



One Grantee's Story: Developing An Emergency Management Plan From Start To Finish

FY 2007 Initial Grantee Meeting

December 5 - 7, 2007 ~ San Diego, California



Steven McElroy
Director, Safety & Security
Columbus Public Schools

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools
400 Maryland Avenue, SW / Washington, DC 20202

Presentation Goals

- Demonstrate how one grantee used the ERCM/REMS grant to develop and expand upon a comprehensive emergency management plan for the district
- Provide strategies for engaging Community Partners in the formation of emergency management plans
- Outline key components of the Columbus City Schools emergency management plan
- Review strategies and suggestions for making plans compliant with the National Incident Management System
- Offer key tips for implementation



Overview of Columbus City Schools (CCS)

- Approximately 57,000 students in 128 schools, including eighteen high schools and four career centers.
- A diverse school system with over 100 languages or dialects being the native language of students.
- Large population of Somali students and a growing number of Hispanic students.



CCS Department of Education Grants

- 2003 grant focused upon literature review of school emergency plans, developing and conducting a school safety assessment with the help of community partners, incorporating incident command into school and district plans, training staff in IS-100 and 700, and developing an Emergency Operations plan for the district
- 2005 grant trained school staff for Medical Disaster Response Teams, Critical Incident Stress Management as well as school-based Incident Command
- 2005 grant has focused on preparing the school district for the possibility of a pandemic event



Where to Start

- Assess where your district currently stands in emergency management.
- Look at what your state department of education has developed for schools.
- There is a lot of good information out there. Don't reinvent the wheel. Remember, you need to develop your own model and program, one that will work for you.
- The *Practical Information on Crisis Planning Guide* should be your number one guide.
- All grantees should be NIMS compliant and provide NIMS training for their districts.
- Examine the relationships you currently have with your community partners.



Building Relationships

- Identify Community Partners.
- Reach out to them! Make a date and time to meet at their establishment and explain your goals.
- Discuss how your grant may be of mutual benefit.
- Schedule regular community partner meetings (quarterly).
- Arrange a meeting between Executive Staff from Community Partner Agencies and School Administration.



Develop Your Evaluation Early

- Develop goals and objectives that are realistic and achievable.
- Review your evaluation instrument every three months.
- Review all GPRA measures in the beginning and make sure your data and evaluation will help you meet your GPRA Performance Objectives



Sequence of Emergency Management

- Mitigation-Prevention
- Preparedness
- Response
- Recovery



Mitigation-Prevention

- The goal of mitigation is to decrease the need for response as opposed to simply increasing response capability.
- Connect with community emergency responders to identify local hazards.
- Review the most recent safety audit to examine school buildings and grounds.
- Determine who is responsible for overseeing violence prevention strategies in your school.
- Encourage staff to provide input and feedback during the crisis planning process.
- Review incident data.
- Determine major problems in your school with regard to student crime and violence.
- Assess how the school addresses these problems.
- Conduct an assessment to determine how these problems, as well as others, may impact your vulnerability to certain crises.



Building Assessments

For NIMS Compliance

- School districts are to assess and evaluate their incident response and management capabilities.
- From this assessment, preparedness recommendations and an Emergency Operations Plan for schools and district are to be developed.
- Emergency Operations Plans are to be reviewed yearly to determine if there are unmet requirements.



Building Assessment

- Identify an assessment instrument for your school.
- Use this form every year.
- Meet with the crisis team at each individual school.
- Use the results to drive your emergency management efforts.



Parts of the CCS Assessment

Mitigation-Prevention

- Building Crisis Plans
- Supervision/surveillance
- Physical Plant

Preparedness

- Logs and Drills

Response

- Medical Team
- Safety Team

Recovery

- CARE Team



The Instrument

1.00 Logs and Drills

The building has a log of all required fire drills

The building has a record of fire inspections by the local or state fire officer.

The building has a record of required health permits.

The building has current Health Department Healthy Buildings inspection forms .

The building has a log of all chemicals and other dangerous substances.

The building has Material Safety Data Sheets easily accessible for all chemicals and substances in building.

The building has a fire drill every month

The building had three tornado drills during the past 12 months.

The building had a shelter-in-place drill during the past 12 months.

The building had a reverse evacuation drill during the past 12 months.

The building had a lock down drill during the past 12 months.

Students are informed of all drill procedures.

Staff and students are debriefed after all drills.



The Instrument

2.00 Building Crisis Plans

Crisis Plan Content

The Building Crisis Plan assigns specific duties to individuals.

The Building Crisis Plan has a three-deep back up if a staff member is not available.

The Building Crisis Plan accommodates students and staff with disabilities.

The Building Crisis Plan designates a liaison separate from incident commander to communicate with police, fire, and other agencies.

The Building Crisis Plan designates a person to direct crisis counseling.

