



# School Safety Summit

Creating a School Emergency Communications Plan

Colorado State Capitol, Room 352

Friday, February 4, 2011

1:30 - 3:30 pm

Sen. Steve King, Chair

## **School Safety Summit**

Room 352, Colorado State Capitol

February 4, 2011 - 1:30-3:30 pm

**Topic:** School Emergency Communications - Interoperable Communications Between Schools and Community Partners when Responding to School Incidents

- Objectives, resources, opportunities, and strategies related to incorporating the National Emergency Communications Plan into our statewide School Response Framework (22-32-109.1 (4), Colorado Revised Statutes)
- Achieving communications interoperability for schools
- Available funding
- Schools and community partners: joint planning, training, drills, exercises, evaluations, reporting, and corrective actions
- Stakeholders open discussion
- Next Steps: statutory construction, stakeholder review

*Handouts provided, also available for download at [www.SchoolSafetySummit.org](http://www.SchoolSafetySummit.org).*

### **Summit Host**

1. Sen. Steve King
2. John Simmons, Special Aide to Sen. Steve King
3. Tatianna Gruen, 2011 Senate Aide
4. Brita Darling, Office of Legislative Legal Services

### **School Emergency Communications Task Force**

5. Kathy Morris, School Safety and Homeland Security Consultant
6. Todd Skoglund, NIMS/ICS Trainer
7. Chris Olson, Public Safety Consultant
8. Alan Ford, School Architect

## Stakeholders

9. Dara Hesse, Governor's Office of Information Technology
10. Kelley Eich, Governor's Office of Information Technology
11. Kim Coleman, Governor's Office of Information Technology
12. Clint Goldenstein, Governor's Office of Information Technology
13. Chris Edmundson, CDE Information Security Officer
14. Ted Hughes, CDE Division of Capital Construction Assistance
15. Kevin Klein, Colorado Division of Fire Safety
16. Linda Kanan, School Safety Resource Center
17. Chris Harms, School Safety Resource Center
18. Cheryle Mangels, CSDSIP
19. Dave Sullivan, CSDSIP
20. Lori Hodges, DOLA North Central Region Field Manager
21. Robin Pulkkinen, USDA Rural Development
22. George Welsh, CASE
23. Sgt. Jon VanZandt, NASRO
24. Daryl Branson, Colorado 9-1-1 Resource Center
25. Larry Borland, Academy School District 20
26. John McDonald, Jeffco Public Schools
27. Robert Swain, Denver Public Schools
28. Joyce Spangler, Platte Canyon School District #1
29. Wayne Howard, Platte Canyon School District #1
30. Craig S. Mansanares, Longmont Police Department
31. Randy Councell, Cherry Creek School District
32. Steve Hoban, Boulder Valley School District
33. Greg Keasling, Pueblo County School District 70
34. Captain Leide DeFusco, Pueblo County Sheriff's Office
35. Stacy Davis, St. Vrain Valley School District
36. John-Michael Keyes, The "I Love U Guys" Foundation

# Communications Interoperability Continuum



Figure 1

# Schools Find Role in National Emergency Communications Plan

School Safety Partners

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**Pueblo County, Colorado launched a new two-way radio training program for all school staff on Monday, and became the first in the nation to align school safety plans with the NECP.**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts:

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Lisa Shorter, Pueblo County Sheriff's Office, 719-583-6222

August 4, 2009 -- A school district in Colorado launched a new two-way radio training program for all school staff on Monday, and became the first in the nation to formally align its school safety plans with the Department of Homeland Security's vision for interoperable radio communications to improve coordination among agencies responding to emergencies.

At the all-day inaugural training workshop, Pueblo County School District 70 (D70) school principals learned how to effectively use two-way radio communications according to the National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP) and the Incident Command System (ICS).

School staff interacted with professional responders to complete a series of brief drills and tabletop exercises at Pueblo West High School, and the proceedings were observed by guests from the Douglas County Sheriff's Office, Boulder Valley School District, Safe Havens International, and School Safety Partners.

Greg Keasling, D70 Director of Student Services announced that all schools in the district are now linked by two-way radio to all local first responders, including police, fire, emergency medical, emergency management, and other special rescue teams. In the event of a school incident, a communications network can be instantly activated that connects the high-end radios used by professional responders with the lower-end radios used day-to-day by staff in any school in the county.

Jeff Howes, principal of North Mesa Elementary, sees many benefits to this interoperability. "Communications is easier among stakeholders," he explained. "Response time is quicker, mistakes can be quickly corrected or response plans quickly changed, and we can run everyday operations more smoothly."

