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Part 7 - SCHOOL AREAS

700 GENERAL

OMUTCD Part 7 addresses traffic controls for school areas. Part 7 of the **Traffic Engineering Manual (TEM)** provides additional guidance for use of traffic control devices for school areas.

701 SCHOOL ROUTES AND ESTABLISHED SCHOOL CROSSINGS

As noted in **OMUTCD Section 7A.01**, it is important to have a uniform approach to school area traffic controls. A School Route Plan Map developed through the combined efforts of school officials, local traffic officials and parents can be useful in identifying recommended walking routes to school. Such a map can aid in an orderly review of school area traffic control devices, and coordination of education and engineering activities. **OMUTCD Section 7A.02 and Figure 7A-1** address school route plans.

In 1978, **ODOT** published an **Implementation Guide to Recommended Walking Route to School Program** to help encourage and support these efforts. This publication was discontinued in June 1991, and the information was incorporated into an updated **Pedestrian Safety Curriculum Guide** published by the **Ohio Department of Education (ODE)**. Part V of this **Guide** included a sample map and letter that teachers could use when discussing a Recommended Walking Route to School Program with students. The **Guide** is no longer published by **ODE**; however, copies of the Part V material are available upon request from the **Office of Traffic Engineering (OTE)**.

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702 SCHOOL SIGNS

702-1 General

School-related signing is generally addressed in **OMUTCD Chapter 7B**. Additional information about school-related signing is provided herein.

702-2 Use of Fluorescent Yellow-Green Reflective Sheeting

As noted in ***Section 220-7***, the standard school area signs shall use fluorescent yellow-green sheeting unless specified otherwise by the **District**.

702-3 School Speed Limit Signs

A School Speed Limit sign is a regulatory traffic control device in accordance with **OMUTCD Section 7B.11**. It may be a passive device (sign only) or an active one (sign with Hazard Identification Beacons). However, when used in conjunction with an active SCHOOL ENTRANCE sign assembly, an active School Speed Limit Sign with Beacons ***(see Section 702-4)*** should be used to help clarify when the 20 mile per hour requirement is in effect.

702-4 School Speed Limit Sign with Beacons

A School Speed Limit Sign with Beacons is an active device which consists of a School Speed Limit sign (S5-H3, S5-H4 or S5-H5) with a pair of alternately flashing yellow beacons, and may have an illuminated "20." Further details about the beacons are addressed in **OMUTCD Sections 7B.11, 4K.03 and 4K.04**.

Section 702-6 addresses the division of responsibilities and duties related to installation, operation and maintenance of these devices.

702-5 SCHOOL ENTRANCE Signs (S3-H3)

A SCHOOL ENTRANCE sign (S3-H3) may be used to help identify a school entrance and/or driveway. It may be a passive device (sign only) or an active one (sign with Hazard Identification Beacons).

When supplemented with Hazard Identification Beacons, i.e., one or two flashing yellow beacons **(see OMUTCD Section 4K.03)**, this sign can be used to draw attention to the location and related traffic at times when the School Zone is not in effect.

SCHOOL ENTRANCE signs may be either ground or overhead mounted. When supplemented with beacons, the sign is operated either manually, or by a timer, usually programmable, which is typically located in a cabinet on the highway right-of-way, or alternatively off the highway right-of-way in the school building.

Section 702-6 addresses the division of responsibilities and duties related to installation, operation and maintenance of these devices.

702-6 Responsibilities for School Signs with Beacons

This section defines the responsibilities and division of duties of those concerned with the installation, operation and maintenance of school signs with beacons on **ODOT**-maintained highways. The provisions herein also apply to rural state highway extensions within the municipal corporation limits of **Villages** which have requested assistance from **ODOT** in accordance with **ORC Section 5521.01**, and have an executed **Form MR 689** ***(see Section 1314)*** on file with **ODOT**.

For purposes of this discussion a "school sign with beacons" refers to a School Speed Limit Sign with Beacons ***(see Section 702-4)*** or a SCHOOL ENTRANCE sign with beacons ***(see Section 702-5)***.

The following responsibilities and division of duties shall apply:

1. The **District** will bear the cost and:

   a. determine where school signs with beacons are justified,

   b. develop the plans for the installation of school signs with beacons,

   c. furnish, install, maintain and repair all school signs with beacons and other related appurtenances located within the highway right-of-way (this does not apply to the emergency maintenance of school signs with beacons located in **Villages**, which are the responsibility of the **Village** in accordance with the provisions of the **Form MR 689**),

   d. program and operate timers located within the highway right-of-way, in accordance with **ORC Section 4511.21** and the **OMUTCD**, and in accordance with the times of operation determined by the school with the concurrence of the **District** (***Form 796-2*** depicts a sample letter that may be used to have the schools annually provide school schedule and timings for the new school year), and

   e. remove school signs with beacons and other related appurtenances located within the highway right-of-way whenever it is determined by the **District** that their installation is no longer justified.

