

**FINAL – BOE Approved  
4 December 07**

**Joint Proposal from Staffs of Union County Public Schools, Union County and all  
Union County Municipalities Regarding Standardized Zoning Regulations**

Union County Public Schools (UCPS) is currently subject to 13 different sets of local land use regulations (12 different municipalities and Union County). Regulations vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, making it difficult to build new schools, renovate existing schools or locate mobile units in a consistent, timely and cost effective manner.

As a part of the Union County Board of Education’s adopted “Building Program Cost Saving Principles”, UCPS is endeavoring to establish a standard zoning classification and standardized requirements for school construction regardless of the schools locale in Union County. Such standardization will result in (i) equitable school facilities throughout the county; (ii) more efficient permitting of school facilities and (iii) cost savings for the benefit of the taxpayers of Union County.

Staffs from UCPS, Union County and local municipalities have met and have agreed to make recommendations to their elected boards as follows:

1. UCPS staff will involve local municipal staff early in the site selection process. The local municipal staff will make recommendations regarding target sites or areas within their respective jurisdictions that are suitable for school uses. Pursuant to state statute, final decisions regarding the selection of school sites are made by the Union County Board of Education.
2. Allow all new schools, additions, or renovation uses by right with supplemental standards. This will eliminate the costly and time-consuming discretionary (CUP/SUP) zoning process and site-by-site negotiations. All local government entities benefit by having expectations regarding school design and construction identified in advance.
3. Jurisdictions may consider an optional CUP/SUP review process if unique conditions exist as determined by the zoning/planning administrator. The administrator shall consider if the proposed project poses a negative impact on the public health and safety.
4. Supplemental standards shall include:
  - 4.1. Exterior of buildings.
    - 4.1.1. Exterior building materials shall be limited to masonry brick (brick or pre-finished block), natural or synthetic stucco, pre-finished insulated or non-insulated metal panel system, pre-finished metal fascia and wall coping, standing seam metal roof (for sloped roof only), painted hollow metal and/or pre-finished aluminum door and window frames, glass, painted or pre-finished steel.
    - 4.1.2. UCPS staff will work with municipality staff to follow any requirements of municipality “special overlay districts” as it relates to the exterior design of the facility.
    - 4.1.3. Exterior of buildings will be articulated to enhance the area of the site.
  - 4.2. Mobile classrooms (MCR):
    - 4.2.1. MCR’s shall be located in rear yard if possible. If rear yard cannot accommodate the MCR’s then they can be placed in the side yard. MCR’s

- can be placed in the front yard only if the MCR's cannot be accommodated in the rear or side yards.
- 4.2.2. MCR underpinning and crawl spaces shall be screened.
  - 4.2.3. Landscaping/planting shall be provided between the MCR and any adjacent roads from which the MCR's are visible.
- 4.3. Sidewalks:
- 4.3.1. Sidewalks will not be required if they present a public health and safety hazard; sidewalks on the school property that connect to an existing sidewalk infrastructure will be provide by UCPS. Except as provided above, the municipalities shall be responsible paying for and constructing sidewalks.
  - 4.3.2. UCPS will dedicate appropriate easement or road right of way needed for sidewalks if requested by municipality.
  - 4.3.3. UCPS will grade areas for sidewalks if requested by municipality.
  - 4.3.4. UCPS will cooperate with municipality to apply for grants for sidewalks.
- 4.4. Exterior Illumination:
- 4.4.1. Driveway and parking area lighting shall be no more than 10 foot candles. Spill over to adjacent properties shall not exceed 1 foot candle. Lighting fixtures shall be shielding type.
  - 4.4.2. Lighting fixtures located on the building exterior shall not emit more than 5 foot candles and shall be shielding type.
  - 4.4.3. Lighting for athletic fields shall follow the current standards as set forth by the North Carolina High School Athletic Association Lighting Standard. A lighting control package shall be included and lights shall be shut-off no later than one hour after the end of the event.
- 4.5. Signs:
- 4.5.1. Materials for sign base and structure shall match the primary building materials.
  - 4.5.2. Sign face shall not exceed 40 square feet and does not include the sign support structure. The bottom of the sign face shall be no less than 24" above nor more than 72" above the ground surface. The sign support structure can include columns and walls on either side of and below the sign face and shall not be more than 16" taller that the sign face.
  - 4.5.3. One sign shall be permitted per school. Alternatively, if multiple schools use the same driveway access, then the allowable square footage may be increased by 10 square feet for each additional school.
  - 4.5.4. One wall sign per school shall be permitted and only for the name of the school and shall be reviewed by the administrator.
  - 4.5.5. External illumination is allowed.
- 4.6. Parking:
- 4.6.1. At elementary and middle schools provide 1 space per staff member plus 1.6 spaces per classroom or 1 space for each 3 seats used for assembly purposes whichever is greater.
  - 4.6.2. At high schools provide 5 spaces per instructional classroom or 1 space for each 3 seats used for assembly purposes whichever is greater.
  - 4.6.3. No more than 20% of the required spaces can be compact spaces.
  - 4.6.4. Minimum size of spaces shall be 9' wide by 19' long for regular, 7.5' wide by 15' long for compact, and accessible spaces shall meet current accessibility codes.
- 4.7. Student Drop Off Stacking:

