: 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 shall have a minimum ceiling height of eight feet. (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6.3(b)6)

7. Ceiling heights, specific: Clear ceiling height in areas other than academic classroom or instructional space shall be as follows: (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6.3(b)7)

|                                                                                |        |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| Gymnasium                                                                      | 22 ft  |
| Auxiliary Gymnasium                                                            | 14 ft  |
| Weight room                                                                    | 12 ft  |
| Music Room (Vocal and/or Instrumental)                                         | 12 ft  |
| Exception: Minimum height from the highest riser to the ceiling shall be 8 ft. |        |
| Cafetorium (Multipurpose Room)                                                 | 18 ft  |
| Cafeteria                                                                      | 12 ft  |
| Industrial Arts and Vocational Shop                                            | 12 ft  |
| Library/Media Center                                                           | 9.5 ft |

8. Corridor ceiling height: Corridors shall have a minimum ceiling height of eight feet. (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6.3(b)8)
9. Instructional greenhouses: The storage of pesticides in instructional greenhouses shall be in a locked metal cabinet and vented to the exterior. (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6.3(e)7). Drinking fountains shall not be located inside the greenhouses. (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6.3(b)10)
10. Chemical storage: Wherever chemicals are stored or used, an eyewash fountain or similar device capable of providing a 15-minute continuous water flow shall be provided. (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6.3(b)11 and N.J.A.C. 6A:26-12.5(d))
11. Instructional space dimensions: The minimum dimension of any instructional space shall be 10 feet. (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6.3(b)12)
12. Doors: Doors from all spaces used by students and school staff excluding lavatories, storage rooms, 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. (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6.3(c)6)
13. Air conditioning: Windowless classrooms and other occupied instructional spaces (excluding gymnasiums, industrial shops, kitchens and locker rooms), which do not have operable windows equal to at least four percent of the floor space, shall be air conditioned. (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6.3(d)1)
14. Glazing: Glazing in fire-rated assemblies shall be in accordance with the Building Subcode. All other interior glazing shall be safety glazing. (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6.3(e)1)
15. Classroom gas supply: A check valve shall be installed in the line supplying gas to each classroom, laboratory, shop, or other area(s) (excluding home economics rooms) where gas is used by students. (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6.3(e)2)
16. Classrooms with open flames and chemicals: Science rooms, laboratories, shops, and other instructional spaces (excluding 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. (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6.3(e)3)
17. Ceiling fans: When provided, ceiling paddle fans shall be located to provide a minimum of eight feet clearance above the finished floor and shall be enclosed with a metal guard. (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6.3(e)5)

18. Electrical power and communications: Electrical power and communication requirements are as follows: (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6.3(f))

- A. Emergency cut-out switches: Push-type emergency cut-out switches shall be provided within shops to de-energize the electrical supply to non-portable machinery and shall have clear, unobstructed access of not less than 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 per shop. Reset of the interrupted service shall be a key-operated switch located within the shop. The cutoff and reset circuits shall be designed and installed to negate the possibility of the control circuit being de-energized, thereby being inoperative.
- B. Magnetic switches: All non-portable, 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. Outlets: Instructional spaces shall be provided with no fewer than two duplex outlets remotely located.

19. Lighting requirements are as follows: (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6.3(g))

- A. Lighting intensity: 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.)

| <b>Locations</b>                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>Minimum Acceptable<br/>Foot Candles</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| 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                                         |

- B. The Guide for Educational Facilities Lighting (2000) ANSI/IES RP3-00 may be used as an alternative to compliance with the above.

