

ARIZONA STATE FIRE MARSHAL CHARTER SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS

The operation of a charter school brings with it some regulatory requirements which may be unfamiliar to educators unaccustomed to the administration of publicly funded schools in Arizona.

To assist you, Arizona Revised Statutes Section 15-183 requires the Department of Education to publish relevant rules, regulations and statutes to advise charter schools of their responsibilities. Paragraph 1, requires compliance with federal, state and local rules, regulation and statutes relating to health, SAFETY, civil rights and insurance.

Presently the Arizona Administrative Code (A.C.C.) R4-34-110, and Arizona Fire Code requires schools to be constructed and maintained in accordance with the International Fire Code 2003 edition, Uniform Building Code, Uniform Mechanical Code and selected National Fire Code Standards. The State Fire Marshal is also mandated to conduct scheduled inspections in schools throughout Arizona. This shall include Charter Schools.

Buildings procured for Charter Schools use under ARS 15-189 are subject to the same requirements as any other public building. The office of the Fire Marshal will assist you by providing guidance regarding the suitability of lease space of any building contemplated for use as a charter school. **Construction documents for the remodel of modification of buildings are required to re reviewed and approved by the State Fire Marshal's Office for code compliance. This must be done before any construction, remodeling or modifications can be started.** When public funds are used to build, modify, alter or improve a structure, the design must be done under the direction of a registered architect in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Technical Board of Registration. **Buildings used for charter schools MUST comply with fire code standards PRIOR to occupancy by any students.**

General note:

Charter Schools that locate in commercial, retail or office buildings including in some cases churches, must be separated from those occupancies by fire rated separations as specified in the building code. In order to properly classify the uses in the building, a plan of the building shall be submitted showing: building dimensions, types of construction of partitions and of the building, as well as the adjacent business's use.

Some Basic Building & Fire Requirements

- ❖ Fire apparatus access roads shall be required for very building hear-after construction when any portion of an exterior wall of the first story is located more than 150 feet from fire department vehicle access
- ❖ An approved water supply capable of supplying the required fire flow for fire protection shall be provided to all premises upon which buildings or portions of buildings are hereafter constructed. When any portion of the building protected is excess of 150 feet

from a water supply on a public street, as measured by an approved route around the exterior of the building there shall be provided on site fire hydrants, and mains capable of supplying the required fire flow.

- ❖ A ventilation hood and duct system shall be provided for commercial type food heat processing equipment that produces grease laden vapors.
- ❖ Rooms used for kindergarten, first, and second grade pupils and day care facilities for more than 6 children, shall not be located above or below the first floor, except for basements that have required exits at grade level.

Exception: In buildings equipped with an Automatic fire sprinkler system throughout, ROOMS used for kindergarten, first and second grade children or for day care purposes, may be located on the second story, provided there are at least two exits from each room going directly to the exterior and going to two different exits paths provided for the exclusive use of such occupants.

- ❖ Storage rooms and janitor's closets shall be of one hour construction within 'E' occupancies.
- ❖ Laboratories, vocational shops and similar areas containing hazardous materials shall be separated from each other and from other portions of the buildings by not less than one hour fire resistive occupancy separations.
- ❖ All Group E occupancies shall front directly upon or have access to a public street of not less than 20 feet in width. The access to the public street shall be a minimum 20 feet wide right of way, unobstructed and maintained only as access to the public street. At least one required exit shall be located on the public street or on the access way.
- ❖ Group E occupancies with total occupant loads of 50 or more in the school, shall have a Fire Alarm system installed.
- ❖ No class I, II, IIIA liquids (defined as flammable or combustible liquids) shall be placed, used or stored in and Group E occupancy, except in approved quantities, as necessary for use in labs, or approved utility room and shall be stored within approved storage cabinets as approved by the Fire Marshal.

Some Basic Building & Fire Requirements

- ❖ A one hour fire resistive occupancy separation should be provided between rooms containing a boiler, central heating or hot water supply boiler exceeding an input rating of 400,000 Btu per hour and the rest of the building.
- ❖ Every building or usable portion thereof shall have at least one exit and not less than two exits where required by the building code

- ❖ To find occupancy load and the number and width of exits required, divide total square feet of room or building by these factors:

Classrooms = 20

Nurseries = 35

School shops = 50

Vocational areas = 50

Assembly areas = 7 (Auditoriums, stadiums, dance floors)

Assembly area = 15 (Conference rooms, dining rooms, gymnasiums, stages)

Example = Classroom size 40 X 50 feet = 2000 Sq. Ft divided by 20 = occupant load 100

To find required exits = 100 divided by 50 = 2 feet of exit width. Minimum width is 3 feet or one door.

Example = Gymnasium 75 X 75 feet = 5625 Sq. Ft. divided by 15 = occupant load 375

Required exits = 375 divided by 50 = 8 feet of exit width.

- ❖ Exit doors shall be openable from the inside without the use of a key or any special knowledge or effort.
- ❖ Exit doors shall be of the pivoted or side hinged swinging type. Exit doors serving 50 or more occupants shall swing in the direction of exit travel.
- ❖ Manually operated edge of surface mounted flush bolts and surface bolts are prohibited. When exit doors are used in pairs and approved automatic flush bolts are used, the door leaf having the automatic flush bolts shall have no door knob or surface mounted hardware. The unlatching of any leaf shall not require more than one person.
- ❖ Every exit doorway shall be a door of not less than 3 feet in width and not less than 6 feet 8 inches in height
- ❖ The width of a corridor in a Group E, Division 1 occupancy shall be not less than 6 feet. When the number of occupants is 100 or less, the corridor may be 44 inches wide.
- ❖ Exit doors from rooms having an occupant load of 50 or more and from corridors shall not be provided with a latch or lock unless it is panic hardware.

Some Basic Building & Fire Requirements

- ❖ Corridor walls and ceiling shall be of not less than one hour fire resistive construction with openings protected as required, (When each room has at least one exit door directly to the exterior at ground level, one hour construction of corridor wall and ceiling is not required)

- ❖ School grounds may be fenced and gates therein equipped with locks, provided safe dispersal areas are located not less than 50 feet from the building. Dispersal areas shall be sized to provide an area of not less than 3 square feet per occupant.
- ❖ The distance from any point in a room shall be not more than 75 feet from an exit corridor, an enclosed stairway or the exterior of the building

Exception: 1. In buildings not more than two stories in height and protected throughout with smoke detectors the distance may be increased to 90 feet.

2. In buildings protected throughout by an automatic sprinkler system, the distance may be increased to 110 feet.

- ❖ Exit stairs serving an occupant load of 100 or more in a Group E occupancy should have a minimum clear width of 5 feet
- ❖ Group E occupancies with basements larger than 1500 square feet in floor area shall have an automatic fire sprinkler system installed.
- ❖ Group E occupancies shall have an automatic fire sprinkler system installed in enclosed usable space below or over a stairway.

Revised 1-6-12