



# Traffic Guidelines Manual

ORIGINATOR State Traffic Engineer	2-3-54
CHAPTER 2	Signing
SECTION 3	Warning Signs
SUBJECT 54	School Area Signing

## A. Purpose

The [2009 MUTCD](#) has expanded the usage of signing for school areas. This policy will summarize the standards and guidance contained in [Part 7](#) of the 2009 MUTCD and will address three specific applications of School Area signing on the state highway system. This policy pertains to signing on conventional highways and expressways.

## B. Background

Part 7 of the 2009 MUTCD and [Wisconsin State Statute 118.08](#) provide support for the guidelines listed in this policy.

## C. Policy for School Area Signing

The installation of School Area signing on the State Highway System can be addressed with three different types of applications:

1. School Zone Signing. School Zones are school areas that would include buildings and/or grounds that border the roadway, but would have no specific crossing. The grounds may or may not have fencing. "School grounds" refers to public and private schools and their surrounding grounds where any of grades K through 12 are regularly taught during the normal school year.
  - a. The S1-1 School Warning sign **shall** be installed in advance of the school grounds at the prescribed warning sign distance outlined in Table 2C-4 of the 2009 Wisconsin Supplement.
  - b. The supplemental WF16-9P AHEAD plaque **shall** be installed under the S1-1 School Warning sign.
  - c. The R2-6P FINES HIGHER plaque **shall** be installed under the School Zone assembly (S1-1 Sign with WF16-9P plaque).

- d. The END SCHOOL ZONE (S5-2 Sign) **shall** be installed at the end of all school zones and areas. If there is a regulatory speed limit at the end of the school zone or area, the END SCHOOL ZONE (S5-2) sign should be mounted under the R2-1 sign. The mounting height of the END SCHOOL ZONE sign mounted under a speed limit sign should be 4' to the bottom of the secondary sign or 5' to the bottom of the lowest plaque in urban areas where there are pedestrians or parked cars.
2. School Advance Crossing Signing. The School Advance Crossing Signing is used to warn motorists that they are approaching a crossing where school children are present. The crossing may be in the same roadway where the school is located or may be on a neighboring roadway, based on the school's master plan of the school routes.
    - a. The S1-1 School Warning sign **shall** be installed in advance of the school grounds at the prescribed warning sign distance outlined in Table 2C-4 of the 2009 Wisconsin Supplement (See Figure 1).
    - b. The supplemental WF16-9P AHEAD plaque **shall** be installed under the S1-1 School Warning sign.
    - c. The R2-6P FINES HIGHER plaque **shall** be installed under the School Zone assembly (S1-1 Sign with WF16-9P plaque). The mounting height should be 4' to the bottom of the lowest plaque or 5' to the bottom of the lowest plaque in urban areas where there are pedestrians or parked cars.
    - d. If the school crossing is located on a cross street in close proximity to the turning motorist, the WF16-6P Advance Direction Arrow should be used in lieu of the WF16-9P AHEAD plaque.
  3. School Crossing Signing. The School Crossing signing is used at the location where the school children cross the roadway. Crosswalk marking is required whenever school crossing signs are used per the MUTCD. Crossing locations are established based on the school's route master plan as shown in the MUTCD, Section 7A.02.
    - a. The S1-1 School Warning sign **shall** be installed at the crossing location.
    - b. The WF16-7L/R Diagonal down arrow warning sign **shall** be installed under the S1-1 School Warning sign.

If the school crossing is located on the same roadway as the school property, then the school advance assembly can function in a dual purpose as the advanced sign for the school bordering the roadway and the advance sign for the school crossing. The school advanced sign does not need to be duplicated for this situation (See Figures 2 and 3).

#### D. Policy for Additional Signing for School Areas

Listed below are other signs covered in the 2009 MUTCD, Part 7 that are installed on the State Highway System.