20. Plumbing for classrooms, toilet rooms and locker rooms: Plumbing and ventilation requirements are as follows: (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6.3(h))

- A. The number of plumbing fixtures and the ventilation requirements shall be based on the relevant provisions of the UCC.
- B. Students 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 student toilet room. General student toilet rooms are those

which are designed and labeled for student 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 students, 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 student capacity of these rooms shall not be counted in computing the number of fixtures required in the general student toilet rooms.
- D. Classrooms identified on the plans or schematics as preschool or kindergarten shall have toilet facilities that meet the following criteria:
  - (1) Rooms identified as preschool and kindergarten classrooms shall contain a juvenile-size water closet suitable for children's use, equipped with an open front seat, with a flood rim no greater than 14 inches above the finished floor, and a lavatory (sink) with a flood rim height no greater than 26 inches above the finished floor. Note: The plumbing subcode requires a water closet bowl height of approximately 10 inches. By installing a water closet in compliance with the plumbing subcode, the water closet bowl height requirement above is met.
  - (2) 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. Rooms identified on the schematic plan as preschool or kindergarten classrooms shall be equipped with a drinking water facility.
- F. The entrance to toilet rooms and locker rooms shall be screened to prevent visibility into the room.
- G. Water closets shall be separated by individual stall partitions, including doors, which shall be of a smooth, impervious material to permit effective cleaning.
- H. 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.
- I. Where showers are provided shower heads shall be 30 inches apart. One showerhead 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 showerhead height of six feet. Twelve square feet of bathing area per showerhead shall be provided.
- J. Rooms identified on the schematic plan as arts and crafts classrooms shall be equipped with a water source, sink, and appropriate sink trap.

## **Part III: Permanent Public Schools and Public Preschool Facilities – Enforcement Checklist for UCC Enhancements**

### ***CHECKLIST 2 - PERMANENT PUBLIC SCHOOLS – UCC ENHANCEMENTS***

The DCA, or the municipal code enforcing agency performing construction code plan review 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. 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 HID lamps shall be provided with a glass or plastic lens to protect the bulb.
2. 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.

### ***CHECKLIST 3 - PUBLIC PRESCHOOL FACILITIES – UCC ENHANCEMENTS***

Public preschool facilities, a room or space identified on the schematic plans as preschool classroom, are required to comply with the following for student accommodations:

1. Room location: Rooms shall not be located above the second story above grade of a school facility. (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6.4(b)2)
2. Toilets: Each room shall have an attached toilet room with features sized for the use of preschool students. (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6.4(b)4)
3. Floors: Each room shall have a resilient floor covering. (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6.4(b)5)
4. Sinks: Separate from the toilet room, each room shall have access to an additional sink with a flood rim height no greater than 26 inches from the floor. (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6.4(b)6)
5. Drinking water: Each room shall be equipped drinking water facilities. (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6.4(b)7)
6. Entrances, egress and security requirements are as follows:
  - A. All rooms shall have “child-safe” operable windows with inside locks and such windows shall be equal to at least four percent of the floor space. (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6.4(c)1 and N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6.4(f)2)
7. The electrical power and communications requirement is as follows:
  - A. Child safety receptacles shall be used where children may be present. (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6.4(e)1)
8. Lighting requirements are as follows:

- A. Preschool classroom lighting is subject to the requirements of N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6.3(g).
- 9. Plumbing requirements shall be consistent with N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6.3(h) 4 as shown in checklist 1, paragraph 20 above except as follows:
  - A. Rooms shall be open to view; (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6.4(g)1)
  - B. Toilet facilities for preschool students shall be designated for their exclusive use and shall be so identified; and (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6.4(g)2)
  - C. Preschool facilities shall provide a diaper/clothes changing area in the classroom. (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6.4(g)3)

**Part IV: Public Schools – Temporary School Facilities (as defined by the Department of Education) – Enforcement Checklist for Educational Facility Planning Standards**

The DOE has a number of facility planning standards that are not a part of the UCC that address facilities that do not comply with the new school standards. As with new school construction where a 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.

A “Temporary Facility” is a facility used for educating students on a temporary basis while awaiting completion of a school facilities project that will permanently house students. In addition, a temporary facility can also be:

- 1. A facility reviewed and approved by the county superintendent of schools and/or the DOE as substandard prior to June 7, 2004 and a facility approved by the DOE, as a temporary facility under the rules in effect after that date;
- 2. Any facility not planned or constructed as a permanent school facility that is rented lease or otherwise acquired by a school district or a private school for the disabled for use by public students; or
- 3. A temporary classroom unit, whether or not installed on a school district-owned site.

