

South Carolina Department of Transportation
Traffic Engineering Guidelines

NUMBER: TG-28

SUBJECT: Signing for School Facilities

BACKGROUND: This guideline is intended to be a supplement to [TG-14](#) . The overall objective of this guideline is to establish and maintain consistency in signing for school facilities statewide.

The Department receives many requests each year for directional guide and interstate signs for various types of schools. The types of schools that are requesting signing include post-secondary schools (*Colleges, Universities, Junior Colleges, Seminaries, Technical Colleges, and Career Colleges*) and primary and secondary schools (*High Schools, Middle Schools, Grade Schools, Private Schools, and Public Vocational Schools*).

The MUTCD does not provide specific guidance on guide signing for schools. Schools are considered traffic generators and Section 2E.35 of the MUTCD recommends that each state adopt a policy for signing traffic generators. While [TG-14](#) provides guidance for the signing of a wide range of traffic generators, this guideline specifically establishes criteria for various types of schools on both interstate/control-of-access facilities as well as non-interstate routes.

GUIDELINE: The Interstate Highway System is designed for high speed and high volume travel making it important to limit the amount of distractions to the driver. Also, the Department strives to maintain a consistent approach to signing by limiting the number of signs to the amount necessary for safe and efficient travel. Signs on the interstate system are designed and erected in accordance with federal guidelines. Signs for traffic generators are referred to as supplemental destination guide signs and are limited to one sign in each direction per interchange location and includes two destinations per sign. Part A deals with signing on interstates and other control-of-access facilities while Part B deals with signing facilities on full-access and limited-access non-interstate highways.

Part A: Signing for School Facilities on Interstate/Controlled-Access Roadways

Higher education institutions are important assets to the State of South Carolina and have potential to generate high volumes of traffic. However, due to the variety of schools and facilities, it is important to establish criteria for determining which of these facilities warrant signing based on actual traffic generation and motorist interest in locating these facilities.

Signing for post-secondary education facilities may be permitted on the Interstate Highway System if the facility meets the criteria for each school type. Each school should provide SCDOT with documentation that it meets the requirements outlined in this guideline.

Post-secondary schools should, as a minimum, meet the following general requirements:

- Be accredited by the Commission on College of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
- Provide degree programs of a traditional variety
- Have an established campus in which the main grounds have buildings for teaching classes and receiving visitors
- A minimum of 75% of the classes offered should be taught by a teacher located at this campus location
- Own a majority of the property

The school should not be signed if the campus is rented or leased. The signs for an approved school shall be limited to the closest or most direct route to the campus. Also, each school should only be signed at the interchange with the most direct route to the school or may be signed in one direction at separate interchanges if this provides the most direct, shortest route in each direction.

In cases where the interchange with the most direct route to the supplemental destination does not have space for additional signing, alternative interchanges may be considered by the Department based on the next most direct route. A supplemental destination cannot be signed at more than one interchange in a single direction of travel.

The following table contains specific enrollment and mileage criteria for post-secondary facilities for various areas:

Type of Generator	Specific Criteria	Major Metropolitan Areas ¹	Urban Areas ²	Rural Areas
Colleges and Universities	4-Year Institution	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Enrollment (Full-Time Students)	4,000	2,500	1,500
	Accredited	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Mileage*	3	4	8
Technical Colleges	State-Supported Institute	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Mileage*	3	4	8

¹50,000 or more in population

²5,000 – 49,999 in population

*Maximum distance from the interchange

As for any supplemental guide signing, it will be the responsibility of the school of higher education to provide the funding for all initial costs involved with fabrication and installation of the signing. The requestor shall provide written notification to the Department agreeing to fund all costs associated with fabrication and installation of the signing. The Department shall receive this notification prior to developing a detailed cost estimate, signing plans, or sign layouts. Also, the school will be responsible for all costs associated with any future changes to the signing such as name changes.

Not all school facilities qualify for interstate signing. Examples of schools that are not eligible for interstate signing are:

- Colleges, universities, tech schools, career colleges, etc. that operate primarily by internet (online) or other remote techniques
- Academic institutes that do not offer a minimum degree program of traditional variety, and trade schools that do not offer a minimum degree program
- Schools that are privately owned and operated with the intent to be a for-profit business
- Primary and secondary education facilities

Part B: Signing on Non-Interstate (Full & Limited Access) Roadways

Generally, more latitude is given to signing all school types on non-interstate or control of access facilities. These roadways are usually lower in speed and, therefore, the sign spacing is not generally an issue. A consistent approach should be used for signing all schools on these facilities statewide.

Signing for post-secondary education facilities may be signed from the last point of turn from a primary route only if the school meets the general requirements and criteria listed in Part A. If a facility warrants interstate signing, then an adequate amount of signing should be provided from the interstate exit ramps to the school.

Signing for primary and secondary education facilities may be signed from the last point of turn from a primary route. Also, schools that have a stadium or other facilities that attract a high volume of motorists unfamiliar with the area can be signed from the last point of turn from a primary route. Private/independent schools may be eligible for signing if they are a member of the South Carolina Independent School Association and are a non-profit entity.

Any exceptions to these rules should be approved by the District Traffic Engineer.

Approved:

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Director of Traffic Engineering

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Date