

**RHODE ISLAND
STATE BUILDING CODE**

**State Building Code
Standards for Existing Schools
Regulation SBC-13**

FEBRUARY 1, 1997



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

**Department of Administration
BUILDING CODE STANDARDS COMMITTEE
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SBC-13

STATE BUILDING CODE
STANDARDS FOR EXISTING SCHOOLS

PREPARED IN ACCORDANCE WITH
THE REQUIREMENTS OF
CHAPTER 16-21
OF THE GENERAL LAWS
ENTITLED
“HEALTH AND SAFETY
OF STUDENTS”

DECEMBER 1, 1987

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STATE BUILDING CODE STANDARDS FOR EXISTING SCHOOLS

1.0 GENERAL: - The State Building Code regulations are applicable as the standards for the annual inspection survey of existing public and private nursery, elementary and secondary school buildings as well as those schools on state property. These regulations are adopted in accordance with the mandates of Section 16-21-3 of Chapter 16-21 of the General Laws entitled “Health and Safety of Students”

1.1 DEFINITIONS: - Unless otherwise expressly stated in the State Building Code, the following terms shall, for the purpose of these rules and regulations, have the meaning indicated in this section:

CODE: - The Rhode Island State Building Code or Specialized Codes and Standards as defined herein.

COMMISSIONER: The Rhode Island State Building Commissioner, is authorized to enforce the provisions of the Codes and rules and regulations which have been promulgated, adopted and amended and which pertain to buildings and structures and parts thereof.

COMMITTEE: The Rhode Island State Building Code Standards Committee, the agency authorized to promulgate and adopt codes and rules and regulations relating to buildings and structures and parts thereof.

DIRECTOR OF THE STATE OPERATED SCHOOLS: The person responsible to ensure that schools under their jurisdiction are not opened until notification is received from the inspecting agencies that the schools are in compliance with their respective codes.

INSPECTING AGENCIES: The local Fire Chief or assistant fire marshal, local building official, the Director of the State Department of Health, and the Director of the State Labor Department are those agencies responsible to notify the local superintendents of schools or private school officials by August 1 of each year as to whether the public and private nursery, elementary and secondary school buildings conform to the appropriate state law and regulation. The State Building Commissioner shall substitute for the local building official in the inspection of those schools on state property, and the Commissioner shall submit his report to the “state” department director responsible for the operation of said schools.

LOCAL BUILDING OFFICIAL: The official in a municipality charged with the enforcement of the State Building Code and appropriate specialized codes and standards.

PRIVATE SCHOOL OFFICIAL: The person responsible to ensure that schools under their jurisdiction are not opened until notification is received from the inspecting agencies that the schools are in compliance with their respective codes.

SCHOOLS: The schools affected by these standards are all existing public, private or state nursery, elementary and secondary school buildings or structures.

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS: The person responsible to ensure that public schools within their municipality are not opened until notification is received from the inspecting agencies that the schools are in compliance with their respective codes.

2.0 STANDARDS FOR EXISTING SCHOOL BUILDINGS

2.1 UNSAFE CONDITIONS:- A building or structure shall be declared unsafe by the local building official or the Commissioner, on state property, if any one of the following Conditions exists upon the premises:

- a) The building is vacant, unguarded and open at doors or windows thereby permitting unauthorized entry; or
- b) There is a hazardous accumulation of dust, debris or other combustible material therein; or
- c) There is a falling away, hanging loose or loosening of any siding, block, brick or other building material; or
- d) There is a deterioration of the structure, or structural parts, or a structural weakness exists whereby the continued use and occupancy would endanger the lives of the occupants or those using public or private land in the immediate area; or
- e) The building has been partially destroyed or has been substantially damaged by the elements, acts of God, fire, explosion, or otherwise is vacant, regardless of whether or not such building is secured to prevent unauthorized entry; or
- f) The building, sign or structure constitutes a fire or windstorm hazard or is in the Opinion of the building official otherwise dangerous to human life or public health, safety and welfare; or
- g) There is an unusual sagging or leaning out of plumb of the building or any parts of the building and such effect is caused by deterioration or over-stressing; or
- h) The electrical or mechanical installation or systems create a hazardous condition contrary to the Standards of this Code or the code in effect at the time of construction; or
- i) An unsanitary condition exists by the reason of inadequate or malfunctioning sanitary facilities, waste disposal systems and deprivation of privacy; or