The Building Crisis Plan designates a person in charge of safety.

The Building Crisis Plan designates an incident commander.

The Building Crisis Plan reflects the community's crime rate.

The Building Crisis Plan includes procedures for media contact during a crisis.

The Building Crisis Plan designates a pick up point for parents during a building emergency.

The Building Crisis Plan is written specifically to the building.

The Building Crisis Plan includes an initiation procedure for appropriate responses.

The Building Crisis Plan includes post-crisis response plans.



Lessons Learned

- Only four of 142 buildings were aware of where the gas, electric and water shutoffs were located.
- Most schools were not practicing the six nationally recognized emergency drills, evacuation, reverse evacuation, shelter-in-place, lockdown, duck, cover and hold, and hit the deck. Many schools were still using codes instead of plain language.
- Many schools were not evacuating far enough during drills.
- In most schools, the only people who knew the school's emergency plan were the administrators.
- Many schools did not have a controlled access policy.
- There were limited provisions in our crisis plans for special needs and ESL students.



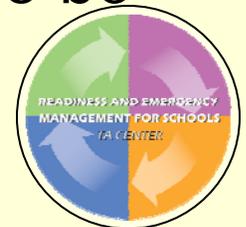
Tips for Success

- Know/learn the resources within your district and community.
- Track all data correctly.
- Keep to your timeline.
- Receive a commitment from your district...other than dollars!
- Learn from others, but develop a plan to fit your district.



Preparedness

- Good planning will facilitate a rapid, coordinated, effective response when an emergency occurs.
- Determine what emergency plans exist in the school, district, and community.
- Identify all stakeholders involved in emergency management.
- Develop procedures for communicating with staff, students, families, and the media.
- Establish procedures to account for students during an emergency.
- Gather information about the school facility, such as maps and the location of utility shutoffs.
- Identify the necessary equipment that needs to be assembled to assist staff in a crisis.



Preparedness

DRILLS

- Use plain language/no codes!
- Uniform across district
- Involve your local response agencies



Preparedness

Drills

- Evacuation
- Reverse Evacuation
- Lock Down
- Shelter-in-Place
- Duck, Cover, and Hold
- Hit the Deck

Other Responses

- Cancel school before it starts
- Early release
- Relocation
- Activation of Incident Command System



Plans for Special Needs Students

- Have you assessed all of your drills to include special needs students?
- What special considerations have you made?
- Are your first responders aware of your special needs population?
- Never leave these students alone.
- Review the special school plans.



Prevention Tips

- Develop a schedule for schools to follow to practice emergency drills on a regular basis.
- Track all drills for each school on a database to determine baseline time needed to complete drills and areas in need of improvement.
- Work closely with special education experts to keep special needs students safe and adapt emergency procedures to meet their needs.
- Communicate with local police, fire and emergency management about drill procedures and seek their input.



Response

- A crisis is the time to follow the emergency plan and make use of your preparations.
- Determine if an emergency is occurring.
- Identify the type of emergency that is occurring and determine the appropriate response.
- Activate the Incident Management System.
- Ascertain whether an evacuation, reverse evacuation, lock-down, or shelter-in-place needs to be implemented.
- Maintain communication among all relevant staff at officially designated locations.
- Establish what information needs to be communicated to staff, students, families, and the community.
- Monitor how emergency first aid is being administered to the injured.
- Decide if more equipment and supplies are needed.



Response

- What is your responsibility?
 - Act and react
 - Perform as you were trained
 - Accept help and relinquish command and control when professional help arrives



NIMS Compliance for Schools

- School districts assess and evaluate their incident response and management capabilities.
- From this assessment, an Emergency Operations Plan for schools and district is developed.
- School personnel are trained at the NIMS 700 and NIMS 800 levels.
- NIMS (National Incident Management System) is incorporated into existing training programs and exercises.
- Schools work with community partners developing Emergency Operations Plans.
- Emergency Operations Plans are reviewed yearly to determine if there are unmet requirements.
- Local school boards adopt a board policy implementing NIMS Incident Command.
- Know the District's state/local requirements to ensure that each school system is compliant.



Incident Command: Why Are We Doing This?

- It is required for recipients of preparedness funding.
- It works.
 - Establishes clear focus on objectives and lines of authority
 - Helps entities to establish response roles and capabilities before an incident
- It saves lives and money.
 - Lessons learned
 - Practicing and drilling



Incident Command

- A commonly accepted plan for disaster incident management that assigns tasks and allows for rapid, expert decision making.
- Enhances communication at the incident site within each agency and between agencies.
- The Incident Commander is responsible until the authority is delegated to another person.
- The Incident Command Post is where the primary administrative functions are coordinated.
- Incident command can be used for fires and earthquakes, as well normal city events.



