



## State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
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### Educational Specifications Guidelines

Issued by the Office of School Facilities  
July 21, 2009

The following provides content guidelines for educational specifications for school facilities projects. The primary purpose of educational specifications is to convey the school district's programs and building objectives to the design consultant to ensure that the proposed facilities properly support the educational programs. They should provide detailed parameters to guide the design of the school, rather than describe how the facility is to be constructed. The success of the educational specifications in communicating program needs to the design consultant plays a large part in the overall success of the school construction project. Therefore, it is important that they comprehensively describe the school building's anticipated uses and identify specific physical characteristics that will be required to house and promote the proposed activities.

#### State Requirements

Educational Specifications are required to be submitted to the New Jersey Department of Education (Department) for educational adequacy review in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:26-5.2 for school facilities projects involving room use changes and/or new construction. **It is recommended that they be submitted to the Department prior to schematic submission for preliminary review.** The educational specifications must be endorsed by the district superintendent and board of education president. Although the Department does not prescribe who should participate in the development of educational specifications, it is recommended that a broad base of input, including district administrators, faculty, community representatives, parents, and students, be solicited.

##### 6A:26-5.2 Educational specifications

(a) Submissions of educational specifications for educational adequacy reviews shall include the following:

1. Educational specifications shall be prepared in writing describing in detail the educational program activities and requirements for each space proposed in the capital project, and shall refer to the Core Curriculum Content Standards wherever appropriate;
2. An itemized list of furniture, equipment, and support spaces required to conduct the educational program specified for each space shall be included, together with their net areas in square feet, as well as the net of the total room area required for each space;
3. Specific technical and environmental criteria, adjacencies and other requirements for the educational program shall be noted; and
4. Educational specifications shall contain a building space program that indicates the number and net area in square feet of each instructional, specialized instructional, administrative and support space in each existing or proposed building included in the capital project and/or the temporary facility.

**Please note that the project represented in the educational specifications must be included in the district's approved Long-Range Facilities Plan.** This includes the proposed room inventory and scope of work. The approved Long-Range Facilities Plan must also incorporate an enrollment projection with the most recent Fall Enrollment Report.

## Recommended Contents

The following lists information recommended for inclusion in the educational specifications. The intent is to promote thorough programming and an educationally responsive project, as well as to provide an understanding of expectations between the school district and design consultant and satisfy Department submission requirements.

### Cover Page

The cover page should minimally include the following:

- School district name
- School district county
- School name
- Project name
- DOE project number
- SDA project number (*if applicable*)
- Date educational specifications were approved by the district
- District superintendent of schools signature
- District board of education president signature

### Table of Contents

#### Part I: Program and Project Description

Provide an overview of the programs to be accommodated in the school and the proposed project scope of work. Information may include:

- Scope of work overview
- Need for project
- Educational program and extracurricular activities
- Community issues
- Flexibility requirements
- Participants in educational specifications development

#### Part II: Site Objectives

Describe physical site objectives as well as the underlying program rationale. (*Not required if the project scope does not include site improvements.*)

- Parking:
  - Number of staff members, including non-instructional staff
  - Current on-site parking accommodations
  - Availability of public transportation or nearby public parking
  - Number of parking spaces desired for staff, students, visitors, etc.
- Vehicle Circulation and Student Drop-Off:
  - Number of students expected to walk to school or arrive by school bus, public transportation, or car
  - Number of school buses and vans
  - Drop-off and pick-up accommodations for buses and cars
  - Student “holding” location in the morning until school starts and afternoon for pick-up
  - Service accommodations, including loading dock needs

- Play Areas:
  - Recess and physical education outdoor schedule, including grades, maximum number of students outside at one time, and activities
  - Athletics schedules
  - Number and types of play areas and fields, including equipment
  - Landscaping objectives
  - Existing site features to be preserved
  - Community use of site
  - Nearby community recreation spaces that may be used by the school

