

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF ZANZIBAR  
PARENT EMERGENCY MANUAL  
**2020/21**

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NURTURE, EMPOWER, LEAD

Dear Parents and Guardians,

It is our privilege to welcome you to the International School of Zanzibar. At ISZ, we strive to provide a healthy, safe, and academically rich environment for our children to grow. As a parent or guardian, you play a vital role in helping to provide that healthy and safe environment. In the unfortunate event of a crisis or emergency situation in or around ISZ, we will make every possible attempt to ensure the safety of our children. As a school, we define staff-specific roles, plan for specific scenarios, review annually our procedures, practice drills with our students, and maintain an overall level of crisis prevention awareness. We also work closely with the Regional Security Officer of the United States Embassy in Dar Es Salaam. Our entire staff, from administrators to our sanitation staff, know the role that they will play in an emergency situation. It is equally important for you as a parent or guardian to understand your role. This booklet will detail the role that you play in helping ISZ maintain the highest possible level of safety and security. It will also provide you with information on how our staff will handle crisis or emergency situations.

Sincerely,

Dr. James W. Pilton  
Head of School  
International School of Zanzibar

## **Emergency Intervention and Response**

ISZ has specific plans and directives to handle the following crisis situations. We follow guidelines recommended by the U.S. Department of State Overseas Schools Advisory Council:

- Fire
- Bomb Threat
- Natural Disaster
- Civil Unrest/Civil Disorder
- Student/Staff Injury
- Sexual Assault
- Suicide
- Child Napping/Child Lost
- Hostage/Intruder
- Death of Student/Staff
- Safe School Zone

ISZ has published this document in an effort to inform parents and guardians on how to handle crisis or emergency situations. The most important thing for you as a parent during a crisis situation is to remain calm and keep lines of communications with the school open at all times. The school will coordinate the crisis response together with the appropriate authorities. The school will provide accurate and up-to-date information as we receive it. Please be aware that information from other community sources and/or the media may not be accurate.

In the event of extended crisis or emergency, ISZ is committed to implementing best practices outlined by the U.S. Department of State in maintaining continuity of academic operations. ISZ's online platform and core academic continuity system is Google Classroom. ISZ is dedicated to consistent development of an academic continuity system that is intentional, reliable, comprehensive, and effective (World Virtual School Project, 2016).

Thank you very much for your attention. The role you play in a crisis or emergency situation is crucial to the success of our response.

## **Parent/Guardian Role**

In an emergency or crisis situation, there are three areas of concern that will need to be addressed. These are labeled as pre-response, during, and post-response. As a parent, you have a role to play in each area.

Pre-response:

- Ensure that the school has all necessary contact information and medical history.
- Participate in Open-House meetings.
- Review and reinforce emergency procedures with your child.
- Review and reinforce consulate/company emergency policies with your child.

During:

- Remain calm and make sure lines of communication with the school are open at all times.

- In case of an individual emergency situation, an administrator from the school will join you.
- Follow instructions as given by designated school spokesperson.
- Ensure that accurate information is being received from the school, either by updated bulletins, and/or our school telephone tree.
- Be alert for and refrain from spreading rumors/unsubstantiated information in the community.
- Ensure that family emergencies have been communicated to the proper authorities at school.

Post-response:

- Respond to school survey with feedback on response to emergency and future actions or changes.
- Watch for counseling needs of students.
- Debrief the emergency at an appropriately called meeting/ conference with the emergency team.

**ISZ Role**

ISZ administration and staff regularly meet to discuss health, safety, and emergency response issues with an emphasis on emergency communications and preparations.

Crisis Communication:

In the event of an emergency, our Crisis Response Team (CRT) will lead all communication efforts. Our CRT has a defined hierarchal structure. All decisions on communication will come through the lead CRT member on site. The CRT hierarchical structure is as follows:

Head of School of School

Chairperson of the Board of Governors

Section Principal for Elementary and Secondary

Operations Manager

Appointed Teacher

In the event of an existing or potential security threat, ISZ will be in contact with and receive assistance from the U.S. Consulate. The school will notify parents and local authorities.

- The primary means of communication is the telephone. The lead CRT member will initiate the telephone tree. Each homeroom teacher will then make their assigned calls to parents.
- Secondary means of communication will consist of a school-wide parent email alert and social media like WhatsApp.
- Efforts will be made to access and keep the school phone open to receive incoming calls. It may not be possible to do this during an evacuation scenario.
- In the event that electronic communication is not an option, the onsite CRT lead member will verbally disseminate information to parents that are on-site. This CRT member will identify himself and proceed with providing information at a designated location.

**Emergency Preparation**

ISZ has made preparations to intervene in a crisis situation. An important aspect of emergency preparedness is having the right supplies and equipment as well as practicing our response.

- Each classroom has an emergency kit in case of an evacuation of the building.
- First aid kits are located in each building and are accessible by all staff. Emergency and First-Aid Kits will also be taken on all field trips.
- Teachers regularly review emergency procedures with their students.

There are two types of drills practiced at ISZ: Evacuation and Lockdown. At the beginning of each school year, the teacher will walk 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.

During or after a particularly severe natural disaster or dangerous political situation, students and staff may have to stay at school until conditions are safe for pick up. There will be two Safe Havens for these particular situations, an On-Site Safe Haven and an Off-Site Safe Haven. The On-Site Safe Haven is the outdoor gym The Off-Site Safe Haven is the adjacent hotel.

In the Off-Site Safe Haven, students will be contained until it is safe to release students to their parents or guardians. The release of students will be determined by the lead CRT member. Upon release students can be picked up at the hotel entrance. Please do not attempt to walk into our safe haven site to get your child. Student safety is of the utmost importance to us. We will get your child to you in the safest and most orderly fashion as possible. You will be asked to show identification and sign your child out at this time.

#### Closed Campus:

ISZ is a closed campus. Admissions to our campus is strictly controlled and regulated to ensure the safety of our students and staff. A security guard is posted at all entrances and exits of the school. These guards monitor their appointed area for intruders or unwelcome guest. We want to emphasize that all parents and visitors are welcome and ask you to understand that certain guidelines need to be followed:

- Visitors will enter the school through the security guard area and then proceed to the office area.
- Signing in is mandatory for entrance into any part of the school grounds. The sign in sheets are located in the security guard areas of both buildings.
- Visitors will wear a visitor pass at all times.

We appreciate your cooperation when following the outlined procedures.