***CHECKLIST 4 - TEMPORARY PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES***

- 1. Temporary spaces in an existing public school, in other district-owned facilities or in rented or leased buildings not on a district-owned site, are required to meet the following for student accommodations:
  - A. The hardware on doors of any space occupied by students shall permit egress from the room at all times. (Key-operated locks, thumb-turn locks, hasps or similar types of locking devices shall not be permitted). (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-8.1(d)1i(2))
  - B. Instructional room doors opening into the corridor shall have vision panels. (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-8.1(d)1i(3))
  - C. Concrete floors in all instructional areas, except shops, shall be covered with a resilient floor covering. (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-8.1(d)1i(5))

- D. The average ceiling height shall be at least eight feet for instructional spaces in temporary facilities in an existing public school, in a district-owned facility, and in rented or leased buildings not on district-owned sites. (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-8.1(d)1ii)
  - E. Toilet facilities shall have the number of fixtures required by the plumbing subcode for the total population being served. These facilities shall be available within a reasonable distance and not more than one floor away; however, toilet facilities shall be provided for students in pre-school and kindergarten programs as described in Checklist 1, paragraph 20, section D. All toilet facilities shall be equipped with an exterior operable window sash or mechanical exhaust ventilation. (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-8.1(d)1iv)
  - F. Potable water and drinking fountains shall be available. Drinking fountains shall be provided for students in pre-school and kindergarten programs as described in Checklist 1, paragraph 20, section E. Drinking fountains shall be installed in accordance with the Barrier Free Subcode (N.J.A.C. 5:23-7). (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-8.1(d)1v)
  - G. At least 50 foot candles of uniformly distributed artificial illumination shall be provided in all instructional areas. (Note: Code officials should verify that the lighting, which is required to be noted on the plans, is as listed; they are not required to measure the intensity of the lighting installed.) (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-8.1(d)1vi)
  - H. Instructional spaces shall be provided with no fewer than two duplex outlets remotely located and 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. (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6.3(f))
2. Pre-manufactured temporary classroom units shall comply with the following:
- A. Have a seal affixed by the manufacturer which indicates that it meets the requirements for construction and certification of industrialized/modular buildings for educational use at N.J.A.C. 5:23-4A. (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-8.1(d)2i(1))
  - B. Meet code requirements for educational facilities as specified in the UCC.
  - C. Meet code requirements in N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6.3 (i.e. Checklists I and II) and N.J.A.C. 5:23-6.4 (i.e. Checklist III), to the extent that these latter code requirements are applicable to temporary facilities. (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-8.1(d)2i(3))
  - D. A pre-manufactured temporary classroom unit in excess of 20 feet in length shall have two means of egress in compliance with the Building Subcode of the UCC. The exits are to be remote from each other as required by the Building Subcode of the UCC. (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-8.1(d)2i(4))
  - E. Have means of egress stairs in compliance with the Building Subcode of the UCC and have an accessible entrance in compliance with the Barrier Free Subcode of the UCC. (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-8.1(d)2i(5))
  - F. Have a ceiling height as follows: (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-8.1(d)2i(7))
    - (1) Temporary classroom unit—seven feet six inches minimum.
  - G. Have provisions for the storage of students' clothing. (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-8.1(d)2i(8))

- H. Have floor coverings of either carpet which complies with the UCC or asbestos-free resilient flooring. (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-8.1(d)2i(10))
- I. Have interior ceiling and wall materials which comply with the UCC. (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-8.1(d)2i(11))
- J. Be provided with a hardwired smoke detector compliant with NFPA 72 for each 900 square feet or portion thereof or for each instructional space and which is tied in to the main building fire alarm system. (N.J.A.C. 6A:26-8.1(d)2i(12))

NOTE: N.J.A.C. 6A:26 is available specifically at  
<http://www.nj.gov/education/code/current/title6a/chap26.pdf> or generally at  
<http://www.nj.gov/education/code>.

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