



Office of Facilities Planning Newsletter Update #9 – November 2000

If you would like to have this Update sent directly to you by e-mail, please send your e-mail address to Joe Levy at jlevy@mail.nysed.gov

Please continue to send in your comments and requests. Our purpose is to provide information, which will help all Consultants and Facilities Planning provide a quick concise review of all projects. This will help the schools get their construction projects out to bid in a timely manner.

New Terminology: Building Aid Units (vs. Rated Capacity)

We have decided to express State-rated capacities in terms of Building Aid Units (BAUs). We hope that this will help reduce the confusion regarding the relationship between State-rated capacity and the actual operational capacity of the public schools. As an example, a newly created elementary school classroom which is 770 square feet or larger will be assigned 27 BAUs. Each BAU will represent one cost index for construction and one cost index for incidentals. The monthly cost index used to compute the maximum cost allowance will be the month the contract is signed to do the work involved in a particular project.

We are aware that rooms are being inappropriately labeled to increase the maximum cost allowance of a project. School officials should, along with their architect/engineer, review the educational needs of the district and plan new spaces accordingly. It is the goal of this department to re-evaluate the current process for calculating Building Aid Units.

This office is currently working on spreadsheets that you will be able to use on the Internet for calculating BAUs. These forms will be put on our web site in the near future. At this time, the project managers in our office are testing the accuracy of these spreadsheets.

155.5 Uniform Safety Standards for School Construction and Maintenance Projects:

The RESCUE Regulations have been in effect since October 7, 1999. On our web site we have provided the "Checklist of items required by 155.5 to appear in contract documents"

<https://www.p12.nysed.gov/facplan/articles/Checklistofitemsrequiredby155.html>. Many projects are being submitted that are not properly incorporating these requirements. These projects cannot be approved.

The checklist should be edited for inclusion in each project. Please look carefully at the eleven items provided on our web site checklist. There are seven statements that need to be incorporated into your documents. The word "Statement" is used to direct your attention to specific language that must be included in your contract documents.

The other four items refer to additional items, which must be provided for the project. Two of these items address lead and asbestos. The remaining two include "a plan detailing how exiting required by the applicable building code will be maintained" and "a plan detailing how adequate ventilation will be maintained during construction". Failing to include these items will delay the approval of your projects.

A plan detailing how exiting required by the applicable building code will be maintained:

Show all the applicable items from numbers 3 and 4 on the Checklist of items required by 155.5. Include exterior and interior obstructions that effect exiting the building. The basic premise of this plan is that all construction workers and equipment should be completely separated from exits and spaces used by students or school staff. On the plan show: construction fences for staging areas, storage, areas around the construction and gates; construction barriers; overhead protection of exits as necessary; construction workers entrances to the building. All barriers must be noncombustible with a minimum of one-hour fire protection. All exits must have a walkable surface, be maintained, cleared of snow, and be protected from construction activity. This plan must be approved by our office prior to project approval. You may not delegate the responsibility to the contractor.

A plan detailing how adequate ventilation will be maintained during construction:

Ventilation air must be supplied to all occupied portions of the building during construction.

School Responsibilities Under 155.5:

Once the project is under construction the requirements in the construction documents **must** be adhered to. It is the school's responsibility to be sure the 155.5 requirements are enforced. (See <https://www.p12.nysed.gov/facplan/articles/155.5schooldistrictrequirements.html>) This means that the administrator of the contract must also be sure that the contractors are fulfilling their contractual responsibilities.

Every architect, engineer and construction manager taking on the role of contract administrator must seriously pursue this cause. We are beginning to get a lot of complaints by teachers and parents that, upon investigation, seem to be justified. Please be aware that we take these complaints seriously. We are making site visits as necessary. Non-compliance with 155.5 during construction will cause a greater backlog and approval time.

Some firms have included provisions for penalties in their contracts to motivate contractors to comply with the 155.5 requirements.

We are happy to hear from you. If you have a subject you would like addressed, feedback on the material you read, input or general comments, please send them to Joe Levy at jlevy@mail.nysed.gov .

We plan to address subject matter as discussed at our March 29, 2000 Workshop, common errors holding up reviews, solutions to repeat problems and any subject which will help the schools and consultants quickly and efficiently receive their project approvals.