The principals agreed that the enhanced radio communications allows school staff and local responders to more effectively take action to protect students, teachers, and staff, as well as protect school property. The bridging technology takes less than a day to install and is provided by Denver company SchoolSAFE Communications, which also maintains a 24/7 district monitoring center to track all radio network activity and assure availability. The system is already installed in 48 locations across Colorado.

Keasling tested the technology in various simulations including a full-scale active shooter exercise last year which involved over 1,200 persons and 18 response agencies. He also established a feedback loop with the system's developers to create custom features and improvements for his district.

However, D70 is also taking steps to avoid clogging safety communications by inexperienced school radio users. Captain Lee Roybal with the Pueblo County Sheriff's Office advised, "always call 911 first, even if only to give a location," but in order to incorporate radios he placed a high priority on protocols and evaluations to improve procedures.

Others in the Sheriff's Office concurred. School Resource Officer Bryan DeHerrera said school staff need to learn proper radio etiquette. Comm Officer Katie Decrescontis urged schools to learn from dispatch how to give exactly the information needed within a matter of seconds.

Workshop facilitators Todd Skoglund and Ken Rost showed how "human interoperability" depended on concise dialog to make the radio system work, and they drew on ICS features such as the use of common terminology and unity of command to improve crisis communications between schools and public safety.

They also relied on the objectives of the NECP, which recognizes that the "ability to communicate in real time is critical to establishing command and control at the scene of an emergency, to maintaining event situational awareness, and to operating overall within a broad range of incidents."

Throughout the day, workshop groups focused on major school incidents that would be most effectively addressed using radio: weather-related emergencies, gas leaks, intruder alerts, lost children, nearby wildfires, disgruntled violent parents, bomb threats, child

abductions, and active shooters. Keasling added another: "What about first day of school? That's an incident, too!"

Once the school year begins, Keasling will roll out the training program to include more and more school staff.

School principals and district administrators have long questioned the ability to communicate in crisis using traditional emergency resources. For example, they identified in the district's central phone system a design flaw commonly found in schools across the nation: routing a 911 call through a remote call center cloaks the address of the school in distress placing the call, and this can prevent the 911 dispatcher from confirming the location of the emergency.

Also, in the crucial minutes waiting for responders to arrive there has previously been no way to directly provide updates on a developing school crisis, and once responders were on the scene there was no way for them to get real-time information from radio-equipped school staff located throughout the school.

Keasling feels that these problems will be solved through Pueblo County's interoperability program.

Colorado was the first state to make interoperable communications part of a statewide School Response Framework in Senate Bill SB08-181 introduced by Senator Tom Wiens, and signed into law May 14, 2008. All public and charter schools are now mandated to inventory and test interoperable communications equipment at least once every academic term, as well as achieve compliance with the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

The law was based on two national Homeland Security plans, the National Response Framework (NRF) and the National Infrastructure Protection Plan (NIPP). Although the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools (OSDFS) has been recognized as the lead for schools in promoting these plans, it is unclear what leadership role, if any, the same office has in promoting interoperable communications to protect schools.

According to School Safety Partners, such leadership would go hand-in-hand with the efforts of OSDFS to promote NIMS compliance. In a bulletin released earlier this year, "NIMS Implementation Activities for Schools and Higher Education Institutions," OSDFS advises schools to develop a proactive process "to identify preparedness funding opportunities for developing interoperability training with their local and regional multi-disciplinary partners."

Meanwhile, Pueblo County has already adopted the objectives of the NECP, including: "integrating emerging technologies with current emergency communications," and "developing shared approaches to training and exercises, improved technical expertise, and enhanced response capabilities." For Keasling, the effort was the result of a successful public-private partnership with SchoolSAFE Communications.

Workshop attendees acknowledged that Keasling has created a top-down culture of interoperability, and school administrators and local responders alike expressed their buy-in. Bob Guagliardo, Pueblo Rural Fire Chief, welcomed exercising with school faculty and offered additional radio training for all teachers. He also saw a need to inject the new two-way radio system into county-wide exercises.

Rye Elementary Principal Sue Moore came up with her own list of corrective actions for her school's safety plan: "development of correct protocols for radio use for incidents, collaboration with local emergency responders, practice with scenarios."

When asked who should be assigned responsibility for these corrective actions, she answered with a smile, "I guess that would be me."

