

BCAC Education assembly

Intent: Clarify where assembly spaces in educational facilities are considered Group E

Proposal:

303.1.3 Associated with Group E occupancies. A room or space used for assembly purposes that is associated with a Group E occupancy is not considered a separate occupancy. Such associated spaces shall include spaces for students such as cafeterias, libraries, shops, labs, music and drama practice rooms. Such associated spaces shall include auditoriums and gymnasiums with spectator seating for 300 or less.

Reason: To be consistent, the exceptions for assembly spaces in Section 303.1.1 through 303.1.4 (below) seem to indicate that the exceptions are intended for small spaces. However, the language in 303.1.3 has been widely interpreted. Some people feel this should be limited to spaces just typically open to students - such as libraries, music rooms, band rooms, and cafeterias. Others have interpreted this to include large gymnasiums and auditoriums with significant seating. While a school basketball game may be a school function, there would be students from another school, as well as significant number of the public, including a high percentage of families. The same concern for large number of the public also hold true in an auditorium.

This also may be considered a conflict with Section 302.1 which states “A room or space that is intended to be occupied at different times for different purposes shall comply with all of the requirements that are applicable to each of the purposes for which the room or space will be occupied.”

Below is a picture of a city wide choir competition held in the gymnasium at my local highschool.



The intent of the proposal is to not pick up areas used by students for classes, but to require larger auditoriums and gyms with seating to meet assembly provisions. The 300 occupant load would be at the current threshold for sprinklering Assembly occupancies.

Just to give an idea of how large seating in a gym can get, this is the 15 largest high school gyms –

The top fifteen in total [seating capacity](#) are as follows:

	State	City	Venue	Capacity
1	Indiana	New Castle	New Castle Fieldhouse	9,325 ^[1]
2	Indiana	East Chicago	John A. Baratto Athletic Center	8,296 ^[1]

	State	City	Venue	Capacity
3	Indiana	Seymour	Lloyd E. Scott Gymnasium	8,110 ^[1]
4	Indiana	Richmond	Tiernan Center	8,100 ^[3]
5	Indiana	Muncie	Muncie Fieldhouse	7,635 ^[4]
6	Indiana	Marion	Bill Green Athletic Arena	7,560 ^[5]
7	Texas	Dallas	Alfred J. Loos Fieldhouse	7,500 ^[1]
8	Indiana	Elkhart	North Side Gymnasium	7,373 ^[1]
9	Indiana	Michigan City	"The Wolves' Den" Gym	7,304 ^[1]
10	Indiana	Gary	West Side High School Gym	7,217 ^[1]
11	Indiana	Lafayette	Jefferson High School Gym	7,200 ^[6]
12	Indiana	Southport	Southport High School Gym	7,124 ^[6]
13	Indiana	Washington	"The Hatchet House"	7,090 ^[7]
14	Indiana	Columbus	Memorial Gymnasium	7,071 ^[6]
15	Arizona	Chinle	Wildcat Den	7,000 ^[8]

SECTION 303

ASSEMBLY GROUP A

303.1 Assembly Group A. Assembly Group A occupancy includes, among others, the use of a building or structure, or a portion thereof, for the gathering of persons for purposes such as civic, social or religious functions; recreation, food or drink consumption or awaiting transportation.

303.1.1 Small buildings and tenant spaces. A building or tenant space used for assembly purposes with an *occupant load* of less than 50 persons shall be classified as a Group B occupancy.

303.1.2 Small assembly spaces. The following rooms and spaces shall not be classified as Assembly occupancies:

1. A room or space used for assembly purposes with an *occupant load* of less than 50 persons and accessory to another occupancy shall be classified as a Group B occupancy or as part of that occupancy.
2. A room or space used for assembly purposes that is less than 750 square feet (70 m²) in area and accessory to another occupancy shall be classified as a Group B occupancy or as part of that occupancy.

303.1.3 Associated with Group E occupancies. A room or space used for assembly purposes that is associated with a Group E occupancy is not considered a separate occupancy.

303.1.4 Accessory to places of religious worship. Accessory religious educational rooms and religious auditoriums with *occupant loads* of less than 100 per room or space are not considered separate occupancies.