- 4.7.1. On-site vehicle stacking for student drop-off shall be based on NCDOT requirements using the NCDOT required calculator.
- 4.8. Landscaping and Screening/buffering:
  - 4.8.1. Trees and shrubs shall be as indicated within the municipality species list.
  - 4.8.2. Parking Area: 1 large or 2 small trees shall be provided for each 12 parking spaces. Each parking space shall be located within 65' of a tree. Rows of parking spaces shall be terminated with a landscaped island and shall be the same size as a parking space.
  - 4.8.3. Parking areas shall be screened from adjacent public roads with shrubs based on the municipality's species list.
  - 4.8.4. Storm Detention Basins shall be screened with fencing and/or shrubs as determined by the administrator and shall be dependant upon the size, location, and use of the basin.
  - 4.8.5. Land berms will not be permitted between school facilities and roads.
  - 4.8.6. Land berms can be used in conjunction with required screening/buffering to adjacent uses as determined by the local regulations.
  - 4.8.7. Screening/buffering from adjacent uses will be opaque and shall consist of:
    - 4.8.7.1. Small trees planted at a rate of 3 per 100' and 6' high evergreen shrubs planted at a rate of 25 per 100', or
    - 4.8.7.2. Large trees planted at a rate of 2.5 per 100' and a 6' high solid wood fence, or
    - 4.8.7.3. Tall evergreen trees with branches touching the ground planted in a stagger.
  - 4.8.8. If the adjoining property is of similar or compatible use the Administrator may reduce or eliminate the screening/buffer.
  - 4.8.9. Screening/buffering requirements may be waived when screening/buffering is already provided. There may be cases where the unusual topography or elevation of a site, or the size of the parcel involved, or the presence of screening on adjacent property would make the strict adherence to the regulation serve no useful purpose. In those cases, the Administrator is empowered to waive the requirements for screening so long as the spirit and intent of this section and the general provisions of this section pertaining to screening are adhered to. This section does not negate the necessity for establishing screening for uses adjacent to vacant property.
  - 4.8.10. UCPS will endeavor to adhere to all Tree Preservation ordinances of the municipalities and shall preserve natural buffers between the school facility and adjacent properties as much as practical.
  - 4.8.11. UCPS will endeavor to retain as much existing trees and vegetation on school sites as practical and will re-introduce common local species into the project as possible.
- 4.9. In the event any provisions of the supplemental regulations conflict with any other provisions of this ordinance, then the provisions of these supplemental regulations shall control. Other ordinance provisions not in conflict with these supplemental regulations remain in effect.