- j) The use or occupancy of the building is illegal or improper because the building does not comply with the allowable areas, height, type of construction, fire resistance, means of egress, liveload, or other features regulated by the Code in effect at the time of construction; or
- k) Whenever the building or structure has been so damaged by fire, wind or flood, or has become so dilapidated or deteriorated as to become an attractive nuisance to children who might play therein to their danger.

3.0 PROCEDURES

3.1 GENERAL: In accordance with the requirements of Chapter 16-21, section 16-21-3, it shall be the responsibility of the local building official to notify each public or private nursery, elementary and secondary school of the requirement to inspect each school annually prior to August 1st. Reports for said inspections shall be submitted to the superintendent of schools or the private school official prior to said date. Reports on schools on state property shall be submitted to the Commissioner of Education Office.

3.2 INSPECTIONS:- Although the reports are not required to be filed until August 1, the local building official should make all required inspections as close to the end of the school year in May or June. The facility is in full operation and it is easier to schedule said inspections. Also this would provide the reports to the proper authorities earlier than the August 1 date, thereby allowing more time for any corrections, if necessary.

3.3 SCHOOL ALTERATIONS DURING THE YEAR:- In all cases the local school department or the private school system shall file for permits for all alterations, extension of existing systems, additions as required in section 23-27.3-102.0 entitled, Ordinary Repairs, of the State Building Code. As one can see by this section of the Code, many items of work required the normal review, inspection and approval of the local inspector. Whether the municipality charges their own schools for permits, is there own matter.

“23-27.3-102.0 ORDINARY REPAIRS:- “Ordinary repairs to build structures may be made without application or notice to the building official, but such repairs shall not include the installation of any siding, the cutting away of any wall, partition or portion thereof, the removal or change of any required means of egress, or rearrangement of parts of a structure affecting the exitway requirements; nor shall ordinary repairs include addition to, alteration of, replacement or relocation of any standard pipe, water supply, sewer, drainage, drain leader, gas, soil, waste, vent or similar piping, electrical wiring, mechanical or other work affecting public health, safety, and welfare shall comply with the rules and regulations or ordinances of the municipality as to the procurement of a permit for the aforementioned repairs”.

3.4 REPAIR LOG:- It shall be the responsibility of the public school and private school officials to maintain a log of all repairs done to their respective school facilities during this year. This log of repair work which does not require a permit will be available to the local building official to review during normal business hours to assure that the work done is safe and meets code requirements when applicable. The main concern is with the replacement of broken safety glazing. The Code requires that this glazing be replaced to meet the new requirements or otherwise severe penalties and liabilities could result from an accident.

**STATE BUILDING CODE'S CERTIFICATE OF INSPECTION
FOR THE ANNUAL APPROVAL OF EXISTING SCHOOLS**

YEAR -----

To: -----
Superintendent of Schools or Private School Official

Name of School

Location

Town (City)

State

Zip Code

1. Maximum number of students regularly attending the school at one time is -----.

2. Based upon field observations, made upon visiting said facilities on -----, ----, it was found that subject school was in the following condition: (circle one)

a. The school is in substantial conformance with the provisions of the State Building Code for existing buildings as required in Chapter 16-21-3 of the General Laws entitled "Standards for School Building". The following list of corrections must be completed by ----- and a reinspection scheduled with the Building Officials Office.

b. The school is in non-compliance with the aforementioned code provisions. The following list of corrections must be completed before the school can be occupied and a reinspection scheduled with this office.

3. List of Corrections: -----

(Attach additional pages if required)

4. I have ----- have not ----- reviewed the schools repair log.

5. Any code violation may be appealed by the Superintendent of Schools or the private school official to the municipality's Building Code Board of Appeals for a variance or a time delay in accordance with sections 23-27.3-127.2 and 23-27.3-127.2.4 of the State Building Code.

Building Official

Telephone Number

Form SCHL 87-1