

POLICY DIRECTIVE

TR-0011 (REV 9/2006)

TRAFFIC OPERATIONS POLICY DIRECTIVE	NUMBER: 08-06	PAGE: 1 of 6
ROBERT COPP, DIVISION CHIEF (Signature) 	DATE ISSUED: September 12, 2008	EFFECTIVE DATE: September 12, 2008
SUBJECT: Inclusion of interim policy for reduced speed limits in school zones in the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (California MUTCD)	DISTRIBUTION <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All District Directors <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All Deputy District Directors - Traffic Operations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All Deputy District Directors - Maintenance <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All Deputy District Directors - Construction <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All Deputy District Directors - Design <input type="checkbox"/> All Deputy District Directors - Transportation Planning <input type="checkbox"/> Chief, Division of Engineering Services <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chief Counsel, Legal Division <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Publications (California MUTCD Website) www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/signtech/mutcdsupp/ca_mutcd.htm <input type="checkbox"/> Headquarters Division Chief(s) for:	
DOES THIS DIRECTIVE AFFECT OR SUPERSEDE ANOTHER DOCUMENT? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	IF YES, DESCRIBE Addends Chapter 7B of the California MUTCD	
WILL THIS DIRECTIVE BE INCORPORATED IN THE CALIFORNIA MANUAL ON UNIFORM TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	IF YES, DESCRIBE Interim 2-year period in Chapter 7B, Section 7B.11 & 7B.12.	

DIRECTIVE

Pursuant to the requirements of Assembly Bill (AB) 321 (Nava) and the authority granted to the California Department of Transportation (Department) in Section 21400 and 21401 of the California Vehicle Code (CVC), interim policy changes to the following signs shall be included for a 2-year period in Part 7 of the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (California MUTCD), dated September 26, 2006;

California Code	MUTCD Code	Title of Sign	California MUTCD Section
Assembly C(CA)	None	School Speed Limit Assembly	Section 7B.11
None	S4-5 & S4-5a	Reduced Speed School Zone Ahead Sign	Section 7B.12

POLICY DIRECTIVE**IMPLEMENTATION**

In this section, for purposes of clarity, italic text is used to denote text that is being added to the California MUTCD. All other formatting as defined under the Definitions section of this Policy Directive is still applicable.

The following interim policies shall be included in the California MUTCD for a 2-year period:

Section 7B.11 School Speed Limit Assembly (S4-1, S4-2, S4-3, S4-4, S4-6, S5-1)

EXTENDED 40 KM/H (25 MPH) AND/OR REDUCED SPEEDS IN SCHOOL ZONES (Interim)

Option:

A local authority may, by ordinance or resolution, determine and declare prima facie speed limits in a residence district as follows:

- *A 20 km/h (15 mph) prima facie limit on a highway with a posted speed limit of 50 km/h (30 mph) or slower, when approaching at a distance of less than 150 m (500 ft) from, or passing, a school building, the grounds of a school building, and/or other school grounds that are not separated from the highway by a fence, gate or other physical barrier, contiguous to a highway and posted with a school warning sign that indicates a speed limit of 20 km/h (15 mph), while children are present (School Speed Limit Assembly C(CA) see Figure 103(CA)), and/or*
- *A 40 km/h (25 mph) prima facie limit on a highway with a posted speed limit of 50 km/h (30 mph) or slower, when approaching at a distance of 150 to 300 m (500 to 1,000 ft) from a school building, the grounds of a school building, and/or other school grounds that are not separated from the highway by a fence, gate, or other physical barrier, contiguous to a highway and posted with a school warning sign that indicates a speed limit of 40 km/h (25 mph), while children are present (School Speed Limit Assembly C(CA) see Figure 7B-103(CA)).*

When a 20 k/h (15 mph) speed limit is authorized at a distance of less than 150 m (500 ft) from a school, as described above, on a street with a posted speed limit of 50 km/h (30 mph), an intervening speed limit of 40 km/h (25 mph) may be authorized by ordinance or resolution at a distance of 150 to 300 m (500 to 1,000 ft) from a school, in order to provide progressive speed reduction.

