



# UPPER SCHOOL EMERGENCY PROCEDURES



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# INTRODUCTION

The AISV Emergency Procedures Manual is intended to provide administration, staff, students and parents with an easy-to-use reference tool when facing a crisis or emergency situation. The intent of this document is to minimize confusion when a crisis occurs. This Manual is by no means an all-inclusive step-by-step strategy, however, it does provide guidelines for planned responses to a variety of situations.

We know that we cannot account for every possible crisis scenario that may occur. This Manual will, therefore, be an evolving document. It will be reviewed and revised continually so that it remains current with school policy and local Lithuanian laws and regulations. It is critical that we test these procedures on a regular basis and that all staff members become familiar with the procedures and how to implement them.

The key to producing a positive outcome during a crisis lies in our preparation and safety prevention. Most emergencies have four distinct time periods in which action/ reaction occurs. They are:

**Stage 1** The first 10-15 minutes following the onset of a crisis.

Panic is most likely to occur.

Staff awareness of duties is critical to decreasing panic.

**Stage 2** The next 45-60 minutes.

Arrival of emergency services, news media, parents, etc.

Isolating/insulating/protecting students and staff from onslaught.

Restoring normalcy.

**Stage 3** The remainder of the school day.

**Stage 4** Subsequent days.

During periods 3 and 4 it is important that the actions of the AISV school staff help to provide positive messages about the school, informing all students, staff and parents of the actions taken to ensure the safety and well being of staff members and students.

Everyone at AISV is committed to providing the highest level of security for our students and staff members.

**Stephane Ruz**  
Director

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# 1. GUIDING STATEMENTS



## VISION

*Prepared to realise our personal potential, pursue our passions and positively impact our ever-changing world.*

## MISSION



## VALUES



## ACCESS TO AISV CAMPUS

AISV strives to maintain an open and accessible school campus. It is our goal to have a welcoming and friendly feel to our school. However, in the interest of the overall safety and security of the school, the following rules must be followed:

- AISV families may be required to provide the AISV School Identity Card for proof of identification in cases where a staff member does not know a parent on a personal basis. Until the identity of a parent or authorized caregiver is completed, the individual will follow procedures that are in place for visitors to AISV.
- Students may be on school campus only with staff supervision, or permission from the school administration. Students who are not engaged in any after school activities must leave the school campus at the end of school at 3:30 P.M.
- Students must present AISV student identification for access to the school outside of normal school hours. Students will be escorted by security in cases where students need access to their locker or classroom. No student will be permitted entrance to the campus without identification or personal recognition by security staff.
- Parents of AISV students are asked to wait for their children on the first floor during normal school dismissal. The primary reason for this request is that the hallways are already quite busy, and by following this request, parents help staff dismiss students in an orderly and safe manner.
- AISV kindly requests that no family request access to the school after 6:00 P.M. Security will not permit anyone to enter the school after this time in order to help facilitate the daily cleaning of the building as well as security of the school.

## Visitors

- Visitors are cordially received at AISV. For security reasons, however, all visitors must provide their ID for the school guard at the gate, and be escorted to the main office by security staff. Visitors and their belongings may also be checked by AISV security to ensure that no weapons or any unauthorized material enter the school campus.
- All visitors must wear a badge at all times while on campus.
- Observations of classrooms should be scheduled in advance in order to minimize disruptions to learning. Parents should call to set up an appointment if they wish to have a formal or academic conference.
- Classroom visits by other young adults, not enrolled in AISV, may disrupt the academic endeavors of the class. Therefore, students not enrolled at AISV must have special permission to be in school during school hours. Permission to bring a guest should be given to the office at least two days in advance. The teachers and/or Director will decide whether the visit is appropriate or not. AISV students must also provide evidence that his/her parents consent to receiving the visitor. Once the visitor arrives at AISV, he/she will check-in at the Office before visiting the classroom and be escorted by AISV staff to the appropriate room.



## 2. COMMUNICATION



### BEFORE AN EMERGENCY

#### Before an Emergency: Responsibilities of the Emergency Team

At the core of a school's emergency procedures is the emergency team. The composition of the emergency team is as follows:

- Director
- Activity Director
- Security Officer
- School Counselor
- Nurse
- Human Resources Officer

The team will meet before the start of the school year to review procedures from the previous year and to prepare information, which will go home to families during the first weeks of the new school year.

The Emergency team is responsible for maintaining contact and discussing the local situation with respect to potential crises with some or all of the following individuals:

Local police, security, mental/physical health authorities (where possible) GSO or RSO officer of the U.S. Embassy.

Other security or administrative officers at the cooperating embassies.

Security officers and/or health care professionals at multinational companies with school interests.

Note: certain emergencies may require the presence of professionals experienced in crisis intervention (e.g., psychologist) (See Chapter 5. Psychological Readiness).

If the director is absent, the activity director will be the substitute. If the director and activity director are both absent, the emergency team meeting is postponed.

#### The emergency team is also responsible for the following:

- Establishing and maintaining proper communication procedures.
- Communication with the media.
- Designating the duties of administration, teachers, and support staff.
- Ensuring that adequate warning systems are in place and functioning.
- Modes of communication for this purpose include:
  - Email
  - SMS
  - Calls

### Emergency contact list:

General emergency help – 112  
Police – 02  
Local Police Station +370 5 271 60 78  
Medical Station – 03  
Fire station – 01  
SWAT team ARAS +370 5 271 91 03  
Baltic American Clinic +370 5 234 20 20  
Radio signal with U.S. Embassy –  
Vilnius U.S.A.  
Embassy Vilnius +370 5 266 55 00  
RSO +370 5 687 99987

The Security Officer organizes how to use the emergency contact list.

### Yearly emergency procedures checklist

The emergency team designates the exact dates of emergency drills and gets feedback from staff and students about the results of the drills. School staff yearly briefing and reviewing of EPM is completed in August during the all-staff in-service.

All AISV staff medical checks have to be done yearly during the in-service before the school year begins.

### Before An Emergency: Responsibilities of the Students

Students must understand that their safety is the primary concern of their teachers, supervisors, and school administrators. They will be made aware of the local situation and any possible threats to their safety and wellbeing. Through class discussion and activities, students will familiarize themselves with school emergency procedures every year in September, teachers themselves choose time and date. Prior to any school-sponsored trip, they will participate in a student-chaperone meeting to review the rules and safety policies that govern any school trip. Students will also practice any necessary drills. It is recommended that emergency preparedness is a part of the homeroom and advisory program.

## DURING AN EMERGENCY

### During An Emergency: Responsibilities of the Emergency Team

The emergency team is responsible to verify the reliability of any potential or actual emergency.

### Once an emergency is underway, the emergency team will do the following:

- Assume overall direction of school emergency procedures; issue information and directives to the teachers and staff. An address to be made on the PA System.
- Account for the presence of all present on campus. Directions are given on the PA System.
- Assume overall direction of internal and external communications.
- Direct evacuation of the school, if necessary.
- Oversee contact with school chaperones if an emergency has occurred on a school-sponsored field trip.
- Dispel rumor.
- Contact next of kin, where appropriate.

### The basic security reactions are:

- **Stand-in-Place:** Remain in your classroom, lock the door, turn off the lights, and hide (if suspected armed intruder).
- **Safe haven:** Leave your area and go to the assigned safe haven (like a fire egress, each room should show the route to the safe haven).
- **Evacuate** (depending on circumstances):
  - Exit school building, i.e. gather at the soccer field.
  - Exit school and go to the off-site safe haven, i.e. Vytautas Didysis Gymnasium.