2. The **School** will bear the cost and:

   a. furnish, install, maintain and repair all appurtenances located on the school's property,

   b. furnish the electric energy required for the operation of the school signs with beacons and other appurtenances,

   c. determine appropriate times of operation of the school signs with beacons in accordance with the **ORC Section 4511.21**,

   d. obtain concurrence from the **District** regarding the times of operation, and

   e. manually operate the school signs with beacons, or program and operate timers located on the **School's** property, in accordance with the **ORC** and **OMUTCD**.

Arrangements other than those described herein are permissible provided they are agreed upon and are acceptable to all involved parties, do not conflict with the **ORC** or **OMUTCD**, and the **District's** responsibilities do not exceed those described above.

It is recommended that a written agreement be executed between the **District** and the **School** (and the **Village** if appropriate) describing the provisions described herein. ***Form 796-1*** is a sample agreement that can be used. The **Director's** name should be signed by the **District Deputy Director**. A copy of the agreement should be kept at the **District** and the **School** (and the **Village** if appropriate). The agreement should be retained as long as the school signs with beacons are in place.

702-7 SCHOOL BUS STOP/TURN AHEAD Signs (S3-1 and S3-H2)

As noted in **OMUTCD Section 7B.10**, SCHOOL BUS STOP/TURN AHEAD signs (S3-1 and S3-H2) should be used in advance of locations where a school bus, when turning or stopped to pick up or discharge passengers, is not visible for a distance of 500 feet in advance. To avoid unnecessarily perpetuating these signs, a procedure should be established in each **District** whereby a record is kept when these signs are erected, documenting the location and date of the installation. This record should be checked regularly to assure that there is still a need for the sign. ***Form 796-3*** depicts a sample letter used to have the schools annually reaffirm the need for these signs and/or to request signs for a new location.

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704 SCHOOL AREA MARKINGS

School area pavement markings are described in **OMUTCD Sections 3B.19 and 7C.06**, and additional details are noted in **SCD TC-71.10**.

The SCHOOL word marking shall be installed on paved approaches in advance of all School Zones. It should be placed at least 100 feet (30 m) in advance of the School Zone. The preferred placement of the SCHOOL marking is adjacent to the School Zone Advance sign.

On two-way, two-lane highways:

- When the approach lane is 11 feet (3.4 m) or more in width, the SCHOOL word marking and transverse lines shall be contained in, and centered in, the lane, and the character height shall be 6 feet (1.8 m) for urban areas and 8 feet (2.4 m) for rural areas; and

- When the approach lane to the School Zone is less than 11 feet (3.4 m) in width, the SCHOOL word marking and transverse lines shall extend across both lanes of traffic and the characters should be 10 feet (3.0 m) or more in height.

On two-way, multilane highways:

- When the approach lanes are 11 feet (3.4 m) or more in width, the SCHOOL word marking and transverse lines shall be contained in, and centered in, each lane, and the character height shall be 6 feet (1.8 m) for urban areas and 8 feet (2.4 m) for rural areas; and

- When the approach lanes to the School Zone are less than 11 feet (3.4 m) in width, the SCHOOL word marking and transverse lines shall extend across all lanes of traffic and the characters should be 10 feet (3.0 m) or more in height.

Center or lane lines shall not pass through the SCHOOL word marking.

Intentionally blank.

705 SCHOOL ZONES

705-1 General

ORC Section 4511.21(B)(1)(c) defines the term "school zone." Except as noted in **ORC Section 4511.21(H)**, there are no exceptions to the existence of a School Zone. **ODOT** does not have discretion (e.g., based on the lack of pedestrians, the presence of fencing, etc.) to not install School Speed Limit signs ***(see Section 702-3)***.

Whenever, the **Director** determines on the basis of a geometric and traffic characteristic study that the school speed limit is less than reasonable or safe under the conditions found, the 20 mile per hour School Zone may be excepted, with School Zone signing not installed. The provisions of **ORC Section 4511.21(H)** (the speed zoning process) do apply to School Zones. Locations where the implementation of a 20 mile per hour School Zone might cause serious safety problems in the traffic stream, with little or no benefit to students attending the adjacent school, should be the only basis for retaining the existing speed limit. Locations where the 20 mile per hour provision is just an "inconvenience" to road users, or those locations where the school officials prefer something other than the 20 mile per hour School Zone, do not fit into this category.