Standard:

If authorized by ordinance or resolution in a residence district, the prima facie speed limits described above shall apply when approaching, at distances of:

- *Less than 150 m (500 ft), for a reduced school zone speed limit of 20 km/h (15 mph), and/or*
- *150 to 300 m (500 to 1,000 ft), for an extended school zone speed limit of 40 km/h (25 mph)*

from, or passing, a school building, the grounds of a school building, and/or other school grounds that are not separated from the highway by a fence, gate or other physical barrier, contiguous to the highway and posted with a school warning sign that indicates the reduced and/or extended school zone speed limit(s) while children are present (see Figure 7B-103(CA)).

Prima facie limits established by any criterion above shall apply only to highways that have a maximum of two traffic lanes and a maximum posted 50 km/h (30 mph) prima facie speed limit immediately prior to and after the school zone. These prima facie limit(s) shall apply to all lanes of an affected highway, in both directions of travel (see Figure 7B-103(CA)).

POLICY DIRECTIVE**IMPLEMENTATION (cont'd)**

When used, a local ordinance or resolution adopted to establish a 20 km/h (15 mph) reduced school zone speed limit and/or a local ordinance or resolution adopted to establish an extended 40 km/h (25 mph) school zone speed limit shall not be effective until appropriate signs giving notice of the speed limit(s) are erected upon the highway.

On a State highway, the ordinance or resolution shall not be effective until the ordinance or resolution has been approved by the Department of Transportation and appropriate school zone speed signs are erected upon the State highway. The local authority shall reimburse the Department of Transportation for any and all costs incurred as a result of the implementation of the ordinance or resolution.

For purposes of a 20 km/h (15 mph) reduced prima facie speed limit, school warning signs indicating a speed limit of 20 km/h (15 mph) shall be placed at a distance up to 150 m (500 ft) away from school grounds. For purposes of an extended 40 km/h (25 mph) prima facie speed limit, school warning signs indicating a speed limit of 40 km/h (25 mph) shall be placed at any distance between 150 to 300 m (500 to 1,000 ft) away from school grounds. Refer to Figure 7B-103(CA) for maximum distances to post reduced school zone speed limits from a school building, the grounds of a school building, and/or other school grounds that are not separated from the highway by a fence, gate, or other physical barrier.

The need to reduce a prima facie speed limit to 20 km/h (15 mph) and/or extend a 40 km/h (25 mph) school zone speed limit, as described above, shall be documented in writing, in an engineering study. The engineering study shall identify the provisions of Section 627 of the Vehicle Code that support the reduced and/or extended school zone speed limit(s).

Guidance:

When preparing an engineering study pursuant to the Standard above, the local authority should cite all elements of an Engineering and Traffic Survey, as discussed in Section 627 of the Vehicle Code, that support the need for a reduced speed limit of 20 km/h (15 mph) and/or an extended 40 km/hr (25 mph) school zone speed limit. Generally, a minimum of two conditions should be present before a reduced speed limit should be considered (i.e., collision history, residential density, pedestrian and bicyclist safety). However, prevailing speeds (85th-percentile speed) should not be required as the basis for a reduced speed limit.

Section 7B.12 Reduced Speed School Zone Ahead Sign (S4-5, S4-5a)

EXTENDED 40 KM/H (25 MPH) AND/OR REDUCED SPEEDS IN SCHOOL ZONES (Interim)

Option:

For school area traffic control with a reduced school zone speed limit of 20 km/h (15 mph) and/or an extended school zone speed limit of 40 km/h (25 mph) in a residence district, the Reduced Speed School Zone Ahead (S4-5, S4-5a) sign may be used to give advance notice of a reduced 20 km/h (15 mph) school zone speed limit and/or an extended school zone speed limit of 40 km/h (25 mph).