## **During An Emergency: Responsibilities of the Teachers**

Teachers are responsible for the supervision of students in their charge. Teachers who do not have a class at the onset of an emergency will report to the emergency team for instructions or use their common sense in making themselves useful. During an emergency, teachers will do the following:

- Respond to the specific emergency as prescribed and direct the students in the appropriate emergency procedures.
- Contact the school, in the event that the emergency occurs during a field trip or other off-campus school-sponsored activity.
- Give clear, calm instructions to their students during the emergency.
- Remain with the students until released by the designated emergency team leader.
- Direct the evacuation of students under their supervision to designated areas according to signals, warnings, written notifications, or common sense.
- Take roll as soon as conditions allow.
- Report missing students to the emergency team and wait for instructions.
- Assess the physical condition of students. Any students requiring first aid should receive it as soon as conditions allow.
- Keep order.
- Dispel rumor.

## **During An Emergency: Responsibilities of the Support Staff**

At AISV, the support staff not directly involved in student supervision will receive individual tasks and areas of responsibility from the emergency team prior to the emergency.

It is the responsibility of the emergency team to assess the amount of support available during a given emergency. The team should take into consideration the following tasks, which may need to be accomplished prior to, and after an emergency and assign them to appropriate

individuals (see Chapter 3. Emergency Preparation, Procedures, and Drills):

- Maintain equipment (fire extinguishers, cell phones, radio, batteries, generators, etc.).
- Facilities (secure evacuation areas).
- Supplies (water, food).
- Shut off utilities as necessary.
- Conduct or direct rescue operations.
- Follow damage control procedures.
- Communicate with the school community.
- Dispel rumor.

Where necessary, the school will make every effort to inform parents as soon as possible, through appropriate channels, concerning what exactly has transpired, the situation of the students, what parents should do, and any other instructions from the school to parents. Calls will be brief but accurate. A script prepared beforehand will be available for staff and teachers who will communicate.

As regards to communication with the media, the Director will speak to the press at the time of the crisis. All media inquiries should be referred to the director. No staff member will speak or comment to the media.

## **During An Emergency: Responsibilities of the Parents**

Parents must understand that foremost in the minds of school administrators and staff, especially in the event of an emergency, is the safety of the children. It will be important for parents and guardians to be patient, but alert observers until the school has communicated information and possible directives to them. If parents have accurate and useful information that could help the school emergency team, they should make every effort to contact the school Director.

## **During An Emergency: Responsibilities of the Students**

The safety of children is the prime consideration in any emergency. Student cooperation is, therefore, crucial. Students will follow the directives given by their teachers or supervisors. They will work towards dispelling rumors. They will share and cooperate with their peers.



### **During An Emergency: Campus Visitors**

AISV welcomes all visitors on its campus. However, all visitors must check in with the security at the entrance of the school and wear a badge at all times. Visitors during an emergency will be informed on where to go and should make every effort to follow directions.

### **During An Emergency: Others in the Community**

Rumors tend to spread rapidly through the school community and can create chaos, especially if the community is small. Friends of the school can safeguard this tendency by dispelling rumors and awaiting accurate information from the school. As mentioned earlier, anyone with useful information that might help the school during the emergency should contact the spokesperson.

## **AFTER AN EMERGENCY**

A post-emergency debriefing and an opportunity for the school community to share experiences and offer feedback is an important part of the healing process after an emergency. Just as important, this feedback and exchange will provide important lessons for future emergencies. When the crisis is over, the emergency team will meet with the school staff and discuss exactly what happened and the consequences involved. Once the staff, teachers, and administrators have met and reviewed the emergency in its entirety and discussed the follow-up procedure, meetings will be held with the students.

Depending on the nature of the crisis, a school-wide assembly might be warranted; however, a smaller forum of individual classroom visits

or grade level visits might be more appropriate. The school should be prepared for the fact that parents may want to attend any assembly. A separate meeting with parents and other interested members of the community might, therefore, be advisable. The emergency team will also meet with the following individuals: security officers from embassies and multinational companies who have a relationship with the school, local officials and authorities, or outside health care professionals; this should be done so that the school can consult these people to determine how well the school responded to the emergency. These same individuals will also need to be advised as to the present situation and any special plans of action.

In the event of school closure, a written announcement stating the fact, along with contact telephone numbers will be made available as soon as possible to all members of the community, after the school consults with the outside group of experts mentioned above. If repatriation has occurred, it will be necessary to have up-to-date emergency contacts. The same list must be taken out of the country as part of the school effects for safeguarding (see Chapter 4. School Closure).

### **After an emergency, the teacher will do the following:**

- Debrief with the administration.
- Work with colleagues and the administration to determine the successes and failures of the emergency responses.
- Follow up with students, and watch for signs of distress.
- Schedule parent-teacher conferences as necessary.

## 3. EMERGENCY PREPARATION, PROCEDURES, AND DRILLS

The best way to deal with an emergency is to be prepared for it. All emergency information will be updated and accessible, and every staff member will be knowledgeable in all emergency procedures. Being prepared for an emergency can lessen, and often prevent, injuries and loss of life as well as damage to property.

### STUDENT PREPARATION

Teachers will regularly review emergency procedures with their students. At the beginning of every school year, each teacher will walk his/her students through each type of emergency drill. Teachers will present and discuss the following details with their students:

- Types of emergencies
- Procedures for dealing with these types of emergencies
- Proper student behavior during an emergency
- Preventative measures to circumvent emergency situations

### Safe Havens/Shelter in Place

Safe havens are used to provide temporary protection until help arrives. There are several types of safe havens:

**On-site:** (Shelter in place) There are three main Safe Havens in the school:

1. High & Middle school second floor.
2. Middle school (on the first floor).
3. Girls and Boys Locker Rooms by the Gym.

**Off-site:** Students shall be walked (10 min walk) to Vytautas Didysis Gymnasium, address – Augustijonų St. 8. Vytautas Didysis Gymnasium general phone +370 5 527 9130; Chief of school's maintenance +370 5 676 00397 (there is water supplies, WC).

**Diplomatic:** In case of intensive civil disturbance or natural disaster, students will remain at home and follow the directives of their respective embassies. If the situation necessitates, the respective embassy will serve as a safe haven or provide another facility to serve this purpose.

### Transportation

The school's emergency team will inform the bus company yearly of its emergency procedures. The emergency team will inform the bus company of student pick-up points – locations may vary according to the type of emergency. Bus drivers will be familiar with the pick-up location during an evacuation.

The emergency team will be responsible for coordinating transportation during an emergency. During emergencies, students will not be permitted to leave school unaccompanied by a parent or an authorized adult.

### Drill Schedule

The emergency team will organize the drill schedule. Before the announced drill, teachers should go over the respective emergency procedure with their classes. Subsequent drills should not be announced, so as to gauge the reaction and performance of the staff and students. A poorly executed drill, or problems encountered during the drill, will be addressed immediately after the drill to ensure that such problems will not occur during an actual emergency. The emergency team will decide on the frequency of drills.

### Legal Counsel

The school will have access to legal counsel in the case of an injury or death on campus, intentional damage to property by host country nationals, etc.

### Insurance

The school will carry:

- Accidents Insurance for students when traveling out of the host country on a school field trip.
- General liability insurance to cover injuries on school premises.
- School property insurance to cover theft, damage caused by natural disasters, etc.

## Procedures and Drills

Different emergencies require different responses. Outlined below are responses for dealing with several specific emergencies.

The school will make the following preliminary preparations:

- Exit routes will be clearly indicated on maps of the school grounds and will be prominently displayed in each classroom.
- Staff members' responsibilities during an emergency will be clearly defined.
- Staff will know where the following are located in relation to their classroom or office: electrical circuit breakers, fire alarm, nearest fire extinguisher, first aid kit.

