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Kippy Tate, AIA  
Director

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MEMORANDUM

TO: School Architects

FROM: Katherine Lynn, Interim Director, Alabama Building Commission

Re: Guidelines for Calculation of Occupant Loads for Multi-Use Spaces in Schools

1. The Building Commission recognizes that schools may include spaces which are designed to accommodate multiple uses. It is not uncommon for assembly areas, such as cafeterias or gymnasiums, to be used not only for educational purposes but to also serve as assembly areas for community meetings, graduation or awards ceremonies, school dances, and similar activities.
2. In accordance with the 2006 International Building Code, Section 1004.1.1, "Areas without fixed seating", the architect shall calculate the design occupant load from Table 1004.1.1 for the "worst-case scenario" to determine the **minimum egress requirements** from each space and **fire alarm requirements**. Generally, the design occupant load for cafeterias and gymnasiums shall be based on Table 1004.1.1 "Assembly without fixed seats, concentrated".
3. In accordance with the 2006 International Building Code, Section 1004.1.1, "Areas without fixed seating", Exception, the Building Commission will permit the architect to calculate the actual occupant load based on the **primary day-to-day function of the space** for determining minimum plumbing fixtures and other code requirements. Generally, cafeterias and gymnasiums shall be based on Table 1004.1.1, "Assembly without fixed seats, unconcentrated".
4. If the architect elects to use the exception, the architect must show both the design occupant load and the actual occupant load on the Life Safety Plan submitted to the Building Commission for review.
5. For multi-use spaces utilized by the public, the architect must use reasonable judgment in locating restroom facilities so that they are adequate in number and readily accessible during outside activities.