In all applications of this policy, engineering judgment must be exercised. The objective is to provide uniform applications of signs statewide. If there are any questions regarding implementation, districts should consult with the Headquarters Traffic Operations Liaison.

POLICY DIRECTIVE**DELEGATION**

No new delegations of authority are created under this policy.

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this directive is to implement the requirements of AB 321 in administrative law in the California MUTCD to provide local authorities with standards, guidance, and options for speed limits in school zones in a Residence District. AB 321 was signed into law by the Governor in October 2007 to amend CVC Section 22358.4, to designate existing statutory language as subdivision (a) and adds subdivision (b) to this section. This administrative law applies to school zones in a Residence District where local authorities, by ordinance or resolution, may expand the prima facie speed limit of 40 km/h (25 mph) from 150 to 300 m (500 to 1,000 ft) from a school; and/or, reduce the prima facie speed limit to 20 km/h (15 mph) within 150 m (500 feet) of a school.

Due to the fact that existing statute in CVC Section 22358.4(a) includes a wider application beyond school zones, this interim policy addresses only new language in CVC Section 22358.4(b) as it relates to Section 7B.11 "School Speed Limit Assembly" and 7B.12 "Reduced Speed School Zone Ahead Sign" in the California MUTCD. However, the Department is currently working on revising Section 2B.13 "Speed Limit Sign" of the California MUTCD which will encompass the provisions of CVC Section 22358.4(a).

The implementation of AB321 was brought before the CTCDC at their May 29, 2008 meeting for discussion and presentation of alternatives. The CTCDC considered the draft language and the impact to all local agencies in California. In the end, the CTCDC recommended that the Department implement these changes to the California MUTCD for a limited time period to allow evaluation of the changes but only after consultation with the Department's legal staff. The Department requested and received a legal opinion from the Department's legal staff that supported the implementation of these changes. Therefore, the Department will implement this interim policy in the California MUTCD for a limited term of 2-years which is sufficient time to allow for proper evaluation of these changes. During this time period, the Department will review and confer with the CTCDC on the operational experience of local agencies with this interim policy at regular intervals. The Department, at the expiration of 2-years, will develop the final policy and, upon recommendation from the CTCDC, will include it in the California MUTCD.

This policy will be interim until such time that is either revised or incorporated in final form into the California MUTCD at which time it will be retired.