**There are three very important things to remember in any school emergency:**

1. The safety of the students is the top priority,
2. It is crucial not to panic,
3. Careful records will be kept at every stage of an emergency (witnesses, incidents, actions taken, etc.).

## SPECIFIC THREATS

### Crisis Response to Fights

Fights and/or altercations – an assault of any type – must have a specific plan of action. A plan such as the following should be designed and staff trained to implement it should a fight occur. Do not physically intervene if physical harm can come to you. If the principal/designee is not available, teachers/supervisors should implement the fight response plan. Be aware of three stages of a fight:

- Escalation: combatants engage in aggressive provocation (taunts, insults, remove jackets) posturing for a fight.
- Students engage in all-out fighting.
- Violence subsides and enters a lull stage.

#### Stage 1 Intervention – Posturing to Fight:

- Make loud, diverting sounds (blow whistle, set-off personal alarm).

- Use short clear commands and use student's names ("John, back off!")
- When you issue your command, the one who looks at you first is most likely the victim. He is looking for help and will usually comply immediately.
- Set limits. If students continue to face off, give choice and remind them of the consequences. ("Stop now. I'll take the time right now to talk with you. Fighting will only mean suspension.")

#### Stage 2 Intervention – Intense Fighting

- Do not intervene physically.
- Send for back-up at once.
- Call police.
- Use short, clear commands to stop the fighting. (Diversions such as squirting water are often effective, blowing a whistle or personal alarm will get attention and divert them from the fighting to get their attention.)

#### Stage 3 Intervention – Lull in Fight

- Use short, clear commands ("John, you stay there. Mike, you come with me.")
- Without endangering your safety, carefully pull injured students away and escort them to safety. Move one student out of view of the other.
- Get assistance and refer the incident to the principal/designee for disciplinary action.
- Document incident on discipline form.

## STUDENT/STAFF INJURY

It is important to handle student and staff injuries carefully and sensitively. The following course of action will be followed whenever a student or staff member is injured on campus:

- A staff member will remain with the injured person and send another staff member (or reliable student if no other staff members are present) for the Nurse and/or an administrator.
- Staff members or reliable students will move any gathering students away from the area. Any students not directly involved will be sent to their next class, the library, or a supervised area.

- If the injury is extremely serious, an ambulance will be called immediately – the student will not be moved in the meantime. The school Nurse will have to decide whether or not to call an ambulance. A designated staff member will accompany the injured person in the ambulance.
- If the injured person is a student, the student's parents will be called.
- If the student is conscious and the injury is not very serious, the parents can decide whether to pick up their child and take him/her to the doctor or let him/her finish the school day.
- Circumstances concerning the accident will be documented and an Injury Report Form should be filled out by the staff member who was present on the site where the injury took place.. (See Injury Report Form of this chapter.)
- An announcement about the incident will be made to dispel any rumors. If the accident was very serious, teachers will discuss it with their students. Time will be allowed for grief and discussion. Students will be allowed to express their grief and openly discuss their feelings, fears, and concerns.
- Any student who is upset by the incident will be encouraged to talk to the School Counselor.

**Note:** when NOT to move an injured person:

- The person is unconscious, not breathing, or severely bleeding.
- A back or neck injury is suspected.
- An arm, leg, or pelvis is suspected to be broken.

**Note:** During a school emergency, it may not be possible to follow the above procedure as outlined; however, if the injury is serious, the emergency team must do its utmost to make sure that the injured person gets medical attention as soon as possible.

## FIRE

### The fire alarm goes off.

- Students line up quietly and prepare to exit; teachers take their emergency kits and lead the students out according to the exit routes

determined by the emergency team. Doors are left closed but unlocked; lights are turned off.

- Administrative/support staff members check their areas of responsibility to make sure all students have moved out of the area (computer rooms, practice rooms, athletic areas, elevators, etc.); turn off all lights; close any doors left open; check for any remaining students; take the first aid kit(s) and mobile phones(s).
- Homeroom Teachers take attendance immediately upon arriving at the designated spot outside. Any missing children are reported at once to the administrator on duty.
- Everyone must wait for the all-clear signal; after it is given, all return to the building in a quiet orderly fashion.

### In case of an actual fire:

- After everyone is safely out of the building, the emergency team must determine whether there is an actual fire.
- If there is a fire, the fire department will be called immediately.
- If any students or staff members are seriously injured, the emergency procedure for injury goes into effect (See section "Student/Staff Injury" in this chapter.)
- After the fire has been extinguished, the emergency team must determine if it is safe to return to the building. If not, the students must be evacuated. (If it is close to the end of the school day, the students can wait for their usual transportation. If it is early in the day and the weather is not too severe, the students can wait in place while the telephone tree is activated and parents come to pick them up.)
- If the weather is severe (heavy rain, intense cold, etc.) or if the premises become dangerous, the students will be taken to the designated off-site safe havens to wait for their parents to pick them up.
- The emergency team will communicate in the most efficient and appropriate manner.
- Students must remain at the offsite safe havens until a parent or authorized person comes to pick them up.

- The emergency team then will assess the damage and take appropriate measures.
- For very minor damage, the emergency team will decide when to reopen the school.
- For severe damage to the school premises and property, an emergency session of the School Board must be convened to decide where and when the operation of the school will resume.
- Parents and staff will be notified of whatever decisions the School Board makes.

## Fire drills

The emergency team designee will conduct fire drills. Each classroom will have a fire evacuation plan displayed in a conspicuous place. The emergency team designee will send an email to all staff outlining the drill, procedures and responsibilities. Teachers are responsible for going over the evacuation plan and fire safety rules with their respective classes. All students should be walked through the evacuation plan at the beginning of each school year and at regular intervals thereafter.

During a fire drill, teachers will ensure that all classroom doors are closed and lights switched off. They will take their student roster to the designated place of evacuation and take class attendance.

It is a requirement that during a fire drill in school, the entire building is evacuated. Therefore, when the fire drill alarm sounds, everyone (including visitors) must exit the building. There are no exceptions.

## Fire Drill (Evacuation) Procedures

### General Instructions

- Books, backpacks, computers, etc. are to be left in rooms.
- All windows and doors are to be closed but not locked.
- All electrical and gas equipment should be turned off.
- Teachers must take their emergency kit.

## Procedures

- At the sound of the alarm, students are to form a single line in the classroom and await instructions.
- The teacher will review the exit to be used and the line of march.
- Students will walk in line with the teacher at the head of the line.
- The teacher and class will proceed to the designated area.
- Once at the soccer field, students will line by grades in order to check the attendance.
- Absolute silence will be observed throughout the evacuation.
- While waiting for the signal to return to the building, teachers will supervise their students.
- Returning to the building, students will file back in single lines.
- No children, parents, visitors, teachers, or other personnel will remain in the building during a fire drill.
- Teachers without classes, including specialists and other personnel, will assist with student evacuation.
- Signs are posted near the doorway of each classroom indicating the proper route for leaving the building. In addition, students will obtain from their teachers information regarding other procedures to be followed.
- Students will return to their classes when the approved “all clear” signal has been given.

## General Fire Safety Tips

A fire larger than one in a wastepaper basket should be left to professionals. Staff members will not try to fight larger fires unless they have special training.

One should not run if one’s clothing catches fire – running fans and spreads the flames. A person on fire should stop, drop, and roll. Rolling in a coat, blanket, or on the floor helps to smother the flames.

When planning to enter a closed room in a burning building, the door should first be felt with the palm of the hand – if it is hot, it should not be opened!