Threat Levels Used at CCS

Level- I Monitor: Potential crisis; notify necessary staff

- *Examples: threatening weather; monitor weather radio.*

Level II- Standby: Potential or low level crisis; put parts of team on standby or notify team to be prepared.

- *Examples: tornado watch; let staff know that it may become necessary to move if a tornado is sighted.*

Level III- Emergency: *Full crisis, activate Command Post*

- *Examples: tornado warning, tornado sirens going off; duck and cover, get to tornado stations if you have time.*



Incident Command Organization at CCS Building Site

■ Command Staff

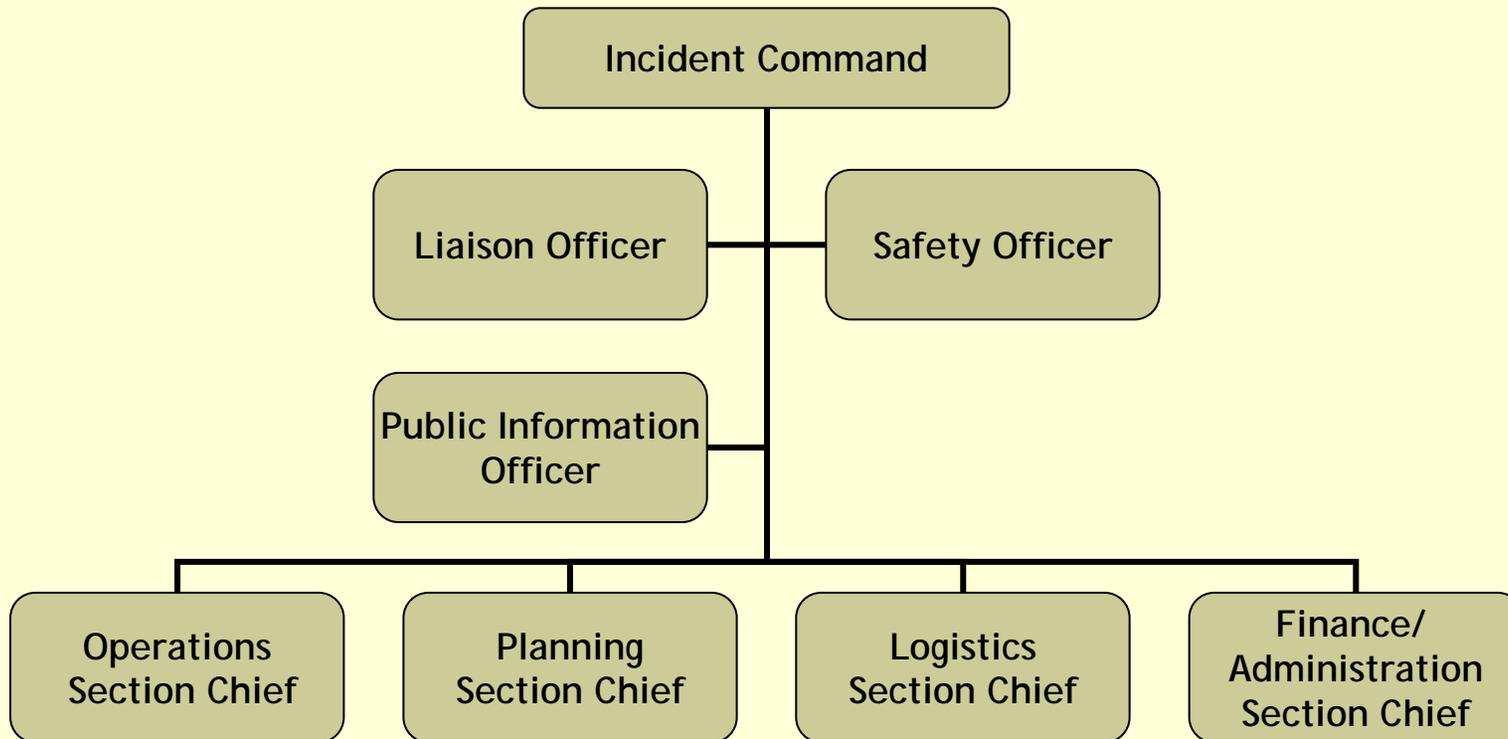
- Incident Commander (always staffed in ICS applications)
- Liaison Officer
- Public Information Officer
- Safety Officer
- Scribe

■ General Staff

- Operations Section Chief
- Logistics Section Chief
- Planning Section Chief
- Finance Section Chief



Incident Command System Building Level



School Incident Command System

Incident Commander/Principal

- Is in charge of any crisis until appropriate an emergency responder arrives.
- Assesses level of danger and determines level of threat.
- Establishes inner and outer perimeter and summons additional help.
- *At level three*, the Incident Commander establishes a command post and summons the Incident Command Management Team to the command post.