# # #

*<http://www.schoolsafetypartners.org/Communications/187.html>*



# Colorado Department of Education

## Qualified Zone Academy Bond (QZAB) Program Application

<b>Purpose:</b> School District Application	<b>District:</b> _____
<b>For Calendar Years:</b> 2008, 2009, 2010	<b>Name of School(s):</b> _____
<b>Qualified Zone Academy Bond Program</b>	<b>Submission Version:</b> Original, Date: _____ Revision, Date: _____
<b>Contact Person:</b> _____	<b>PLEASE SUBMIT:</b>
<b>Title:</b> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> ONE (1) ORIGINAL AND
<b>Address:</b> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> ONE (1) COPY
<b>City:</b> _____ <b>Zip:</b> _____	<b>County:</b> _____
<b>Telephone:</b> _____ <b>Fax:</b> _____	<b>Email:</b> _____

### CERTIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY

The Board of Education of the above named school district certifies that the school district satisfies Criterion 1 (either a or b) and Criteria 2-4 (check appropriate boxes). (Attach a copy of the resolution to this application.)

**Criterion 1:** Qualified by virtue of location or composition of student body:

**a) Location:** The schools are located in an Empowerment Zone.

**OR**

**b) Composition of Student Body:** There is a reasonable expectation as of the date of issuance of the bonds that at least 35% of the students attending the school or participating in the program will be eligible for free or reduced-cost lunches established under the National School Lunch Act (NSLA).

**Current NSLA %** 0.00% \_\_\_\_\_, **Anticipated NSLA %** 0.00% \_\_\_\_\_

**Criterion 2:** Qualified by virtue of private business contribution:

The eligible local education agency (LEA) has written commitments from private entity(ies) to make qualified contributions having a present value as of the date of the issuance of not less than ten percent of the proceeds of the bond issues, including such items as:

- Equipment for use in the quality zone academy (including state of the art technology and vocational equipment);
- Technical assistance in developing curriculum or training teachers to promote market-driven technology in the classroom;
- Volunteer mentors;
- Internships, field trips, or other educational opportunities,
- Other property or service as specified by the school district;
- The value of the of the 10 percent match is below or equal to the fair market value offered by any entity, providing similar projects or services;
- Written verification from private entity and/or entities is on file with the District. (Attach a Copy)





## Colorado Department of Education

### Qualified Zone Academy Bond (QZAB) Program Application

**Criterion 3:** Qualified by virtue of characteristics of the program:

The academic program within a public school is established by and operated under the supervision of an eligible local education agency (as defined in Section 14101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965) to provide education or training below the post-secondary level, and

- Such school or program is designed in cooperation with business to enhance the academic curriculum, increase graduation and employment rates, and better prepare students for the rigors of college and the increasingly complex workforce, and;
- Students in the academy are subject to the same academic standards and assessments as other students educated by the local school system, and;
- The comprehensive education plan of the school or program is approved by the local education agency.

**Criterion 4:** Qualified by virtue of use of bond proceeds:

For the purpose of the application, the proceeds of QZABs can be used for:

- Rehabilitating or repairing the public school facility in which the academy is established;
- Providing equipment for use at such academy;
- Providing instructional materials and/or;
- Providing teacher professional development.

**Criterion 5:** Written spending plan is attached to the application

- Please do not request more bonding authority than can be reasonably repaid or qualified for.

Amount of Bond Authorization Requested \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Does the School District currently have authorization to issue bonds for the amount of the request?

Yes  No





# Colorado Department of Education

## Qualified Zone Academy Bond (QZAB) Program Application

### Required Documentation

The completed application must include the following:

1. A copy of the resolution referenced in the Certificate of Eligibility section.
2. Written verifications from private entity match partners must be attached to the application.
  - Note: Providers of services or materials for the proposed project are not eligible as contributors to meet the 10 percent contribution requirement.
3. An affidavit signed by the school superintendent, financial advisors, bond counsels, and the 10 percent match partners stating that value of the 10 percent match is the fair market value for the products or services as represented by the provider of the match.
4. An overview of the proposed academic program/academy details including, but not limited to: program description, the number of students benefiting, resources used, when and how the program will be implemented, who will direct the implementation and evaluation, and how the evaluation (pre and post tests) will be accomplished.
5. A written spending plan including commitments to contract 10 percent of funds within 6 months after issuance and 100% percent of proceeds spent within 3 years of the issue of QZAB bonds.
6. Applications must clearly explain the means by which the district intends to repay the bond principle upon maturity.
7. School districts must provide written verification that they will comply with all Davis-Bacon Act requirements and documentation requirements if they receive federal funding for a construction project pursuant to Section 1606 Wage Rate Requirements of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