## AIKV BOMB THREAT PROCEDURE

In the event school personnel receive a call indicating that there is a bomb in the school, the following general procedures should be followed:

The individual receiving the call should remain calm, be courteous, and listen carefully for details. If the caller remains on the line after the initial statement is made, ask questions such as "Where is the bomb?" "What does it look like?" and the name of the person calling should be asked. The exact time of the call should be noted. See attached Bomb Threat

### Call procedures

- The person receiving the call should immediately notify the Head of Security and the Director or his/her designee in his/her absence. The person receiving the call is to talk to no one other than as instructed by the Head of Security or Director or his/her designee.
- The emergency team assesses the situation and takes action to evacuate the building or seek safe shelter. Details are indicated below:
- Students, staff, and visitors are directed to a safe location: evacuation site, staging site, safe haven.
- The emergency team and staff assume their roles and carry out the responsibilities as detailed below.
- If after such inspection and a lapse of time it is decided that the building is safe, the students and staff may return to classrooms or if evacuated, the building.
- A bomb threat report form is to be completed by the person who received the call and

### Bomb Threat to do list

- The signal will be given or an announcement will be made for everyone to evacuate the building.
- Students may collect their coats and bookbags if these things are in the classroom or in the immediate vicinity (students should not be allowed to go to their lockers if the lockers are not nearby); the students should then line up quietly and prepare to exit. Teachers should

do a quick sweep of their rooms, looking for any suspicious boxes, packages, or items. Teachers then take their emergency kits and lead the students out according to the exit routes determined by the emergency team. Teachers should not use any electrical switches since this could possibly detonate the bomb if there is one.

- Administrative/support staff members will check their areas of responsibility to make sure all students have moved out of the area (computer rooms, practice rooms, athletic areas, elevators, etc.); they should take the first aid kit(s) and cell phone(s). (Cell phones should not be used in the immediate vicinity of the school, as it is possible for them to detonate bombs.)
- Teachers will take attendance immediately upon arriving at the designated spot. Any missing children will be reported at once to the administrator on duty.
- Suspicious items will not be touched! They will be reported at once to the emergency team.
- The emergency team will contact the US Embassy RSO at +370 5 266 5666 to notify that a bomb threat has been received.
- The Emergency Team should notify the police of the bomb threat by calling general emergency phone 112 and special anti-terrorist police squad ARAS +370 5 271 9103
- If the school is deemed unsafe, then an evacuation procedure will be implemented. If it is close to the end of the school day and the weather is not too severe, the students can wait in place until parents come to pick them up.
- The evacuation location may vary, depending on the information about the location of the bomb. The likely evacuation location is Zone D – the soccer pitch. If it appears that the children will be required to remain outside for an extended period, the school will be evacuated to the designated safe haven off campus. Vytautas Didysis Gymnasium, address – Augustijonų St. 8. Vytautas Didysis Gymnasium general phone – +370 5 279130. Chief of school's maintenance – +370 676 00397
- If the weather is severe (heavy rainfall, intense cold, etc.) or if the premises become dangerous, the students should be taken to the designated

off-site safe havens to wait for their parents to pick them up. The emergency team will start the communication process. Students must remain at the offsite safe havens until a parent or authorized person comes to pick them up.

- Unless there is damage to the school or continuation of a threat, school will resume the next day. If the school is to remain closed, everyone will be notified via SMS, Email and/or the website.

### **Chemical & Biological Threats Terms**

- A chemical incident is defined as the release of toxic industrial chemicals and/or other agents that are capable of causing bodily harm or death. (These could include conditions which contribute to the “Sick Building Syndrome.”)
- A biological incident is defined as the release of bacteria, viruses, and/or toxins that are capable of causing bodily harm or death (these could include Anthrax, Smallpox and/or SARS).
- A radiological incident is defined as the release, exposure to, and/or dispersal of radioactive materials that are capable of causing bodily harm or death.
- Shelter-in-Place means that in certain situations it may be necessary to hold students and staff indoors. This concept is known as “Shelter-in-Place,” which is very similar to the procedures used during a school evacuation/safe haven.
- Shelter-in-Place can be used in weather-related emergencies; chemical, biological, or radiological incidents, and other emergencies. The nature and duration of the Shelter-in-Place will be determined by the emergency situation as analyzed and reviewed by the Emergency Team which could also include the American Embassy R.S.O. and the fire/police departments in your region.
- All delivery of mail or packages must go through security.

### **Response Plan in Dealing with the Biological/Chemical Incident**

- After notification of a suspected biological/chemical incident, the following steps and actions should be initiated immediately to reduce the risk of bodily harm:
- Convene the Emergency Team and review the Biological/Chemical Disaster Report (if available).
- Contact the American Embassy R.S.O. and all appropriate local authorities
- Determine the need for evacuating the school population or utilize the Shelter-in-Place procedure.
- Be sure all students and staff who are involved in outdoor activities return to the building.
- Initially keep all students and staff in an alternative classroom or short-term location until the Emergency Team/administration/American Embassy R.S.O. assess the situation and advise the best course of action such as moving inside the main building or evacuating to a safer location.
- If necessary to evacuate the area, instruct teachers to take their Crisis Response Kits and move cross wind, never with, or against, the wind which could potentially carry fumes or other biological agents. Upon reaching a point of safety, take attendance.
- Be prepared to render first aid if necessary.
- If students/staff/individuals in the building need emergency medical attention, contact the medical support for your location utilizing the emergency number/s and provide any and all pertinent information regarding the nature of the illness or injuries.
- Notify the director/assignee or administration of the school as soon as possible with the details and periodic updates of the incident.
- Ensure all exterior doors are secured and locked with windows closed.
- To reduce the risk of potential exposure to students, staff, and visitors, administrators/ Emergency Team must ensure that no one leaves or enters the building unless directed

by the Team and/or administration/American Embassy R.S.O.

- All air conditioning or air transferring systems within the building should be immediately shut down.
- Complete a final attendance roll check throughout the building and hold all students/staff in their current location.
- Initiate early/late dismissal as necessary.
- Follow the evacuation plan and if possible provide parents with written notification explaining the incident.
- Once released, students and staff shall not return to the school until the regulating agency of the American Embassy R.S.O., fire/police department or other emergency service officials and the school administration determine the school area is safe to return.

## TERRORISM/CIVIL DISTURBANCE

The American Embassy (or another embassy) assists most schools with regard to notification of an existing or potential security threat. In most instances, it will be the Embassy notifying the school of a threat. However, the school will notify the Embassy on a priority basis of any situation that has come to the attention of the staff, which may affect the security of the school. Examples of what to report to the Embassy include sightings of riots or demonstrations; reports of possible terrorist acts; and observations of suspicious persons/vehicles in the vicinity of the school.

The school will work in conjunction with the American Embassy and any other participating embassy, which may have pertinent information concerning the situation. Depending upon the situation, the emergency team will decide if the school will remain open or closed.

### If the school remains open, the following course of action will be taken:

- The American Embassy (or another appropriate embassy) will be notified that there is concern over the possible threat of violence;

the school will request that the appropriate authorities (e.g., the police) be notified.

- The emergency team will determine if there is to be a change in transportation (e.g., change in times; parents/embassy to pick up instead of using the bus company).
- All doors, windows, and gates will be secured. Curtains, blinds, and shutters will be closed.
- The on-site safe haven(s) will be prepared: food and necessary equipment will be moved to the safe haven(s) if they aren't there already.
- Recess, physical education, and any other outdoor activities will be canceled.
- Occupants of off-site safe havens will be contacted so that they will be prepared to accept students and staff should conditions warrant.
- The emergency team will establish 'check-in' times with the Embassy. These are predetermined times that the Embassy will expect to receive calls from the school to ensure that all is well.
- The emergency team will arrange for someone to make frequent checks of the situation if the disturbance is expected in the vicinity of the school. The person watching the situation should be able to communicate with the school quickly in order to give warning of any new developments.
- The emergency team will assign a staff member to watch the perimeter of the school from a safe location for surveillance, approaching crowds, suspicious vehicles, etc.