### **Part III: General Facilities Considerations**

Summarize requirements common to all instructional spaces and/or the overall building design. (Detailed room requirements should be provided in Part IV.) Considerations should pertain to issues that impact room area and design. They should not include detailed system specifications. Topics and sample questions that should minimally be explored are as follows:

- Program Organization:
  - How are the instructional program and staff organized (teams, departments, etc.)?
  - Are there any proposals for future change?
- Building Organization:
  - How should the school be organized to promote program delivery?
  - Where will students and visitors enter?
  - What rooms should be adjacent to each other and clustered together in the same wing?
  - What rooms will be used by the community after school hours?
- Corridors:
  - Will students be provided with corridor lockers? If yes, what size/type and where should they be located?
  - Are student “commons” areas desired?
  - Where and what type of display should be provided?
- Technology and Communications:
  - What are the major elements in the district’s Technology Plan that impact design?
  - What communications and public address services are desired?
- Security:
  - What are security and supervision requirements?
  - Does the district have a security plan?
- Custodial and Storage Needs:
  - What spaces are needed to support the custodial staff and where should they be located?
  - What type of storage is needed? Consider building service, including grounds maintenance, as well as teaching materials.
  - Is there remote storage at another location?
  - What are receiving and loading dock needs?

## Part IV: Proposed Room Inventory Report

The “Proposed Room Inventory Report” from the District’s approved Long-Range Facilities Plan must be included. **This report must be generated from the Department’s Long-Range Facilities Plan website and coordinate with the schematic drawings and room area calculations presented in the educational specifications.** No other format will be accepted unless otherwise approved by the Department prior to project submission.

## Part V: Detailed Room Requirements

Describe functions, activities, fit-out, support spaces, unique design considerations, and adjacencies for each room type. Proposed requirements must coordinate with the floor plans and be accomplished within the proposed room square feet. The following should be provided for each similar room:

- Room Name (Must match Proposed Room Inventory Report.)**
- Overview:
  - Number of rooms
  - Maximum number of students per room (*instructional spaces*)
  - Maximum number of teachers per room (*instructional spaces*)
  - Maximum number of occupants (*offices and non-instructional spaces*)
  - Square feet per room (*excluding walls and support spaces; must coordinate with floor plans*)
- Program Considerations:
  - Applicable Core Curriculum Content Standards
  - Description of educational programs and activities
  - Room activity areas and functional considerations (*whole class instruction, small group instruction, special projects, teacher administration, student storage, etc.*)
- Physical Attributes:
  - Wall and ceiling mounted furniture and equipment
  - Fixed furniture and equipment
  - Movable furniture and equipment
  - Flooring
  - Unique features and special considerations not dictated by building code (*for example, room proportion, day lighting, acoustical considerations, etc.*)
- Support Spaces (*if applicable*):
  - Name, maximum number of occupants, square feet per room, and quantity
  - General description and considerations
  - Physical attributes (*same as above*)
- Adjacencies:
  - Immediate room adjacencies
  - Building wing location
- Room Area Calculations
  - List of floor furniture and equipment, including quantity, dimensions, and area square feet (*must match furniture and equipment listed in “Physical Attributes” and floor plan room layouts*)
  - Number of room occupants multiplied by prescribed building code net square feet per occupant
  - Sum of the above compared to proposed floor plan square feet (*must be equal to or less than floor plan square feet*)

### **Appendix: School Program Summary Report (*SDA districts only*)**

List the programs and services to be accommodated in the school using the Department's reporting template found at <http://www.state.nj.us/education/facilities/lrfp/documentation/abbott.doc>. This form was originally completed as part of the Long-Range Facilities Plan submission. The report should be updated and submitted as part of the educational specifications.

### **Questions?**

Please refer to the Department's Office of School Facilities web page at:

<http://www.state.nj.us/education/facilities/index.html>

for information regarding school facilities project submission requirements and the application process. You may also contact the county manager assigned to review your project at (609) 292-4469.