

Colorado Prepares Its First Ever Student-Run School Evacuation Drill

Image Gallery



Camilla Yamada will lead Colorado's first student-run school evacuation drill Wednesday at 1:30 pm.

Student leaders will use the Incident Command System (ICS) mandated by the Colorado Safe School Act to conduct an emergency evacuation of 300 of their schoolmates at the Rocky Mountain School of Expeditionary Learning (RMSEL), Wednesday, April 28, at 1:30 pm.

Online PR News – 26-April-2010 Student leaders will use the Incident Command System (ICS) mandated by the Colorado Safe School Act to conduct an emergency evacuation of 300 of their schoolmates at the [Rocky Mountain School of Expeditionary Learning](#) (RMSEL), Wednesday, April 28, at 1:30 pm. The event will be followed by a 'hotwash' or 'after-action evaluation' -- a group discussion to determine strengths and weaknesses, and recommend corrective actions.

All activities are open to the public, and reporters or photographers who come early can be 'embedded' with school participants to cover the action up close.

Project leader Camilla Yamada came up with the idea of training a group of 23 RMSEL seniors in the Incident Command System to see whether or not students can effectively assist school staff when a crisis hits, or even take over incident command if they have to -- as will be tested here.

Yamada is a graduate intern at the Natural Hazards Center at the University of Colorado, Boulder, and a graduate student in Disaster Medicine & Management at Philadelphia University. With the RMSEL project she hopes to launch a disaster curriculum that engages students to take responsibility for their own safety and improve the resilience of their schools.

So far, she finds that the students had no problem learning the same ICS concepts that school staff must now learn in order to better coordinate their efforts with local response agencies when responding to school

incidents.

Yamada also finds that the student leaders can quickly learn the techniques of concise plain-English communications with 2-way radios, which they will be using during the drill to further improve coordination. The radio equipment and training were provided by [SchoolSAFE Communications](#), the Colorado company building a national emergency communications network for schools.

For the drill, Yamada is holding up her sleeve a surprise development that will cause the participants to abruptly change their course of action. "It wouldn't be a drill if you couldn't expect the unexpected," she explained.

In 2008, Senate Bill [SB08-181](#) was signed into law requiring all Colorado schools to adopt the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and ICS, and to conduct joint planning, training, drills, exercises, and evaluations with their local responders. ICS is a kind of universal playbook that allows responders from different agencies anywhere to instantly take on pre-defined roles and work together as a team. This will be the first time in Colorado that students are formally brought into the ICS fold, taking on all command roles.

RMSEL is a multi-district public school serving the Aurora, Denver, Cherry Creek, Littleton, and Douglas County school districts. It is located at 1700 South Holly Street, Denver, CO 80222. Check in at Ash Grove Park for the event by 1:00 pm. There's street parking next to Ash Grove Park.

The following is the list of the ICS roles and the students assigned to those roles:

Incident Commanders: Cosmo and Jazmin
Public Information Officers: Alex, Colin, Chris
Safety Officers: Tarah, Duncan, Jesse, Desmarae, Noah
Liaison Officers: Emily, Shauna
Operations Section Chiefs: Alex, Olivia, Kitana
Planning Section Chiefs: Forrest, Jason, Eve
Logistics Section Chiefs: Tiffany, Hanna, Austyn
Additional Role - Observers: Sasha, Cece

Leann Asgari
Director of Operations
Rocky Mountain School of Expeditionary Learning
303-759-2076 ext 2223

Media Information

John Simmons
johnsimmons@schoolsafetypartners.org
<http://www.SchoolSafetyPartners.org>
9650 E Geddes Ave
Englewood
CO
80112
United States