I certify that to the best of my knowledge, the information in this application is true and correct. The Board of Education of the above named school district has authorized me to sign this application on its behalf.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature, District Superintendent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name, District Superintendent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature, School Board of Education President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name, School Board of Education President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



# National Emergency Communications Plan

Colorado School Safety Summit

February 4, 2011

## The Importance of Emergency Communications

Emergency responders—police officers, fire personnel, and emergency medical services—need to communicate across disciplines and jurisdictions to successfully manage routine and large-scale emergencies.



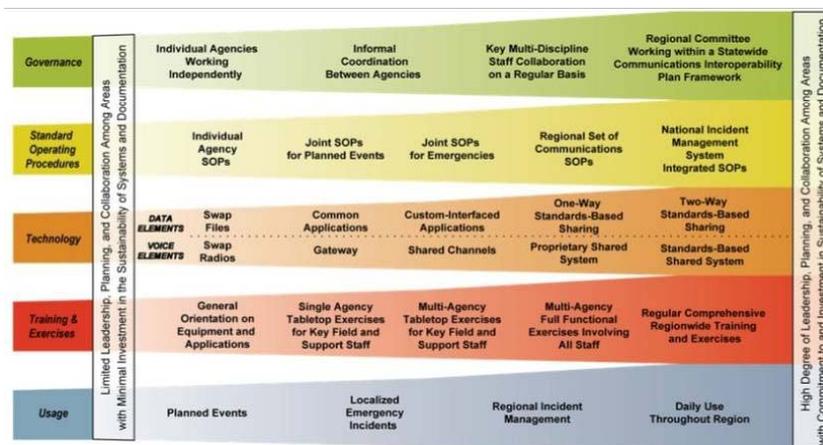
When responders cannot communicate with their own agencies or across jurisdictions, inadequate response jeopardizes lives.

# Office of Emergency Communications

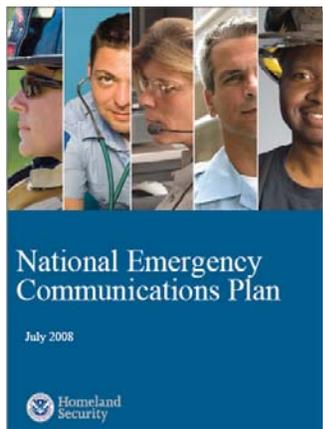
**Mission:** OEC supports and promotes the ability of emergency responders and government officials to communicate in the event of natural disasters, acts of terrorism, or other man-made disasters, and works to ensure, accelerate, and attain interoperable and operable emergency communications nationwide.



## The Interoperability Continuum



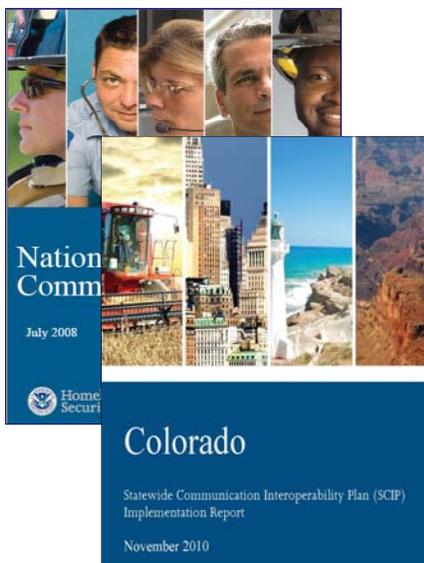
## National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP)