### If the school is to be closed, the following course of action will be taken:

- The emergency team will immediately notify the School Board and the American Embassy (or another appropriate embassy) that a decision has been made to close the school.
- Families will be notified of what has been decided.
- The emergency team will determine where the children are taken. There are several possibilities:
  - School buses will take the children home;
  - Respective embassies will provide transportation for their student nationals;

- Parents will come to the school to pick their children up;
- Children will be taken to offsite safe havens.

**If the children are taken to offsite safe haven, the following course of action will be taken:**

- The emergency team will designate staff members to check the routes to the respective safe havens to ensure that they are safe.
- The American Embassy and other families will be notified that the children have been taken to safe havens.
- Remaining staff will secure the school building as much as time permits, and if possible an assigned person shall remain on site.

## **DANGER IS IMMINENT**

If an attack is imminent and there does not appear to be time for an evacuation of the school, the following course of action will be taken:

- A signal will be given or an announcement will be made that everyone is to proceed to his or her respective on-site safe haven(s).
- The building should immediately be secured by locking all exterior doors and gates; closing all windows; drawing any curtains, blinds or shutters. Teachers will be responsible for securing their own rooms; the emergency team will designate who will be responsible for other areas.
- Teachers will lead his/her students to their respective on-site safe havens. After everyone has gathered in his or her respective safe have, attendance will be taken. The emergency team will dispatch one or two staff members to make a final sweep of the building to make sure no one is still outside the safe haven(s).
- The emergency team will inform the American Embassy (or another appropriate embassy) that the students have been evacuated to off site safe havens. (If the situation is dire, the emergency

team might opt to contact the local police first before contacting the Embassy.)

- Once everyone has been locked into the safe haven(s), it will become difficult to determine when it is safe to come out. Under no circumstances should the safe haven doors be opened unless there is a confirmed 'all clear' signal. The best thing to do is to wait for a call from the American Embassy to confirm the 'all-clear'.

## **ATTACK WITHOUT WARNING**

In the event of an attack without warning, the following course of action will be taken:

- The students will be directed to lie on the floor, preferably under desks or anything providing protection.
- Teachers will close and lock their classroom doors, and close curtains if possible without endangering life.
- Upon securing the classroom, teachers will also remain on the floor until further instructions are received.
- If the signal to evacuate to the on-site safe havens is given, teachers will instruct the students to keep away from the windows and to keep as low as possible.
- If any students or staff members are seriously injured, the emergency procedure for injury goes into effect, if at all possible.
- Teachers should also be aware that they might have to move the students out of the building because of fire.

If the political situation or a natural calamity in the host country becomes life threatening to the school population, the School Board will conduct an emergency session to decide whether or not to close the school on a long term or permanent basis. Students and their families as well as expatriate staff will be assisted in evacuation by their respective embassies; the school's emergency team will carry out the procedure for a force majeure closing.

## INTRUDER IN BUILDING WITH A WEAPON

Although this information is indirectly included in the above procedures, this threatening situation needs to have specific guidelines to protect the school. The process for responding to this threat is:

If possible, the staff member first in contact with the intruder should direct the intruder away from students and signal the nearest staff member to contact the office. If there is a security guard/s, they should be notified immediately;

Announcements on the PA system: “We have a Code Red/Stand Fast (based on your Crisis Response Plan signal) or an armed intruder in the building. Follow lockdown procedures.” or “No one leaves their room as we have an armed intruder in the building.”

### AISV Hostile Intruder Protocol

When you hear the PA system say “Code Red – all staff proceed to safe havens and stand fast” or you are in the gym or music room, and you are informed by another staff member about the “Code Red”, – proceed to safe havens and stand fast. Immediately, teachers take attendance roster, make sure they have a cell phone and immediately (3 minutes for this action) escort students to the designated safe havens. Please help all students you see on the way as you proceed to the safe haven. All other staff proceed to the designated safe havens.

### First responders: the first adults in the safe haven

Act as a door monitor and stay by the door. Pulls labeled safe haven doors closed when all students in sight have entered, no later than after three minutes. Be ready to admit latecomers. Peep holes allow for more to enter. Be judicious in letting locked out enter. The controls for the locks will be activated. You will be able to open the door from the inside – but no one will be able to enter from the outside.

Manually lock the doors. This is essential as the badges can unlock these doors.

Locate Walkie Talkie and designate who will communicate using Walkie Talkie, channel 10

Account for students and staff in safe haven.

**If access to email is available**, email [info@aisv.lt](mailto:info@aisv.lt) and on the subject line write code red accountability for safe haven .....

Report classes in the safe haven as follows:  
Grade ..... teacher and class all present except ..... . List additional students and staff not part of a class. Indicate injuries if any, or write no injuries.

**If access to email is NOT available**, stand ready to report when contacted via Walkie Talkie. When asked for accountability state:  
Grade ..... teacher and class all present except ..... . List additional students and staff not part of a class. Indicate injuries if any, or write no injuries.

Account for injuries.

Administer First Aid if needed.

### Teachers:

- Students are to be quiet and out of line of sight. They are to be in the classrooms, if possible, to avoid crowding.
- Students are to be away from windows and doors, including hallways.
- Classrooms that are part of the safe haven should immediately lock windows and pull the shades, turn off lights, make barriers with desks as necessary away from doors and windows, by walls. Close the door to the hallway.
- NO USE OF DEVICES by students is allowed during a CODE RED. This includes cell phones. This is to maintain communication access needed for emergency communication and response.
- If gunshots are heard, immediately lie down on the floor by barriers.
- Quietly return to class when ALL CLEAR signal is given via Walkie Talkie, PA system, or runner.
- Email Accountability Format.



To: info@aisv.lt

From: First Responder ....., your name

Subject: Code Red Accountability for Safe Haven Rooms .....

Grade ..... teacher and students all present

except .....

Student ....., ....., .....  
..... present.

Adults ....., ....., .....  
..... present.

Injuries – indicate if there is a student or staff member with a special need or medical need.

### Walkie Talkie Set Locations:

- Guard Booth
- Reception
- Gym Office – used in locker rooms
- Office
- 210 – shares with 207
- 205 – shares with 206
- 202 – shares with Pre K

Walkie Talkie Communication – tune to channel 10 and wait for the administration to ask for a safe haven response and respond with Copy to indicate yes, wait to hear the question status before talking.

### Code Red Procedures:

- Everyone stays in their rooms. (Stand Fast/ Lockdown)
- Lock all doors, close the windows and pull the shades.
- Check attendance.
- Keep log.
- Follow the attendance reporting system either by phone or internet system.
- Plan to attend a debriefing staff meeting as soon as the intruder/emergency situation is completed and Code Green/All Clear signal is given.

### Threat Response when Confronted with a Weapon

If you are confronted by an individual with a weapon the following procedures are recommended:

#### If the weapon is outside:

- Remain calm. If you become visibly upset, you may actually prompt the use of the weapon.
- Move slowly and deliberately.
- Turn your body sideways to the weapon.
- Step back three paces if you are able to move.
- As you step back, lower your hands in a non-threatening manner.
- Protect students. Inform the assailant that you are clearing the area. Ask students to step slowly back and leave the scene.
- Reassure the assailant, “No one wants trouble. Please leave now.” Do not ask for the gun/ weapon because you could prompt him/her to use the weapon.
- A staff person witnessing this situation should contact the office immediately and call for the Emergency Signal alert.
- Contact the American Embassy and local police as quickly as possible for immediate assistance.