Since the law requires 20 miles per hour at all School Zones, it is very important that any studies conducted be thoroughly documented and retained in the **District's** files. Although the Speed Warrant sheet will probably not be applicable in these situations, approval of these studies should follow the normal Speed Zone study approval process. Should any future litigation be filed against **ODOT** due to any incidents that might occur at one of these locations, the documentation will be very critical in defending the **District's** actions in not installing the 20 mile per hour School Zone signing.

705-2 Requesting a School Zone Extension

Although the traditional School Zone boundaries are defined by projecting the school property lines, **ORC 4511.21(B)(1)(c)** also allows that, upon request, the **Director** may extend the traditional School Zone boundaries.

Requests for School Zone Extensions are submitted to the **District** using the School Zone Extension Request Form ***(Form 796-4)***.

If the request involves an **ODOT**-maintained highways, the **District** shall document the background for the extension request; prepare a description of the School Zone Extension for the **Director's** approval using the School Zone Extension Request Form ***(Form 796-4)***; and following approval, the **District** shall erect or relocate the appropriate School Zone signs and notify the school, the **Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSHP)** and other law enforcement agencies as appropriate.

School Zone Extension requests involving local roads, shall be submitted to the **District** using the School Zone Extension Request Form ***(Form 796-4)*** and all appropriate documentation shall be included. The **District** shall determine reasonable and safe School Zone limits based on the documentation provided with the request and a field study (to document and confirm the physical features). If this determination is substantially different from that which was requested, the local authorities may be asked to further substantiate their original request and a new determination may be made. The **District** shall notify the school, local authorities, and **OSHP** and other law enforcement agencies, as appropriate, of **ODOT's** final action on the proposed School Zone Extension.

For purposes of requesting School Zone Extensions, rural state highway extensions within the municipal corporation limits of **Villages** are considered "local roads," even if the **Village** has requested assistance from **ODOT** in accordance with **ORC Section 5521.01**, and has an executed **MR 689** form ***(Form 1396-1)*** on file with **ODOT**.

705-3 Withdrawing a School Zone Extension

The withdrawal of a School Zone Extension is accomplished in generally the same manner as establishment of the extension ***(Section 705-2)***. The School Zone Extension Withdrawal Form ***(Form 796-5)*** is used to document the withdrawal.

705-4 Documentation

Table 797-1 establishes the School Zone Number Assignments to be used by **Districts** for School Zone Extensions. This number shall be used on ***Forms 796-4 and 796-5***.

The **District** shall retain the reports used in establishing the School Zone Extensions in their permanent files. Originals of the official document authorizing the regulation, as well as any originals of local requests or resolutions, shall also be retained permanently in **District** files.

A copy of the signed authorizations, including date of sign erection, shall be forwarded to the **Office of Traffic Engineering (OTE)**. For purposes of maintaining a statewide inventory and historical record, an inventory of School Zone Extensions shall be maintained by **OTE**. Copies of the listing shall be provided quarterly to the **Districts** and the **Office of Technical Services**, and annually to the **County Engineers**.

795 REFERENCE RESOURCES

Various reference resources that may be useful have been noted in ***Sections 193, 194 and 195***.

796 FORMS INDEX

796-1 Agreement for School Signs with Beacons

As noted in ***Section 702-6***, ***Form 796-1*** is a sample that can be used in establishing an agreement for the maintenance of school signs with beacons.

796-2 Letter Confirming Operation of School Signs with Beacons

As noted in ***Section 702-6***, ***Form 796-2*** is a sample letter that can be used to have a school confirm annually the school schedule and timings for operation of school signs with beacons.

796-3 Letter Confirming SCHOOL BUS STOP/TURN AHEAD Signs

As noted in ***Section 702-7***, ***Form 796-3*** is a sample letter that can be used to have a school annually confirm the need for SCHOOL BUS STOP/TURN AHEAD signs.

796-4 School Zone Extension Request Form

As noted in ***Section 705-2***, ***Form 796-4*** is used when submitting a request to extend the boundaries of a School Zone beyond the traditional boundary limits.

796-5 School Zone Extension Withdrawal Form

As noted in ***Section 705-3***, ***Form 796-5*** is used for removal of an established School Zone Extension.

