

# Incident Command System (ICS) Overview

---

The Incident Command System (ICS)<sup>2</sup> is a standardized, on-scene, all-hazards incident management approach that:

- Allows for the integration of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications operating within a common organizational structure.
- Enables a coordinated response among various jurisdictions and functional agencies, both public and private.
- Establishes common processes for planning and managing resources.

ICS is flexible and can be used for incidents of any type, scope, and complexity. ICS allows its users to adopt an integrated organizational structure to match the complexities and demands of single or multiple incidents.

ICS is used by all levels of government – Federal, state, tribal, and local – as well as by many nongovernmental organizations and the private sector. ICS is also applicable across disciplines. It is typically structured to facilitate activities in five major functional areas: Command, Operation, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration. All of the functional areas may or may not be used based on the incident needs. Intelligence/Investigations is an optional sixth functional area that is activated on a case-by-case basis.

As a system, ICS is extremely useful; not only does it provide an organizational structure for incident management, but it also guides the process for planning, building, and adapting that structure. Using ICS for every incident or planned event helps hone and maintain skills needed for the large-scale incidents.

---

<sup>2</sup>FEMA – Federal Emergency Management Agency

## FELICITY-FRANKLIN LOCAL SCHOOLS

### Incident Command System<sup>1</sup>

The ICS functional areas include the following:

1. **SUPERINTENDENT**

*Command* function, responsible for overall on-scene management, includes an incident commander (IC) and, depending on the size or complexity of the incident, may include a safety officer to address hazardous or unsafe conditions, a liaison officer to coordinate with other agencies, and an information officer to deal with media and public information.

2. **HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL**

*Operations* function, which is responsible for the actual tactical operation at the incident.

3. **MAINTENANCE SUPERVISOR**

*Planning* function in larger incidents which includes the collection, evaluation, dissemination, and use of information on the incident development and status of resources.

4. **MIDDLE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL**

*Logistics* function, which is responsible for locating and organizing facilities, services, and materials needed to manage the incident, such as communications, medical support, and food.

5. **TREASURER**

*Finance* function, which tracks costs and financial considerations associated with the incident management.

## SUPERINTENDENT

*Administrator-in-charge.* The school superintendent, principal, or other administrator-in-charge may be responsible for

- assessing the situation, engaging appropriate crisis guidelines, and monitoring their implementation;
- serving as the liaison with public safety agency ICs once they arrive, being present and participating in command centers, and coordinating the key individuals and organizations in the broader school community;
- making or assigning appropriately trained administrator's designee to make timely notifications of deaths and injuries, as applicable to the incident;
- assigning duties as needed;
- reviewing and approving public information releases, if possible;
- providing leadership and direction for the recovery process;
- approving appropriate requests for additional resources.

## HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

*School safety/security official.* School security or school police officials' roles may include the following:

- Assigning, supervising, and coordinating school security or police staff to supervise and control the incident site, perimeter, crowds, and access, and to direct traffic and escort visitors.
- Maintaining liaison with public safety agencies on operational issues.
- Collecting, organizing, and documenting facts, statements, and information.
- Briefing incident commanders and other key officials on investigations and security issues.
- Forecasting ongoing school security and policing needs.
- Other duties associated with the protection of life, property, and information.

*Public information officer.* Communications, community, or media relations personnel may do the following:

- Engage and monitor implementation of the crisis communications plan.
- Oversee mass parent notification system and other parent crisis communication message development and delivery.
- Oversee the update of crisis response and recovery information on district and individual school websites.
- Coordinate appropriate media briefings and other incident-related communications and dissemination of information.
- Participate in Joint Information Center (JIC) activities with public information officers from other involved agencies.
- Provide updated fact sheets for secretaries and other persons communicating with parents and the public.
- Ensure effective and consistent communications, in cooperation with school administrators, with the victims and their families.
- Maintain as detailed records as possible of the information requested and released.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

*Secretaries/office support staff.* These individuals play a key role in the day-to-day operations of schools and will also play a key role in managing a crisis incident. Their roles may include the following:

- Having one designated secretary, if possible, on the crisis team to document the actions taken by school officials in managing the crisis.
- Each building secretary should make available to designated staff, the Emergency Medical Authorization for each student in their building.
- Coordinating requests for additional copying, supplies and other such items needed to manage the incident.
- Maintaining a log of phone calls whenever possible.
- Utilizing fact sheets prepared for communications with parents, community members, and other callers.
- Referring media inquiries to the designated staff.
- *Not* speculating or giving opinions.
- *Not* releasing confidential student, staff, or other information.
- Limiting the use of office phone during an emergency, especially by students, strangers, and visitors.
- Knowing how to report emergencies (e.g., knowing what information 911 dispatchers will need to know and how it should be provided).
- Having and making available updated quick resource reference lists, contact information, and so forth.
- Knowing how to use, and coordinate the use of, broadcast fax, e-mail, voice mail, and other message systems, including public address systems and bell systems.

### ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

*Teachers, preschool staff, and support staff.* Their roles may include the following:

- Implementing evacuation, lockdowns, or other directives as issued by crisis management leaders.
- Not assuming that everything is secure and back to normal until given an all-clear indication of such.
- Meeting the needs of special needs populations.
- Staying with and supervising students, with an emphasis on ensuring that they remain as calm and quiet as possible, and that they follow adult directions.
- Being prepared to take student roll and to report missing students.
- Knowing how to report concerns and needs related to the crisis, and knowing who to report them to.
- Being familiar with, and prepared to deal with, student emotions and psychological reactions to the crisis.
- Being flexible and prepared to adapt curriculum and classroom activities in response to the crisis and, in particular, to help students process and manage their reactions to the crisis.
- Communication clearly, concisely, and honestly to students before, during, and after the crisis.

*School nurse or health aide, counselors, psychologists, social workers, Head Start personnel, and other mental health professionals.* These personnel may do the following:

- Mobilize first aid, assist with triage of victims, coordinate emergency medical service response, and identify students transported to hospitals and associated parent notifications, address needs of medicated students, and so on.
- Mobilize all available mental health resource personnel and materials from within, and if necessary from outside of, the school district.
- Establish and coordinate group and individual counseling opportunities for students, teachers, staff, and other, including self-referral systems.
- Identify resources for teachers, parents, and others to help identify the natural progression and management of the grief and healing process.
- Coordinate debriefings and make services available to those providing care and management of the crisis.
- Identify resources for parents and the broader community to deal with grief and healing.
- Prepare for memorial services, and the long-term support needed for anniversary dates of the crisis incidents.
- Implement a comprehensive communication plan for making available services known.
- Maintain adequate records of services provided.

**MAINTENANCE SUPERVISOR  
DAY SHIFT AND 2<sup>ND</sup> SHIFT**

*Custodians and maintenance personnel.* Their role may include the following:

- Assisting in physically securing buildings and grounds, or, when appropriate, providing access to normally secured areas for crisis management officials.
- Being available to brief public safety responders on building design and operations.
- Having information available on emergency shutoff controls for utilities, alarms, bells, and so forth.
- Being prepared for requests to assist in providing additional special needs, such as additional electrical, mechanical, and other resources.
- Preparing for quick mobilization of staff for major cleanup, repair, and other activities at the appropriate time as directed by incident commanders.

## TRANSPORTATION COORDINATOR

*Transportation staff.* Such staff, including bus drivers, can play critical roles, including the following:

- Being available and flexible for short-notice emergency transportation needs.
- Becoming familiar with alternate site plans, evacuation routes and procedures, and so forth.
- Knowing how properly to use and maintain two-way radio communications equipment.
- Having first-aid kits and related supplies on buses at all times.
- Maintaining rosters and emergency contact information for regular riders.
- Reporting weather or other emergency condition, obstacles, or concerns as appropriate.



## PARENTS AND STUDENTS

*Parents.* Parents can play critical roles in crisis management by doing the following:

- Following procedures established by school officials for responding in crisis situations, use of alternative sites, and other logistical requests.
- Learning to recognize children's psychological responses to crisis situations and being familiar with available school and community resources for dealing with these reactions.
- Supporting children and encouraging them to communicate their thoughts and concerns.
- Avoiding finger-pointing and blame, focusing instead on healing and recovery as a first priority.
- Being realistic as to what steps should be taken regarding security changes after a crisis incident.

*Students.* Student roles in a crisis may include the following:

- Participating seriously in lockdowns, evacuations, or other steps ordered to secure themselves and the school.
- Remaining as calm and quiet as possible.
- Following the directions of adults.
- Reporting any concerns or needs.
- Avoiding the use of cell phones and texting message to forward information about an unfolding incident for which they have no direct knowledge of details.
- Providing input on steps for recovery and future security and emergency preparedness needs.