School Door and Window Labelling Recommendations

The Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management in cooperation with the NH Fire and Police Chiefs Association, City of Manchester Police Department, NH Department of Education, and the NH Fire Marshall's Office has endorsed a model system for the labelling or doors, windows, and other access points in NH schools. It is recommended that labelling the physical sides of the building in accordance with accepted practices from the Incident Command System be considered when schools and public safety officials undertake the task of labeling windows and access points.

Purpose of Numbering School Doors

When emergencies occur, the rapid response of emergency workers to the incident can be critical. Many schools have dozens of doors providing entrance and egress to their buildings. During an emergency it may be necessary for responders to gain access through the door closest to the emergency scene. Numbering external doors can be extremely valuable to emergency responders and will also assist your students and staff in acclimating themselves to door locations in case of an emergency.
Access Control

Actively engaging/controlling the flow of people into the school facility is another physical security capability that all schools should have. Allowing first responders to accurately and rapidly access the school building is the purpose of providing labels to windows, doors, and other access points to the school building.

Numbering Sequence

All exterior doors that allow access to the interior of the school should be numbered in a sequential order starting with the main entrance (office door/public entrance). The main entrance should always be #1 while subsequent doors will be numbered in sequential order in a clockwise manner.

Exterior Number Position

All numbers should be:

- Placed at the top right of the door
- Where a multiple bank of doors (3 or more) is present, it is good practice to center the number or put the same number at both ends of the bank.
- Each door may be numbered separately, as follows: 3-1, 3-2, etc.

Number Sizing

It is recommended that letters be a minimum of 4 inches in height if the structure is 36 feet from the roadway and a minimum of 6 inches in height if between 36 and 50 feet from the roadway. The width of the numbers/letters should be at least 1/2 0.5 inches across.

Interior Numbers

The numbers should:

- Match the number on the outside of the door
- Always be placed on the hinge side of the door near the bottom so they can be viewed in smoky conditions
- Contrast with their background
- Be retro-reflective for low light or smoky conditions

Non Access Doors

Doors which do not allow access to the building should not be numbered. Examples of these may be storage rooms or trash rooms. They may be labeled “Storage Only”, “No Access”, etc.

Mobile Classrooms

- Mobile classrooms present unique issues and should be numbered using an “M” to signify modular or mobile (M-1, M-2, etc.).
- Each mobile classroom should be numbered near each door and on the “street” side so the numbers are visible to emergency responders.

Courtyards

Completely enclosed courtyards are numbered CY-1, CY-2, etc., and are numbered on both the inside and outside, in the same manner as other exterior doors.

- Generally the courtyard door closest to the main entrance is numbered CY-1.

Multiple courtyards can be numbered:

1st courtyard: CY1-1, CY1-2, etc.
2nd courtyard: CY2-1, CY2-2, etc.