Operations Teams Utilized at CCS

- Medical Disaster Response Team
- Care Team
- Safety Team



Medical Disaster Response Team

- School nurse leads this team and coordinates its training.
- Team identifies necessary staging areas, personnel, and supplies.
- Team receives training in First Aid, CPR, AED and Triage.
- Team is responsible for triaging and treating all casualties until outside assistance arrives and takes over.
- Team documents all treatment activities.



Student Care Team

- School counselor leads this team and coordinates this training.
- Team identifies personnel, supplies and necessary staging areas.
- Team counsels traumatized students and staff.
- Team coordinates aftermath procedures for students/ school staff.
- Team assists with student accountability, reunification, and release.



Student Accountability Coordinator

- Operates under direction of Student Care Team Leader.
- Responsible for accounting for and tracking the location and disposition of all students.



Safety Team

- School Safety and Security Officer leads this team and coordinates its training.
- Coordinates functions of site security (parental management, violence, crowd control).
- Team creates a Manpower Pool.
- Secures evacuation site, assists in evacuation, informs safety officer of any unsafe conditions.
- Assists building in reviewing the crisis plans.



Manpower Pool Coordinator

- Operates under the direction of the Safety Team Leader.
- Responsible for assembling and tracking use of staff members assigned to the Manpower Pool.



General Staff Assignments

- Everyone has an assignment - i.e., specific Incident Command role, team assignment, classroom coverage, or Manpower Pool.
- Classroom Coverage - specifically list who will cover which classrooms.
- Manpower Pool - specifically assign all staff not given Incident Command roles, team assignments, or classroom coverage assignments to Manpower Pool.



Incident Command System

- Sites and staging areas should be pre-planned with back ups.
 - Command Post
 - Triage
 - Student Accountability
 - Care Team
 - Manpower Pool
 - Whole school relocation sites



Staging Areas

- The location where personnel and equipment are kept while waiting for assignments.
 - Command Post staging area
 - Triage staging area
 - Care Team staging area
 - Security Team staging area
 - Manpower Pool staging area
 - Relocation Site



Incident Action Plan

- Measurable strategic operations to be achieved within the specified period.
- To be filled out by each command and general command officer for any objectives they have developed and implemented during a crisis.



Response Tips

- Develop Operations Teams which will fit the needs of your district.
- Work with community partners to access training opportunities at low or no-cost for your staff, such as local health departments, Red Cross, emergency management and state or local homeland security.
- Partner with first responders to be included in local or regional disaster drills.



Recovery

- During recovery, return to learning and restore the infrastructure as quickly as possible.
- Strive to return to learning as quickly as possible.
- Restore the physical plant, as well as the school community.
- Monitor how staff are assessing students for the emotional impact of the crisis.
- Identify what follow up interventions are available to students, staff, and first responders.
- Conduct debriefings with staff and first responders.
- Assess curricular activities that address the crisis.
- Allocate appropriate time for recovery.
- Plan how anniversaries of events will be commemorated.
- Capture "lessons learned" and incorporate them into revisions and trainings.



Action Steps: Immediately After the Crisis

Prepare for 3 levels of intervention:

Tier 1 - General School-Based Interventions

Psycho-education, triage and assessment
Supportive environment

Tier 2 - School-Based Interventions

Trauma and grief - focused counseling
Short-term group or individual counseling

Tier 3 - Specialized Community-Based Interventions

Referral to on or off-site mental health
services



Tips for Recovery

- Use the expertise of your district's counseling staff to develop a recovery plan.
- Community partners such as local health departments and the Red Cross have a wealth of material which can be included in your recovery plans.



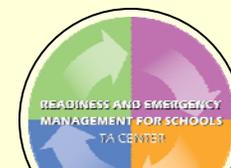
What CCS Accomplished

- Conducted an emergency management assessment by interviewing a building team at 142 CPS buildings
- Generated a recommendations report from our building assessments
- Organized a collaborative Community Partner Group with bi-monthly meetings
- Provided every school, through FEMA funds, a building first aid bag, CARE team bag, and Medication bag
- Cross trained 235 counselors, nurses and security specialists in Incident Command, Incident Stress Management, first aid, CPR, AED and Triage training
- Trained 1838 staff members to serve on Medical Disaster Response Teams.
Trained Medical Teams, CARE Teams and Safety Teams in every school
- All Safety and Security Specialist have had First Aid, CPR, AED, Triage, Critical Incident Stress Management, CERT Training, IS 100, and IS 700 training
- Trained 5100 district employees at the IS 100 Level
- Trained 759 bus drivers in IS 100 and School Bus Watch



Crisis Management Loop

- Completing the Crisis Management Plan might seem like the end, but it is also the beginning.
- The “Plan” is a work in progress. Evaluate each incident with an after action report. What worked? What didn't? How could you improve operations?
- Update and strengthen the plan so that in a crisis, no child is left behind.



QUESTIONS??