1. School Bus Stop Ahead (S3-1 Sign).
  - a. The word message SCHOOL BUS STOP AHEAD (S3-1 signs) shall no longer be used. The new sign is a School Bus / Children symbol that is fluorescent yellow green in color and is still the S3-1 sign code. The existing SCHOOL BUS STOP AHEAD word message signs in the field shall be replaced with the new symbol signs by no later than December 31, 2015.
  - b. In order to determine if a School Bus Stop *qualifies* for a sign, the Minimum Visibility Distance table in Section 2C.36 of the 2009 Wisconsin Supplement Should be used.
  - c. If a School Bus Stop qualifies for a sign (based on the Minimum Visibility Distance outlined above), Table 2C-4 of the 2009 Wisconsin Supplement **shall** be used to determine field placement of the sign(s).
2. Reduced School Speed Limit Ahead (S4-5 Sign).
  - a. A Reduced School Speed Limit Ahead Sign (S4-5) **shall** be installed for reductions of 15 mph or more.
  - b. The distance table in TGM Policy 2-3-30 should be used in determining the placement distance of the Reduced School Speed Limit Ahead Sign (S4-5) from the School Speed Limit (S4-51 Sign).
3. School Speed Limit (S4-51 Sign).
  - a. Wisconsin State Statute 346.57 places a Statutory Fixed Speed Limit of 15 mph on school crossings when children are present and the crossing is properly signed. Wisconsin State Statute 349.11 allows the Department of Local units of government the authority to modify this speed restriction on their respective maintained roadways. WisDOT recommends that the school speed limit be 10 mph less than the speed limit of the roadway. The School Speed Limit (S4-51 Sign) **shall** be installed at all school areas and crossings where the speed restriction is modified.
  - b. For school areas and crossings, the School Speed Limit (S4-51 Sign) should be installed in areas that are urban or have school children walking/crossing within the right-of-way.
  - c. For school areas and crossings in fringe or rural areas, the School Speed Limit (S4-51 Sign) *may* be installed. However, the signs are generally not installed in these areas, unless school children are walking or crossing within the right-of-way. If the signs are installed in these areas, they should be 10 mph less than the posted speed limit of the roadway.

#### 4. Flashing Beacons.

The local unit of government *may* be allowed by permit to install a flashing beacon on one of the school area signs in each direction of roadway travel. RRFB's (Rectangular rapid flash beacons) may be allowed by permit on the school crossing sign assembly (S1-1 and WF16-7L/R) only, since this would be the location of the physical crossing. Policy criteria for flashing beacon usage is covered in TGM 4-5-1 and the application/permit form (DT 1877 form).

