

# Public Schools & Highways

DIVISION OF SCHOOL PLANNING

Department of Public Instruction, Raleigh, North Carolina

## **PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND HIGHWAYS**

### **Introduction**

The Division of School Planning of the State Department of Public Instruction is issuing this booklet of suggested procedures for local school officials and their design professionals regarding improved traffic services at North Carolina's public schools.

The State Department of Public Instruction, through the Division of School Planning, is establishing a more positive relationship with the offices of the North Carolina State Highway Commission.

### **Reasons for this action:**

- Vehicular traffic at or near public schools is generally increasing.
- As schools become larger, traffic problem increase.
- The State Highway Construction and improvement Program is expanding; this is affecting schools that are located on or near these public highways.
- Inadequate attention to traffic problems at schools in the past has been resulting in
  - (a) unnecessary costs for correction and for control methods to minimize existing hazards
  - (b) additional administrative problems for school officials regarding vehicular and pedestrian traffic.
- Greater attention is being given to total design of school plants including traffic and site development.
- The State Highway Commission has some legal responsibility for highways and traffic-ways and parking areas on school grounds.

## THE STATE HIGHWAY COMMISSION AND THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The General Statutes of the State of North Carolina give the State Highway Commission certain responsibilities for roads and parking areas on and adjacent to public school grounds.

The Commission has made a policy statement regarding this as follows:

In order to provide adequate maintenance, it is the policy of the Commission within the availability of funds to pave school drives located on the school property from the public road on which it fronts. It is also the policy of the Highway Commission to stabilize with aggregate school bus parking lots at the school.

The Commission does not provide parking areas for teachers, students, or visitors; nor does it furnish driveways and parking to serve athletic fields, cafeterias and other services. The Commission will construct these extra driveways and parking areas on a cost reimbursement basis.

The school drives are not considered a part of the State-maintained System in terms of determining the total Secondary Road mileage in any county.

G. S. 136-18 (17)

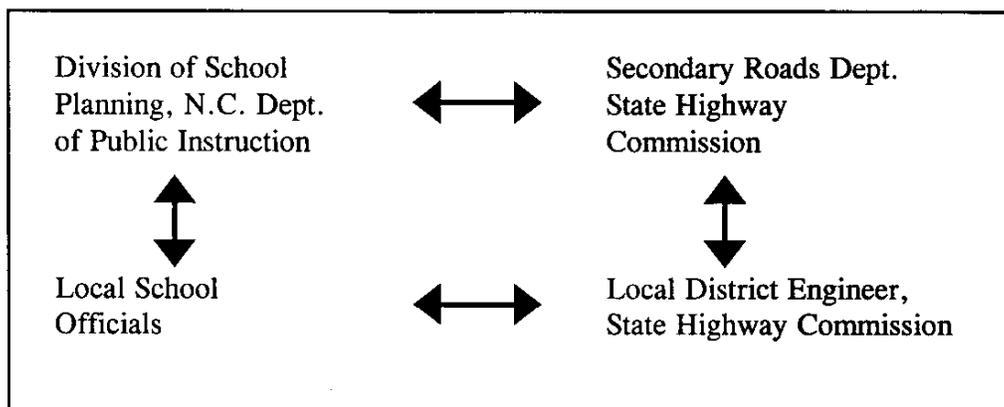
The State Highway Commission is hereby authorized and required to maintain and keep in repair, sufficient to accommodate the public school buses, roads leading from the State-maintained public roads to all public schools and public school buildings to which children are transported on public school buses to and from their homes, And said Commission is further authorized to maintain and repair sufficient parking facilities for the school buses at those schools.

To clarify its responsibilities, the Commission takes the following position regarding services to public schools.

- The General Statutes provide only for maintenance of parking facilities for school buses, not for other parking.
- The Commission has no jurisdiction over policing roads and parking areas on school property.
- The Commission cannot control speed of vehicles on school property.
- The Commission does not construct "bumps" on any roads in its system. Such "bumps" to limit speeding are hazardous and are not recommended.

## COMMUNICATIONS

To minimize misunderstandings, the communications of the several parties should generally be channeled as shown on the following chart.



Copies of communications should be sent to both agencies with which each individual service communicates, as indicated on the chart above.

Examples: Department of Public Instruction communicates with

- Secondary Roads Department State Highway Commission
- Local school officials

Local school officials communicate with

- Department of Public Instruction
- Local District Engineer S H C

Secondary Roads Department State Highway Commission communicates with

- Department of Public Instruction
- Local District Engineer S H C

Local District Engineer S H C communicates with

- Secondary Roads Department State Highway Commission
- Local school officials

Example: Department of Public Instruction sends copy to local school officials of all direct communications with Secondary Roads Department State Highway Commission.

## RECOMMEND PROCEDURES

Both for new school building projects and for existing plants, certain procedures as outlined below should be followed. This applies to all schools, urban and rural, which are located on highways, roads, or streets which are part of the State Highway system.

Most urban and some non-urban communities have local street engineers, planning commissions, or traffic engineering services. Where they exist, these services must also be consulted and their approval obtained.

### NEW SCHOOLS ON NEW SITES

#### Site not selected

Local school Officials, through the office of the local District Engineer of the State Highway Commission, may determine from the Advance Planning Department, and the Secondary Roads Department of the State Highway Commission, the long-range plans for new highway construction or improvement in the area, where a new school is proposed. The Division of school Planning will normally consult with the Advance Planning Department or the Secondary Roads Department, or both, when the Division is requested to give guidance in selecting new school sites.

Local school officials, through the local District Engineer's office, may request the State Highway Commission to evaluate a site in terms of availability of safe and convenient access from adjacent or nearby public highways. The Division Of school Planning will normally consult with the State Highway Commission when the Division is requested to assist in the selection of a new site.

#### Site Selected

If a site for a new school has already been selected and planning for new facilities is underway, the local school officials, through the local District Engineer's office of the State Highway Commission, may determine from the State Highway Commission office recommendations for the best location of necessary access from the public highway to the site. The State Highway Commission office may also suggest possible arrangements of vehicular trafficways and parking areas on the site itself.

## **EXISTING SCHOOLS**

### Highway Improvements

Improvements to highways which are initiated by the State Highway Commission may affect the roads adjacent to existing school properties. Generally, the State Highway Commission will notify the Division of School Planning of the Department of Public Instruction and also the local District Engineer's office when such improvements may involve the relocation, modification of existing access roads to the school property from the public highways either or both the Division of School Planning and the local District Engineer's office will notify the local school officials of such proposed improvements.

### School Plant Enlargement

Local school officials may establish projects at existing schools which will enlarge the school plant or will modify use of the school facilities. These changes in turn will increase vehicular traffic. In this case, the local school officials or the Division of School Planning may advise the local District Engineer's office or the State Highway Commission office respectively and request a study of the traffic situation with a view towards possible improvements. Improvements of this nature may have to be made on a cost reimbursement basis, paid by the local school board.

### Existing Hazards

Existing schools may have developed serious traffic problem situations, which have resulted in hazards to school personnel. Such hazards might be these: too many access roads to the site from the public highway; access roads too close to highway intersections; inadequate sight distances to school access; unsafe situations relative to vehicles turning on or off the site. Hazards such as these may have resulted in complaints by the public, by school principals, or other school personnel regarding the potential dangers to personnel and vehicles. In these cases the local school officials or the Division of School Planning may advise appropriate highway authorities requesting study and recommendations for improvement. Improvements of this nature may have to be made on a cost reimbursement basis, paid by the local school board.