### **If the weapon is inside the classroom:**

- Remain calm.
- Essentially this is a hostage situation.
- Say “What do you want? What is wrong?”
- Please point the gun/weapon away from us.”  
Try not to escalate the situation.
- Ask permission to evacuate the class and do so if allowed by the armed intruder. If not allowed, keep talking calmly.
- Never lunge for the weapon or show fear and cower.
- A staff person who sees this situation should contact the office to initiate the Code Red/Stand Fast/Emergency Signal alert.
- Contact the local police and the American Embassy as quickly as possible for immediate assistance.

## **NATURAL DISASTER**

Earthquakes, floods, and typhoons often come with little or no warning, so it is imperative that the staff and students be well versed in emergency procedures concerning natural disasters.

### **Earthquakes**

In case of an earthquake, the following course of action should be taken:

- If indoor, teachers will keep their students inside. While shielding their heads with their hands and elbows, students will move away from windows, shelves, and heavy objects and furniture that may fall. They should not be under light fixtures or other suspended objects. If in the classroom, students will take cover under desks, tables, or other heavy furniture.
- If in a hall, stairway, gymnasium or other area where no cover is available, the students will move to an interior wall. They will turn away from windows, kneel alongside the wall, bend their heads close to their knees, cover the sides of their heads with their elbows, and clasp hands firmly behind their necks.
- If in the library, the students will immediately move away from windows and bookshelves and take cover under a desk or a table.

- If in a laboratory or kitchen, all burners will be extinguished (if possible) before taking cover. Students will stay clear of hazardous chemicals that may spill.

- If outdoors, students will move to an open space, away from buildings and overhead power lines. Students will lie down or crouch low to the ground (since legs will not be steady). Teachers and students will constantly keep an eye on their surroundings to be aware of dangers that may demand movement.

- If in a school bus or other vehicle, the vehicle will pull over and stop, away from power lines, bridges, overpasses, and buildings. Students will remain in their seats and hold on.

Once the emergency team has judged that the quake has ended, the emergency procedure for fire will be followed.

### **Tornadoes, floods, storms. etc.**

In case of a tornado or flood or other natural disaster, the following course of action will be taken:

- The emergency team will determine whether or not to cancel school for the day, dismiss students early, or evacuate to offsite safe havens. If weather conditions are extremely serious (thus making driving dangerous), the emergency team may opt to keep students at school in the on-site safe haven(s).
- If the students are to be evacuated, the parents will be contacted in regards to where to pick their children up (at the school or at the off-site safe havens).
- The emergency team then must assess the damage and take appropriate measures. For very minor damage, the emergency team will decide when to reopen the school. For severe damage to the school premises and property, an emergency session of the School Board must be convened to decide where and when the operation of the school will resume. Parents and staff will be notified of whatever decisions the Board makes.

## DEATH IN THE COMMUNITY

If the death occurs on campus, the following course of action will be taken:

- A staff member will remain with the deceased person and send another staff member (or a reliable student if no other staff members are present) for the school nurse or an administrator to assist.
- Staff members or reliable students will move any gathering students away from the area. Any students not directly involved will be sent to their next class, the library, or a supervised area.
- The police and an ambulance will be called.
- The School Board and The US Embassy will be notified.
- Students who witnessed the incident will be gathered into an appropriate office or room for counseling.
- Students who are in class at the time will be kept in their classrooms, especially if the body is in a visible area (students who are not in class at the time will be gathered into a designated area.
- Students will be allowed to leave their classrooms after the situation has been resolved.
- An announcement concerning the following day's schedule will be made to the students. A schedule in writing should also be provided if possible.

### **The administration will do the following:**

- The immediate family of the deceased person will be contacted.
- The administration will meet with the emergency team and make decisions regarding early dismissal and/or schedule changes.
- The campus will be closed to the media.
- Legal counsel will be contacted.
- The emergency team will discuss what information is to be given to the parents and students.

### **If the students are to be dismissed:**

- The school's transportation company will be contacted.
- The emergency team will notify parents of the early dismissal. If the school does not use a transportation company, parents will be asked to pick up their children.
- After the children have been dismissed, the staff will meet to receive accurate information regarding the death. The staff must discuss the procedures to be followed when the students return. At this point, the staff will be allowed to express their grief and openly discuss their feelings, fears, and concerns.

### **When students return to school after the incidents, the following course of action will be taken:**

- Students will be informed.
- Time will be allowed for grief and discussion. Students will be allowed to express their grief and openly discuss their feelings, fears, and concerns.
- The administration will set up a crisis center in the school. If students react strongly and/or appear to be very upset by the news of the death, they will be sent to the crisis center, with an escort if necessary.
- If individual students are extremely upset, their parents will be called.
- Students will be encouraged to attend their regular classes as soon as possible; however, individual students will be allowed more time for grieving, if necessary. Staff members will be especially sensitive to and aware of the students' needs and concerns throughout this period.
- If a funeral is to be held, the time and location will be announced. Particular funeral customs in relation to the deceased person's culture will be explained.

# FIELD TRIPS

## Injury or Death During a Field Trip

- Notify immediately the local police/ ambulance.
- Call the School at +370 5 212 1031 and inform the Emergency Team Leader and/or School Director of what has happened.
- If an accident occurs outside of School hours refer to the list of mobile phone numbers of appropriate administrators to be used in case of emergency and inform the emergency team and/ or School Director of what has happened.
- In case of injury, call the Next of Kin listed on the student's permission slip. In case of death, gather all information on the situation and notify the Emergency Team, or designee, who will inform Next of Kin, offering assistance, condolences and support.
- The Director will meet with the Emergency Team and brief them on the incident.
- Contact legal counsel.
- Collect written evidence for insurance and other purposes.
- The Emergency Team to discuss/finalize what information is to be given to the parents and students.
- An announcement about the incident should be made to the entire community to dispel any rumors. Teachers should discuss the incident with their students.
- Allow time for students to express their feelings openly and to discuss any fears and concerns.
- Any student who is upset by the incident should be encouraged to talk to a counselor or an administrator.

## General Bus Safety Checklist

- All school bus companies should comply with safety, maintenance and insurance regulations according to best practice and the requirements of the local law.
- Students should wait for the bus at a pre-designated distance from the curb.

- Students should board only when the bus comes to a complete stop.
- Buses should have radio or telephone contact on board.
- No bags in the aisles.

## Off Campus Field Trip Preparedness

- All field trips should be reviewed and approved.
- School buses are required to carry a first aid kit. Make sure it is on the bus.
- Teachers are trained in CPR and first aid procedures.
- Always take a complete roster and emergency information of students on a field trip.
- Maintain a complete list of teachers' and chaperones' emergency contacts.
- Maintain and have available family contact sheets.
- Emergency information should be taken to the hospital. Notify parents.
- A staff member should accompany students that are transported to the hospital.
- Student injuries must be registered according to Policy.
- The addresses and telephone numbers of the Lithuanian Embassy and American Embassy in the country or countries to be visited, as required.
- Mobile telephone/charger.
- List of telephone/mobile numbers of appropriate administrators to be used in case of emergency.

## Bus Accident

- Upon notification of the accident, determine if any students are injured.
- Contact Director/Principal/Local Emergency number.
- If an accident location is nearby, administrators from school should respond to the scene, otherwise, chaperones will be in charge.
- Provide emotional support to students.
- Student Emergency information will need to be sent to the hospital.
- Parent notification.
- A staff member should accompany students to the hospital.
- Provide information to faculty.

- If student injuries resulted from an accident make sure the student injury report is registered according to Policy.
- Bus driver should report any accident to the Director.
- Remain calm.
- If a threat of fire exists, move children to a safe place.
- Begin administration of first aid immediately, where necessary.