Intentionally blank.

Form 796-1. Agreement for School Signs with Beacons

Agreement for School Signs with Beacons

THIS AGREEMENT is made and entered into by and between the STATE OF OHIO, DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (hereinafter called "THE STATE"), the _____ School District (hereinafter called "THE SCHOOL") and the Village of _____ (hereinafter called "THE VILLAGE").

WITNESSETH THAT:

FOR AND IN CONSIDERATION of mutual covenants hereinafter contained and for the purposes of regulating traffic on _____ for the _____ School District in _____ County, the parties hereby covenant and agree to the following:

1. THE STATE shall bear the cost and develop the plans for the installation of school signs with beacons, and furnish, install, maintain and repair all school signs with beacons and appurtenances located within the highway right-of-way.

2. THE SCHOOL shall bear the cost and furnish, install, maintain and repair all appurtenances located on THE SCHOOL's property. [Note: Eliminate this item for installations located entirely within the highway right-of-way.]

3. THE SCHOOL shall furnish the electric energy required for the operation of the school signs with beacons and appurtenances.

4. THE SCHOOL shall determine appropriate times of operation of the school signs with beacons in accordance with the Ohio Revised Code, and obtain concurrence from THE STATE.

5. THE SCHOOL shall manually operate the school sign with beacons in accordance with the times of operation determined by THE SCHOOL and agreed upon by THE STATE, and in accordance with the Ohio Revised Code and the Ohio Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices. [Note: For use with manually operated signs.]

   or

   THE SCHOOL shall program and operate the timer in accordance with the times of operation determined by THE SCHOOL and agreed upon by THE STATE, and in accordance with the Ohio Revised Code and the Ohio Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices. [Note: For use with timers located in the school building.]

   or

   THE STATE shall program and operate the timer in accordance with the times of operation determined by THE SCHOOL and agreed upon by THE STATE, and in accordance with the Ohio Revised Code and the Ohio Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices. [Note: For use with timers located on the highway right-of-way.]

6. THE STATE will remove school signs with beacons and appurtenances located within the highway right-of-way whenever it is determined by THE STATE that their installation is no longer justified, and this agreement shall thereupon terminate.

7. THIS AGREEMENT shall be binding upon and inure to the benefit of the parties hereto, their respective successors and/or assigns.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have caused this agreement to be executed by their duly authorized officers or agents.

_____ School District

by _____ Title _____

Witness _____ Date _____

Village of _____

by _____ Title _____

Witness _____ Date _____

THE STATE OF OHIO, DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

by _____ Title _____

Witness _____ Date _____

Notes:

1. For installations located outside of **Village** corporation limits, eliminate references to THE VILLAGE.
2. The form should be modified as necessary. Three wording options are provided for item #5 to address different types of installations.

Form 796-2. Letter Confirming Operation of School Signs with Beacons

(DATE)

(ADDRESS)

RE: (2001-2002) School Clock Schedule

Dear Superintendent,

Would you please send us a copy of your **(2001-2002) school year calendar** for the school signs with beacons that ODOT signal electricians maintain on U.S. or State Routes in your school district. **Please complete and return the enclosed Daily School Clock Schedule Form by (date)**, indicating when you wish to have the school flashers operate, including recess times.

We will input this information into the programmable time clocks that control the school flashers at each of the school locations. Your cooperation in this matter will allow us to have each location programmed and ready when school begins next fall. Please forward the information to me at the above address.

If you should have any questions concerning this request, please contact me at the above listed telephone number, (extension).

Respectfully,

Enclosure

c: file

Form 796-3. Letter Confirming SCHOOL BUS STOP/TURN AHEAD Signs

(DATE)

(ADDRESS)

Dear (Superintendent or Transportation Coordinator),

Each year the Ohio Department of Transportation receives numerous requests from school personnel and parents requesting SCHOOL BUS STOP AHEAD and SCHOOL BUS TURN AHEAD Warning Signs.

If you have locations on rural state highways where your bus drivers have indicated, or in the future indicate the need for such signs, we will be happy to investigate the location. These signs are intended for use in areas where sight distance is limited to less than 500 feet. A copy of the portion of the Ohio Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices relating to these signs is enclosed for your information.

Many times it is much safer for the bus driver to stop at a location not directly in front of a residential driveway, or to turn around at a location not quite convenient, i.e., on top of the hill or around the curve. Where this is possible, we request that this be done rather than having a sign erected, which the road user may not notice.

Since this will also involve the parents, any requests received by this office from parents for these signs will be referred to your office for initial review and approval.