POLICY DIRECTIVE

DEFINITIONS

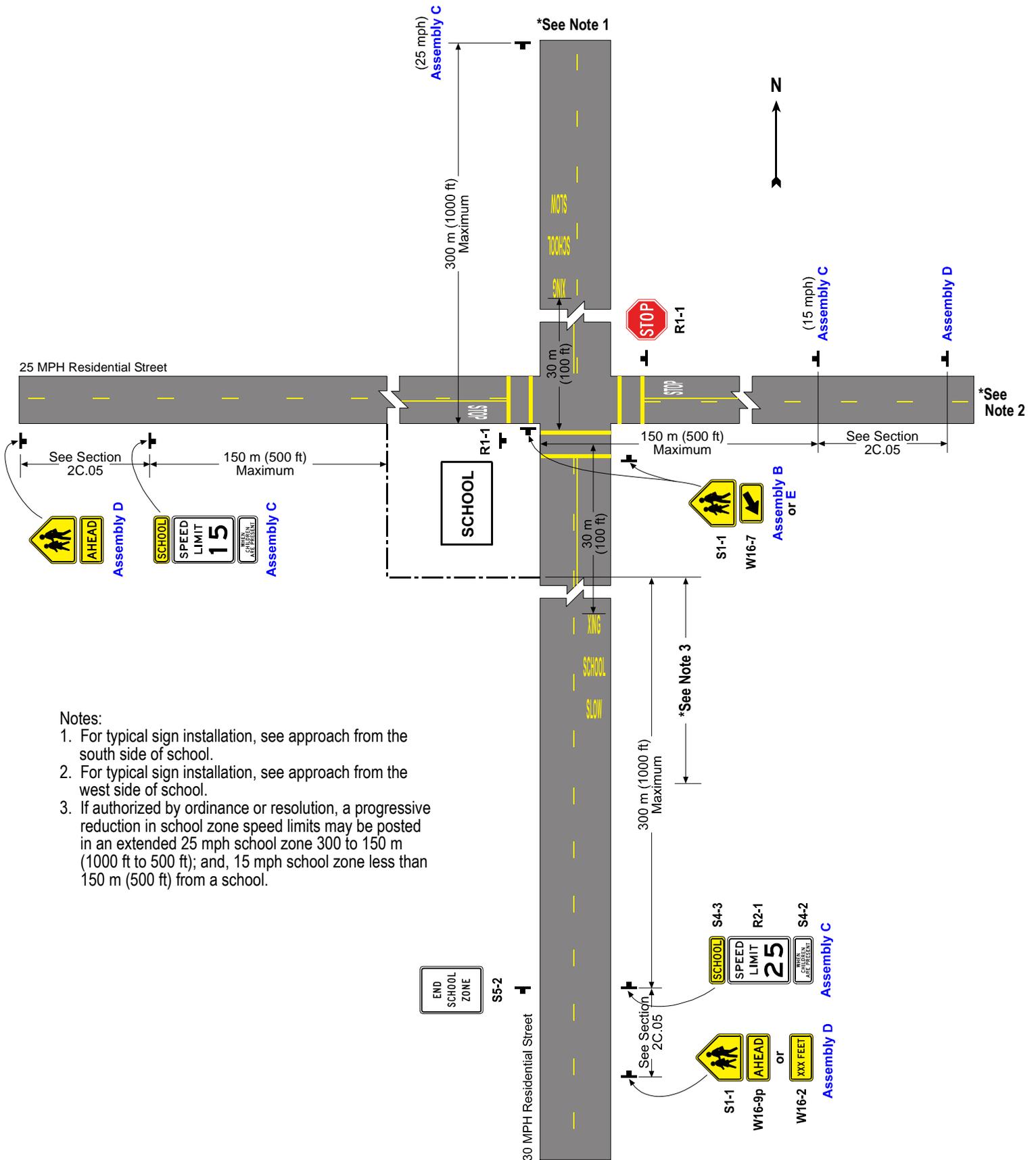
When used in this Traffic Operations Policy Directive, the text shall be defined as follows:

- 1) **Standard** – a statement of required, mandatory or specifically prohibited practice. All standards text appears in **bold** type. The verb **shall** is typically used. Standards are sometimes modified by Options.
- 2) **Guidance** – a statement of recommended, but not mandatory, practice in typical situations, with deviations allowed if engineering judgment or engineering study indicates the deviation to be appropriate. All Guidance statements text appears in underline type. The verb should is typically used. Guidance statements are sometime modified by Options.
- 3) **Option** – a statement of practice that is a permissive condition and carries no requirement or recommendation. Options may contain allowable modifications to a Standard or Guidance. All Option statements text appears in normal type. The verb may is typically used.
- 4) **Support** – an informational statement that does not convey any degree of mandate, recommendation, authorization, prohibition, or enforceable condition. Support statements text appears in normal type. The verbs shall, should and may are not used in Support statements.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Figure 7B-103(CA) Example of Signing for School Area Traffic Control with Extended and/or Reduced School Zone Speed Limits

Figure 7B-103(CA). Example of Signing for School Area Traffic Control with Extended and/or Reduced School Zone Speed Limits



- Notes:
1. For typical sign installation, see approach from the south side of school.
 2. For typical sign installation, see approach from the west side of school.
 3. If authorized by ordinance or resolution, a progressive reduction in school zone speed limits may be posted in an extended 25 mph school zone 300 to 150 m (1000 ft to 500 ft); and, 15 mph school zone less than 150 m (500 ft) from a school.