**When taking students on field trips to different countries, staff members should have the following:**

- First aid kit
- The addresses and telephone numbers of the Lithuanian Embassy and American Embassy (and other appropriate embassies) in the countries to be visited.
- The addresses and telephone numbers of hospitals in the cities to be visited.
- Mobile telephone

**Should a serious injury or death occur while on a field trip, the staff member will do the following:**

- Call the local emergency unit.
- Call the school and inform the chief administrator of what has happened.
- Call the Lithuanian Embassy and/or American Embassy (or the embassy of the injured or deceased person) immediately for advice.

**The administration will then do the following:**

- Contact the immediate family of the injured or deceased person.
- Meet with the emergency team and brief them on the incidents.
- Contact legal counsel.
- The emergency team will discuss what information is to be given to the community.

**If the accident results in serious injury or death then the following course of action will be taken upon the students' return from the field trip:**

- An announcement about the incident will be made to dispel any rumors.
- Teachers will discuss the incident with their students.
- Time will be allowed for grief and discussion. Students will be allowed to express their grief and openly discuss their feelings, fears, and concerns.
- Any student who is upset by the incident will be encouraged to talk to a counselor or an administrator.

## EMERGENCY SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT

An important aspect of emergency preparedness is having the right supplies and equipment on hand.

### First Aid Kits

First aid kits should be easily accessible by every staff member. If the school uses a transportation company, there should be a first aid kit in every vehicle. First aid kits should be taken on every field trip and excursion out of the school.

**The basic first aid kit should contain the following:**

- Antiseptic wipes
- Gauze pads
- Bandages
- Non allergic tape
- Latex gloves
- Band-aids

### Safe Haven Equipment

#### Equipment

The school has a back-up communications system in case the telephone lines fail. A two-way radio and mobile phones are kept. (See Chapter 2. Communication for more details.)



## 4. SCHOOL CLOSURE



Many parts of the world are in a state of instability. Governments and boundaries are changing dramatically, and age-old hostilities throughout the globe are escalating at an alarming rate. All of this change and potential danger emphasize the need for forethought and preparation in international schools, which may be forced at a moment's notice to close due to revolution, hostility, or even natural calamity. How do you protect the students, faculty, the school, and its records? The time to address these questions and reduce confusion and chaos is before the fact, when there is time and heads are cool.

### **This chapter will provide procedure for:**

- Emergency school closure on a short-term basis
- Long-term closure
- Reopening after prolonged closure
- Survival in a crisis situation where the school remains open

## COMMUNICATION

- First and foremost, clear channels of communication must be established so that information can be disseminated in a clear, accurate, and organized fashion. Effective channels of communication will facilitate any emergency situation.
- Information concerning school closure will be immediately communicated to staff, faculty, parents, and students, especially if the closure should continue for more than one day.
- The Emergency Team will provide parents with clearly understood information concerning any kind of closure. This information should be in written form to discourage rumors and undue alarm about emergency situations. In the case of a short-term or long-term closure, a reopening date will be announced.
- Emergency communications equipment (two-way radios, mobile phones, etc.) is available. (See Chapter 2. Communication for more details on communication.)

## TEMPORARY SHORT-TERM CLOSURE AND REOPENING

This section refers to both closings during the school day and for the following day or days as the situation merits. Such closures could be the result of the following:

- Civil disturbances
- Immediate threats to the school
- Major sports events causing excessive traffic and/or unsafe conditions
- Inclement weather
- Strikes

In short, any event that threatens the safety of the staff and students would bring about school closure.

### Who Closes the School on a Short-Term Basis?

The Director shall make this decision. In the Director's absence, the following individuals will be responsible: Assistant Director, Administration Manager will confer to arrive at this decision.

### Making the Decision to Close

The following procedure will be followed if the school is considering closure:

- Verify the situation when it is not obvious or clear by checking reliable primary sources (embassies, local media).
- Once the situation is verified, the director will then evaluate the situation and order school to be closed or dismissed early. The criterion for determining whether the school closes or not will be the safety of the students and staff whether they are at school, or still at home before school begins.

### Closing the School on a Short-Term Basis

- The AISV SMS Emergency system will be activated (in the case of early dismissal), alternate routes to school may be suggested if the usual ones are unsafe. If school vehicles are used for early dismissal during an emergency school closure, they should be equipped with mobile phones and/or two-way radios if they are not already.

- If the decision is made early in the day, parents will be sent an SMS immediately so that their children will not be brought to school. The security guard will be given written instructions as to why the school has been closed in case some drivers/parents leave for school before being informed of the closure.

- In the event of a closure while school is in session, parents will be contacted to either pick up their children or arrange for someone to be at home early when their usual driver drops them off.

- If the school is safe, students may be kept in their classrooms until their parents or authorized drivers pick them up.

- If the school grounds have become unsafe, students will be taken to on site safe haven location (upper school second floor).

- Local security, weather activity, and any other potentially threatening conditions will be closely monitored from primary sources during the closure.

- Unless the school announces otherwise, classes will resume the next day.

### Transport to Safe Havens

When a decision has been made to move to a safe haven, the following procedure will be followed:

- Explain the reasons for moving to a safe haven.
- Walk in a line.
- Keep everyone calm.

Faculty and staff must be sure that all children have been sent to safe haven before leaving the school. (See Chapter 2. Communication for more information on safe havens.)

### Reopening of the School after a Short-Term Closure

- Confirm safe conditions through primary sources.
- Inform the school staff.
- Classes will resume on the following day (or on a specific, previously announced date).

## Make-Up Days

Days lost to temporary closure may or may not be made up.

## LONG-TERM OR PERMANENT CLOSURE DUE TO FORCE MAJEURE

“Force majeure” describes an event that cannot be anticipated or controlled. For international schools, it is an emergency situation that would close the school for four or more consecutive weeks, and one that would likewise affect local and foreign-hire staff, faculty, administration, school families, and the overall functioning of the school itself. The situation may be such that decisions must be carried out with the utmost speed and efficiency.

### Who Declares Force Majeure?

As for short-term closure, the first step is verification of the situation at hand. It should be noted, however, that a force majeure situation is usually of such magnitude that it needs little confirmation of its existence. The American Embassy, school board, or local government will determine a force majeure situation.

The following persons or bodies (in descending order) will declare a force majeure closing: the School Board Chair acting on the recommendations of the Founder of the school – the American ambassador.

### Force Majeure Action Plan

The following is an outline of areas of responsibility as well as a guideline of duties to be executed before a school is actually closed.

#### The Director is responsible for the following:

- Communication with the school board, student families, faculty, and staff.
- The overall implementation of the force majeure action plan and follow-through of assigned responsibilities.
- The delegation of responsibilities concerning school security and the shutdown of plan operations.

#### The Business Office is responsible for the following:

- The settlement of local and foreign contracts, Arrangements for the summarization of all school bank accounts and deposits, and the updating of signatory authorities, with power of attorney, if needed.
- Arrangements for securing school and personal property The establishment of inventory lists (with photos if necessary) of school property, which will be updated annually and entered into a computer base, outside of school campus.
- The maintenance of school records in a facility outside the country, and the provision of last-minute updates for such records;
- Arrangements for departure transportation.

#### The Faculty is responsible for the following:

- Communication with the students;
- The organization of online learning for students;
- The storage of instructional supplies and equipment;
- Assistance in faculty departure arrangements and other responsibilities deemed important by the Director and Business Office.

