New York State
CENTER for SCHOOL SAFETY

"Creating Safer Schools…..Building by Building"
"Creando Escuelas Seguras….Escuela Por Escuela"

FACT SHEET

May 2008

Incident Command System (ICS) for Schools

What is the Incident Command System (ICS)?
The ICS is a standardized, on-scene, all-hazard incident management system. It is one of the incident management structures of NIMS.

What are the ICS position titles and roles (the ICS organization)?

INCIDENT COMMANDER (IC): Sets the incident objectives, strategies, and priorities; has overall responsibility for the incident response; and coordinates and manages all ICS functions. The IC first establishes the Operations Section and remaining sections are established as needed to support the operation. The IC may delegate authority for performance of certain activities to the *Command Staff and/or General Staff*. The IC may be transferred *during* an incident: a school official may serve as the incident commander and lead a command team of school personnel but if there is a bomb threat, the IC would transfer command to law enforcement. The IC is specifically responsible for:

1. Ensuring safety
2. Providing information services to internal and external stakeholders, such as parents
3. Establishing and maintaining liaison with other agencies participating in the incident
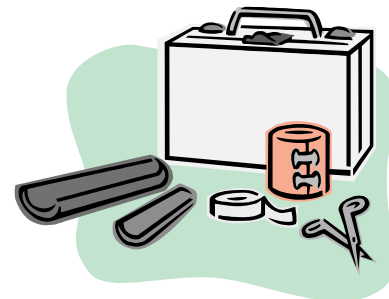
COMMAND STAFF (Officers)
1. **Public Information Officer (PIO):** Serves as the conduit for information to internal and external stakeholders, including the media or parents.
2. **Safety Officer:** Monitors safety conditions and develops measure for assuring the safety of all response personnel.
3. **Liaison Officer:** Serves as the primary contact for supporting agencies assisting at an incident.

GENERAL STAFF (Chiefs):
1. **Operations:** Roles and responsibilities focus on well-being and accountability (e.g. Health Services-

First Aid, Search and Rescue) and may check outdoor areas for students and staff; maintain student and staff emergency contacts and medical/ medication information; oversee emergency kits and supplies; keep cellular phones or two-way radios to ensure constant communication; and assist students and staff with special needs.
- Site Facility Check/Security
- Search and Rescue
- Medical
- Student Care
- Student Release/Parent Reunification

2. **Planning:** Ensures that the needs of all students, staff, visitors and parents are met by planning incident responses, assigning pre-designated roles and responsibilities and providing training to staff. Also plans and conducts exercises, completes after-incident debriefings and after-action reports, modifies the emergency plan as needed and documents all practice exercises and real responses.
- Documentation
- Situation Analysis

3. **Logistics:** Secures and coordinates resources needed by students, staff and first responders during an incident, including food, shelter and other supplies; and any physical items that may be needed (back-up generators, buses, etc.)
- Supplies/Facilities
- Staffing
- Communications

4. **Finance and Administration:** Records staff hours and expenses and supplies documentation after the disaster for insurance claims and requests for assistance to district, state, or federal governments.
   - Timekeeping
   - Purchasing

ICS Facilities:
- **Incident Command Post** is the location from which the IC oversees all incident operations.
- **Staging Areas** are where personnel and equipment are gathered while waiting to be assigned.
- **Base** is the location from which primary logistics and administrative functions are coordinated and administered.
- **Camp** is the location where resources may be kept to support incident operations if a Base is not accessible to all resources. Camps are equipped and staffed to provide food, water, sleeping areas, and sanitary services. A school gym or cafeteria could be used as a Camp for a community-wide incident.
- **Helibase** is the location from which helicopter-centered air operations are conducted.
- **Helispots** are more temporary locations at the incident where helicopters can safely land and take off.

What is an Incident Action Plan (IAP)?
An IAP provides a coherent means to communicate the overall incident objectives for both operational and support activities. The priorities are: Life safety, incident stabilization, and property preservation.

What are the elements of an IAP?
- What do we want to do?
- Who is responsible for doing it?
- How do we communicate with each other?
- What is the procedure if someone is injured?

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