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Incident Command System Use in K12 Schools Crisis Management

This was a qualitative study of a large urban K12 district in Texas, and the use of the Incident Command System (ICS) to manage crisis events. The study and was the dissertation topic for a Doctorate in Education. The federal government mandates the use of ICS to manage emergencies by organizations which receive federal funds. An administrator interviewed said: 'I don't know if there is a way to translate it [ICS] into a language that the school district can more easily understand, and I think that's really going to be the barrier to the use of the incident command structure.' Another leader interviewed relates the challenge faced by K12 districts in using ICS is '.the training it requires, the familiarization with those key roles.' and another, '.it is just hard to get a centralized organization of folks that are going to be there long enough to get all the needed training to actually be effective.' It takes years to master the intricacies of the ICS. K12 schools operate with a different focus, structure, and culture than public safety agencies for which the ICS was developed. This study evaluates the suitability of ICS for use in a K12 school district. It asks if the ICS, as it exists now, is useable in the K12 environment, or is there a need for a modified incident management system for the K12 environment, that effectively interfaces with the ICS of public safety responders?

Presentation Theme: Use of the Incident Command System in the K12 Schools to Manage Crisis and Emergency Events.

Collaborators, Advisor(s) and Department(s) that assisted with this research: Doctoral Advisor Dr. Adam Fullerton, Trident University.