We also ask your assistance in updating the existing signs on the rural state highway system within your school district. We request a review of your existing signs with your bus drivers to determine signs that are no longer needed due to student graduation or a family moving to a new residence. By eliminating unneeded signs drivers will gain respect for the signs that have already been erected. Please provide a listing of the SCHOOL BUS STOP AHEAD and SCHOOL BUS TURN AHEAD Warning Signs needed in your school district, noting any new requests. Also, please provide a list of any existing signs that can be removed.

We share your concern about pupil transportation safety and wish to thank you in advance for your cooperation in this matter. If you have any questions, please contact this office,

Respectfully,

Enclosure

cc: file

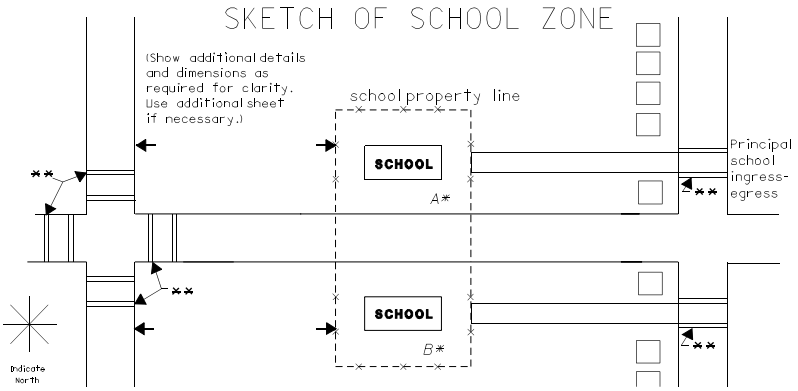
Form 796-4. School Zone Extension Request Form

STATE OF OHIO
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

SCHOOL ZONE EXTENSION REQUEST

In accordance with the provisions of Section 4511.21, Ohio Revised Code, it is hereby requested that the Director of Transportation approve the appropriate distance for the school zone for the:

Municipality: _____ School Name: _____
County: _____ Address: _____
Township: _____ _____
By: Name _____ _____
Title _____
(Elected Official)



* "X-out School "A" or "B" as necessary.
** "Established School Crossing" where children are directed to cross the street or roadway on their way to and from school, selected on the basis of a School Route Plan Map developed by local school and safety authorities. (Attache a copy of the map.)
Note: Additional data may be required.

(For Department use only)

APPROVED SCHOOL ZONE DISTANCES

Under authority of Section 4511.21(B)(1)(c)(i), (ii) and (iii), and (d), these distances have been approved for the _____ School, Zone No. _____, _____County, ODOT District _____, Jurisdiction _____

Street Name	School Zone Distances

Date: _____ _____
Director of Transportation

Form 796-5. School Zone Extension Withdrawal Form

STATE OF OHIO
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

WITHDRAWAL OF APPROVED SCHOOL ZONE EXTENSIONS

District: ____ **School Zone No.**: _____ **Name of Street**: _____

Municipality: _____ **County**: _____

State Route No.: _____ **Name of School**: _____

Under Authority of Section 4511.21(B)(1)(c)(i), (ii) and (iii), and (d) of the Ohio Revised Code, the following described School Zone Extension(s) approved by the Director of Transportation on _____, has been determined, on the basis of a traffic and engineering investigation, to be unreasonable and approval of the same is hereby withdrawn.

LOCATION OF SCHOOL ZONE DISTANCES

From	To

Signs relating to the School Zone Extension shall be immediately removed.

Date: _____ _____
Director of Transportation

Immediately after removal or relocation of School Zone signs, return the attached copy of this School Zone Extension Withdrawal form to the ODOT District Deputy Director or his designee, with the following certification properly executed.

I hereby certify that appropriate signs, giving notice of the above School Zone Extension were removed

on _____ Signed _____

Title _____

797 TABLES INDEX

797-1 School Zone Number Assignments

As noted in ***Section 705-4***, ***Table 797-1*** assigns numbers to be used by **Districts** when submitting/reviewing School Zone Extension requests.

Table 797-1. School Zone Number Assignments

District	School Zones
District 1	10000 - 14999
District 2	15000 - 19999
District 3	20000 - 24999
District 4	25000 - 29999
District 5	30000 - 34999
District 6	35000 - 39999
District 7	40000 - 44999
District 8	45000 - 49999
District 9	50000 - 54999
District 10	50000 - 54999
District 11	60000 - 64999
District 12	65000 - 69999

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