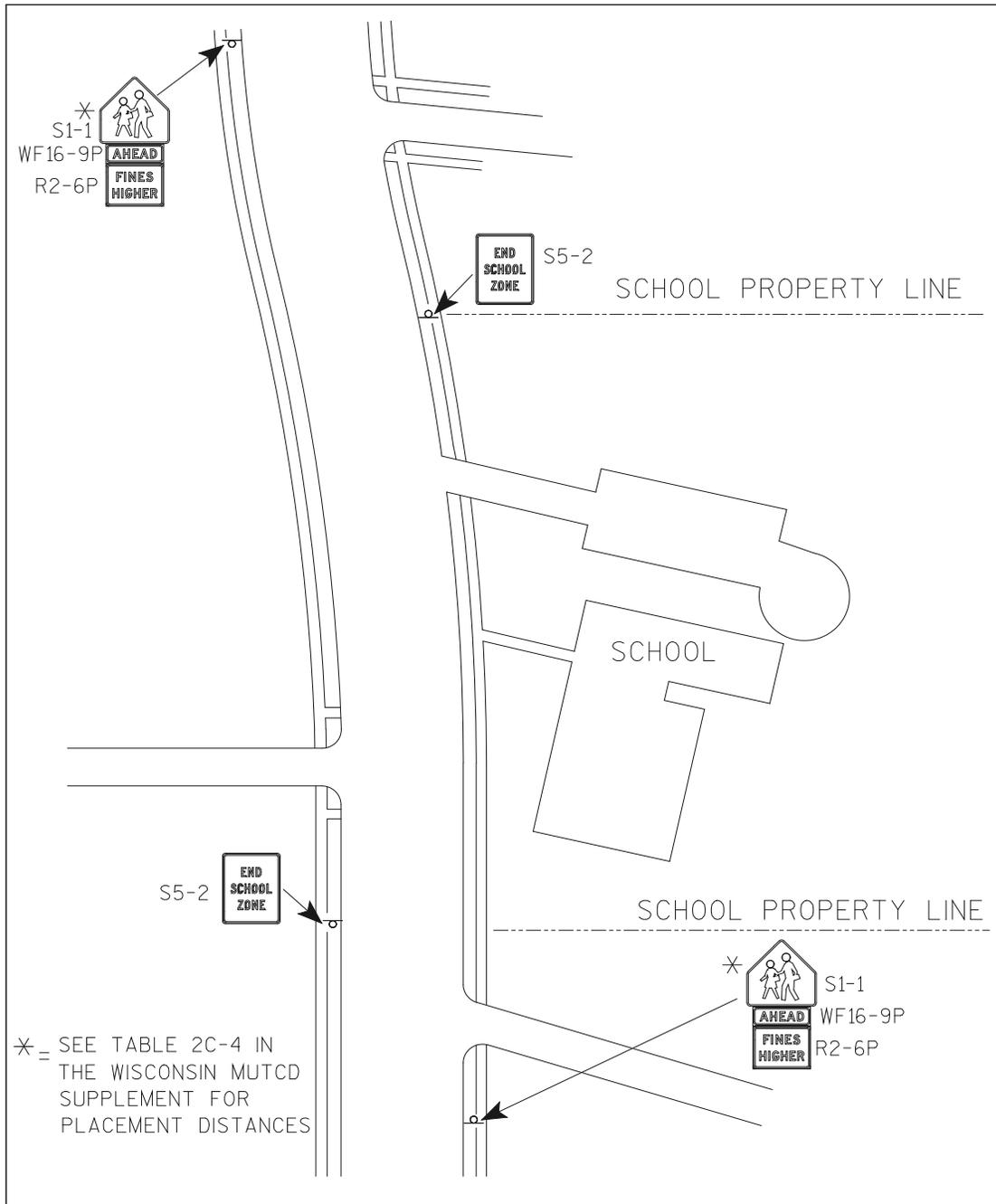


FIG.1 RURAL SCHOOL WITHOUT CROSSING

NOTE: SIGNING IS SHOWN AS TYPICAL SIGN PLACEMENT. FIELD CONDITIONS MAY DICTATE CHANGES IN SIGN PLACEMENT.

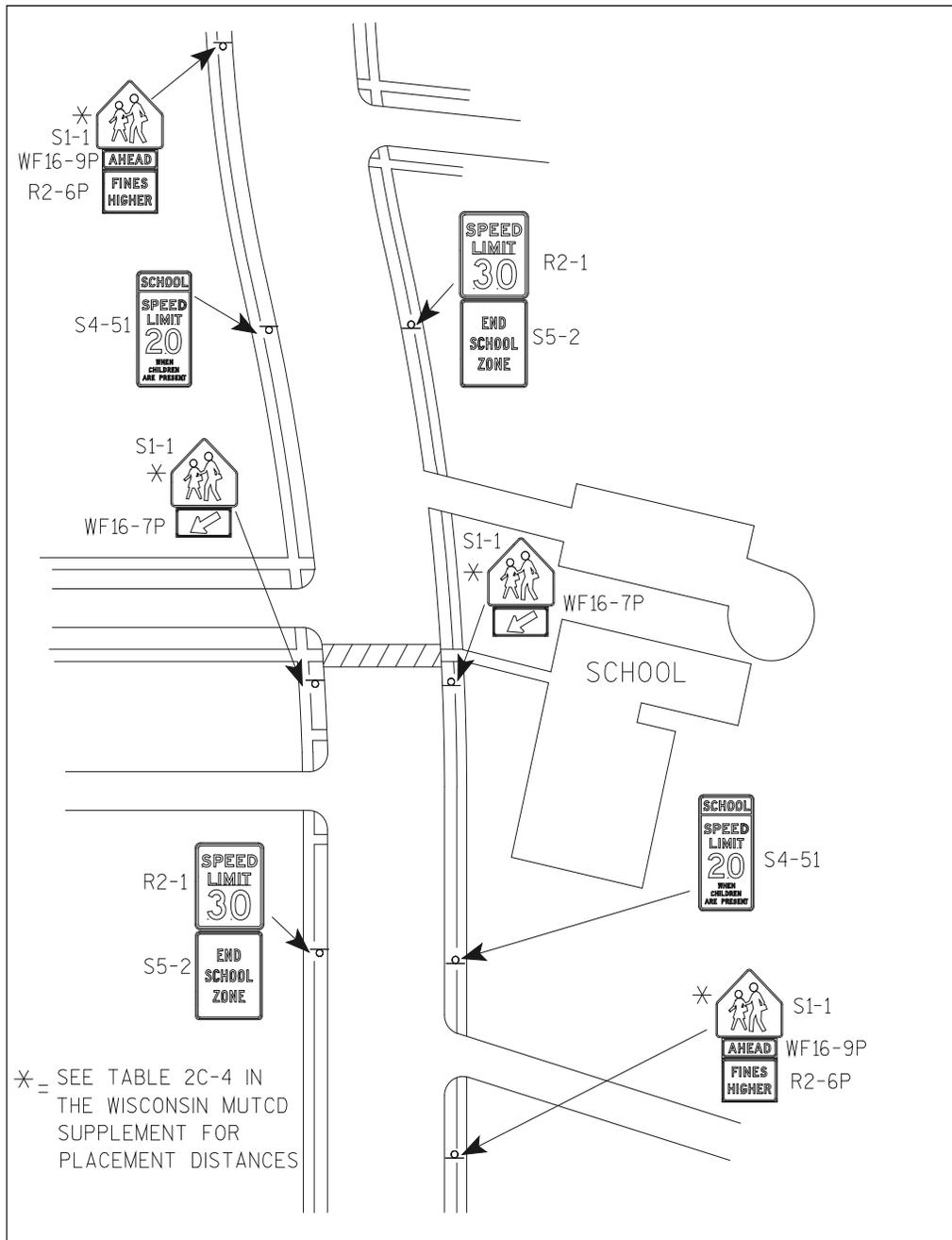


FIG. 2 URBAN SCHOOL CROSSING (WITHOUT REDUCED SCHOOL SPEED ZONE SIGNS)

NOTE: SIGNING IS SHOWN AS TYPICAL SIGN PLACEMENT. FIELD CONDITIONS MAY DICTATE CHANGES IN SIGN PLACEMENT.