#### The Administrative Support/Secretarial Staff is responsible for the following:

- The maintenance of an up-to-date list of telephone numbers and addresses for all school staff; the distribution of this list to the emergency team, school board, American Embassy administrative officer, and any other appropriate parties.
- The maintenance of current information on the staff and board members’ emergency contact numbers, as well as on the staff’s passports and visas.
- The preparation and distribution to all staff and board members of an “emergency information sheet” with information regarding the following:
  - School’s insurance providers.
  - The US Embassy.

- The US State Department Office of Overseas Schools.
- Contact numbers of staff and board members.
- Any other information deemed vital.

**School records will include the following:**

- Budget information.
- Salary schedule.
- Payroll obligations.
- Employee contracts and contract leases.
- Vendor obligations.
- Employee assignments.
- Student names, addresses, parent names.
- Report cards and transcripts.
- School historical data.
- Board minutes and policies.
- Administrative procedures.
- Copies of school bulletins and brochures.
- A current yearbook.

If the emergency situation requires a rapid evacuation from the host country, the school's copy of records should be taken out of the country with the Director or another designated responsible party.

**Note:** School employees will be reminded to have all their important personal papers up-to-date and ready to take at a moment's notice.

**Settling of Outstanding Local Contracts/Accounts**

If school closure is temporary, there is no need to transfer local bank accounts. If closure will be permanent, then the school will: Act according to local laws and bylaws of AISV.

**REOPENING**

Closing down the school in an efficient manner will greatly facilitate its reopening. Basically, reopening involves the following:

- Verification of the safety and stability of the host country or affected region with primary sources.
- Verification of the safety of the school and grounds.
- Reestablishment of contacts in the local government.
- Verification of the stability of local financial institutions, or the establishment of a safe place to store school money (e.g., at the American Embassy).
- Reestablishment of housing for foreign-hire staff and the director.
- Recall of local employees and those who have left the country.
- Examination of employee/director contracts for breach of contract if they do not return.
- Notification of parent of reopening date and status of school.



## 5. PSYCHOLOGICAL READINESS



### The Psychological Component – Why It Matters and How to Plan for It

A community can gain strength in the long-term from tragedy, if the situation is handled properly. If not, it can tear the community apart. In times of crisis, sure direction from professionals coupled with a briefed, compassionate staff will go far to contain the emotional disruption due to a traumatic event or any number of potential crises.

A crisis is defined as a psychological or social condition characterized by instability caused by stress, and endangering the individual in his/her group.

The emotional and psychological trauma that arises after a crisis can have powerful repercussions within the immediate and extended school community.

### CRISIS RESPONSE POLICY

Our crisis response policy has the following objectives:

- To provide emotional support on a short-term basis in situations that have an emotionally traumatic impact on students.
- To provide support to faculty who are working with students affected by a traumatic situation,

and who are called upon to identify students at risk.

- To facilitate referral for ongoing counseling or therapy in situations that have some potential of escalating, or in situations where a student's need for counseling or therapy is not addressed adequately in a group meeting format.
- To disseminate accurate information and dispel rumors.
- To provide an ongoing structure for managing potentially escalating anxiety in longer-term high stress situations.
- To facilitate broad-based management of situations that threaten to disrupt the functioning of the school and/or place individuals or groups of students at risk.
- To use students and families as a resource in special situations (e.g., to obtain information about a missing student; to provide support for school families affected by a catastrophe).
- To develop and maintain an ongoing educational program to help students develop anticipatory coping skills.

### Identification of Resources

When an emergency strikes, time is critical, and depending on the scope of the emergency situation, a number of special resources will



need to be contacted. Resources and contacts within the broader school community may be required to assist. Suggested contacts include the following:

- Health care professionals (including child psychologists) at local hospitals, clinics, and schools.
- Professionals within the parent community (they can be contacted through the Parent-School Association).
- Independent psychological counselors.
- Embassy personnel.
- Counseling agencies (clinics, community organizations).
- The counseling staff of other schools.
- The school's insurance provider.

## Response Plans

The following response plans are designed to offer suggestions in assessing the psychological impact and designing countermeasures to assist the school community – students, parents, and faculty -in dealing with specific trauma. These plans are “field-tested,” and based on real life events.

Note: Underlying these steps is the need for all staff members to be sensitive to the feelings, rights, and confidentiality of all students and staff who may be involved in a crisis situation.

## DEALING WITH TRAUMA – THE TRAUMA RESPONSE

Any critical incident that is sudden, random, violent, and senseless can shatter a person's sense of safety and wellbeing and temporarily destroy the ability to function normally. This reaction is called the trauma response. Although everyone will react with different intensities and recover at varying rates, most people will go through some form of the trauma response. Here are some suggestions on how to deal with students:

- Reassure students that their fears and feelings are appropriate and shared.

- Allow for small group discussions and share their feelings.
- Monitor concern about peer reaction.
- Try to reduce tension, anxieties, and possible feelings of guilt.
- Know the typical responses to trauma.
- Sleep and appetite disturbance
- Rebellion at home
- Refusal to do chores or school work
- Poor concentration
- Withdrawal
- Attention-seeking behavior
- Physical problems (headaches, bowel problems, psychosomatic complaints)
- Loss of interest in social activities.

Monitor student response and refer students to counselors as necessary if any of the following symptoms of psychological distress appear:

- Suicidal ideation, talking about suicide
- Aggressive behavior
- Inability to make simple decisions or carry out everyday activities
- Self-harm
- Psychoactive substance abuse
- Disorientation
- Prevailing sadness and hopelessness

## Debriefing

In the event of violence in the community, the following debriefing steps can help those involved to respond to trauma and to begin functioning normally again. Ask faculty and administration to respond to these three questions:

- Describe how you first learned of the incident?
- How did you feel then?
- How do you feel now?

Each classroom teacher debriefs the students by doing the following:

- Encouraging discussion and sharing.
- Ensuring confidentiality
- Providing as much time as is needed.
- Making appropriate referrals to counselors when necessary.

At the end of each day following a specific traumatic event, assemble the staff to discuss the day, share experiences, ask questions, and plan for the following days.

## NATURAL DISASTER

### Communication – Sharing Information and Providing Comfort

During a natural disaster a school can serve as a vital communication station for members of the school community to stay in touch with friends and family elsewhere.

- The school will contact each family.
- Callers will keep notes on emergency telephone numbers and on where families are going if they plan to leave town.
- Telephone lines will be made available.
- The main reception telephone will be manned around the clock by teachers and staff. Teachers and staff will be trained to direct calls to appropriate places and stop needless phone calls.
- Information shared will be accurate, consistent, and helpful in stopping rumors. Important telephone numbers will be posted on the walls, and a list of updated information posted each day.
- Messages will be communicated regularly, and more than once to make sure they are received and understood.
- A steady stream of information will provide comfort to families disrupted by a natural disaster; even repeated messages have a positive impact of giving people confidence.

### The Role of the Internet

The Internet can serve as a vital link to the outside world. The school will issue daily “progress reports” via the Internet.

### Calming Rumors and Dispelling Anxiety

Rumors will be addressed quickly. One of the most important ways to deal with and combat rumors is to collect them – make it easy to find out what is on people’s minds and then disseminate the actual facts. The school will do this.

### Psychological Counseling

Several things will be done to provide counseling for teachers, staff, students, and their families.

- Recruit outside professionals if needed. They can be made available the first week back in school, and then periodically or as needed after that.
- The school’s teachers will be readily available to talk to students about their feelings.
- Rooms will be set aside for students to talk to counselors, friends, or teachers.
- The first day will be spent with students regrouping and writing about what has happened to them.
- Unique class “time blocks” can be scheduled to allow students to share experiences.
- Resume the normal school schedule as quickly as possible.

All other information pertaining to well being, safety and emergency can be found in the Child Protection Handbook.