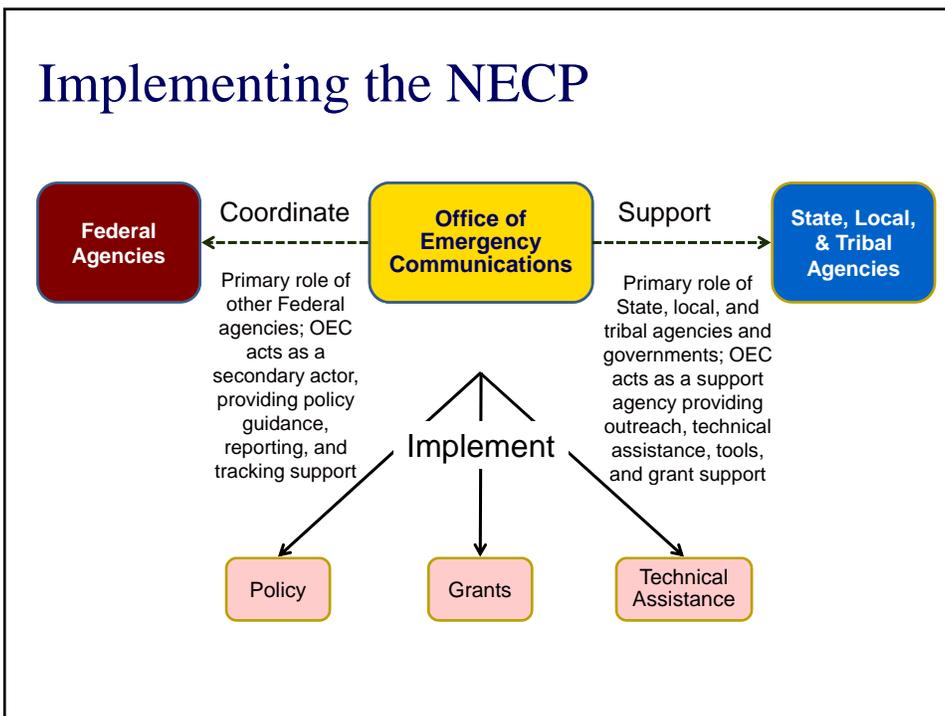
- The NECP is a strategic plan to improve:
  - **Interoperability**
  - **Operability**
  - **Continuity of communications**
- The Plan was developed with input from more than **150 representatives** from major public safety organizations across the country.
- The NECP addresses:
  - **3 goals** that establish performance metrics
  - **7 objectives** that identify priorities
  - **92 time-bound milestones**

## National and Statewide Plans

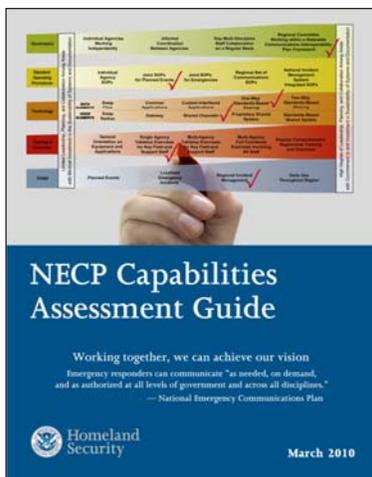
- Framework for Success
  - Statewide Communications Interoperability Plans
  - National Emergency Communications Plan
  - Statewide Interoperability Coordinators
  - State Interoperability Governing Bodies



## Implementing the NECP



## Measuring Progress: The NECP Goals



Goals measurement provides a comprehensive view of interoperability in the U.S.

- Identify best practices and success stories
- Identify emergency communications needs at the local levels
- Help OEC target TA, grants, and other support
- Prepare public safety community for next generation technologies

## Goal 2 Overall Approach:

### County-level Interoperability Data

- Two types of data to be collected:
  - Performance (*response-level incident data*)
  - Capabilities (*based on SAFECOM continuum lanes*)
- County / County-equivalent was selected to provide standardized reporting data.
  - Can be analyzed against Census data for population, land area, etc.
  - Will provide the most comprehensive look at interoperability in the United States ever collected.
- Information will be used to target OEC services such as technical assistance to issues and areas based on identified need.

By 2011, 75 percent of non-UASI jurisdictions are able to demonstrate *response-level emergency communications* within one hour for routine events involving *multiple jurisdictions and agencies*.



## NECP Addendum

- The NECP Addendum will create an integrated emergency communications strategy for the Federal, State, local, and tribal emergency response community and the citizens we serve.
- The emergency response community includes the fire, law enforcement, health, emergency management, transportation, utilities, and industry sectors.
- The updated NECP will enhance current mission-critical voice technologies while extending next-generation technologies into a converged emergency communications environment.



## Moving Forward

- We've already made significant progress, but building and attaining interoperable communications is an ongoing process. OEC is working with stakeholders to plan and prepare for new technologies and communications challenges.



- OEC will continue to work with the stakeholder community to ensure programs and activities address the most pressing needs.
- OEC will continue to build and promote strong partnerships that cut across levels of government, jurisdictions, and missions.

## Contact Information

OEC

[oeq@hq.dhs.gov](mailto:oeq@hq.dhs.gov)

WEB

[www.dhs.gov](http://www.dhs.gov), search keyword: OEC