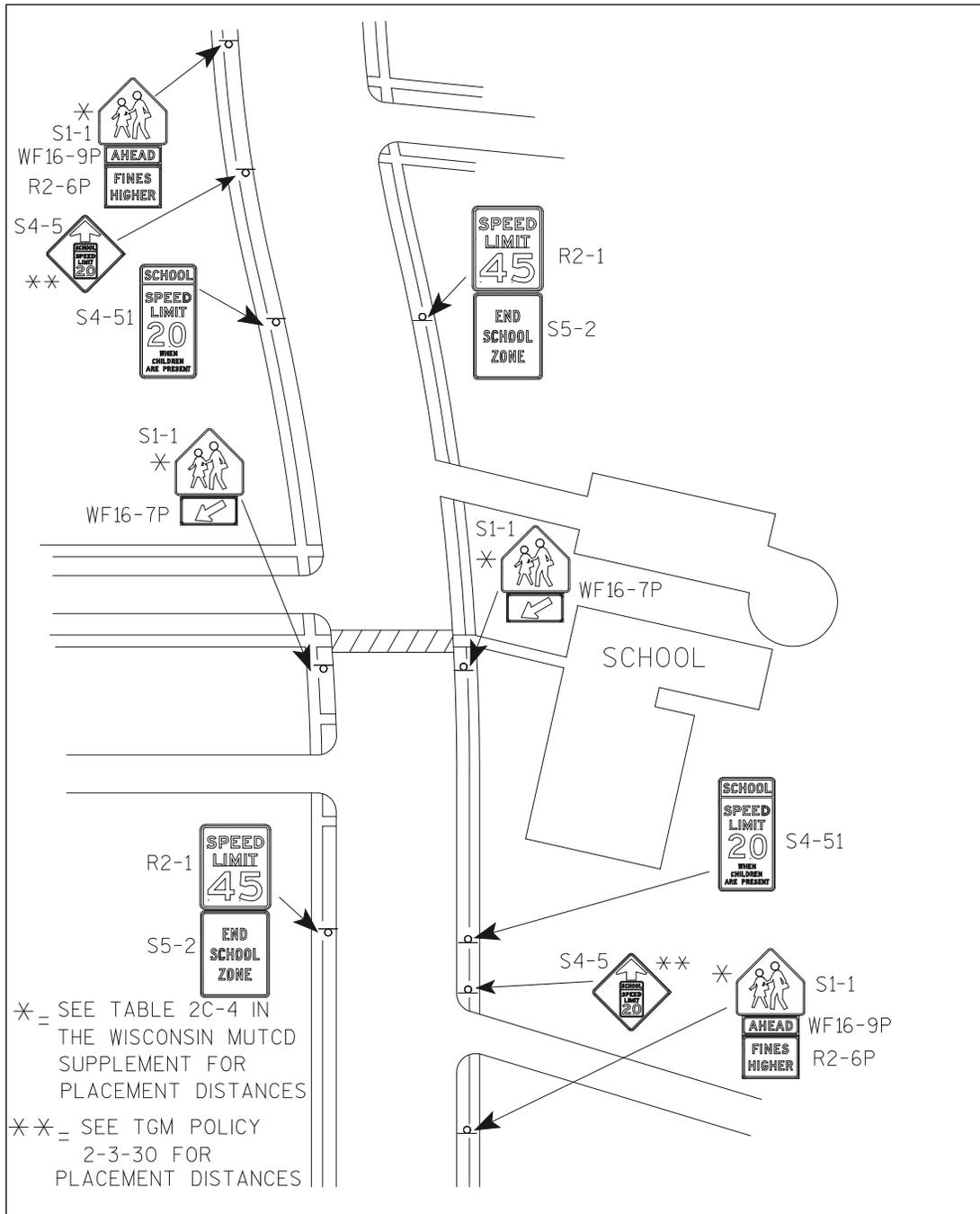


FIG. 3 URBAN SCHOOL CROSSING (WITH REDUCED SCHOOL SPEED ZONE SIGNS)

NOTE: SIGNING IS SHOWN AS TYPICAL SIGN PLACEMENT. FIELD CONDITIONS MAY DICTATE CHANGES IN SIGN PLACEMENT.