



TIRANA INTERNATIONAL
S c h o o l

TIS

Operating

Handbook

2021-2022



TIRANA INTERNATIONAL
School

#StopTheSpread

2021-2022

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Re-opening
with
strategies

HEALTH & SAFETY

Tirana International School is planning on returning to campus on August 26th, opening our doors for a new school year. We look forward to seeing all returning students and families while also welcoming several new students and families into the TIS community.

Without any clear indication for how long we will need to make adjustments due to COVID-19, we may be in a situation where we are moving through a variety of risk levels. TIS will continue to follow guidelines defined by the Albania Government, which may include social distancing limitations or campus closure.

We will follow the Government's assessment of the risk level, but TIS realizes that we will need to respond to many different health and safety scenarios. We also understand that within our large school community, there is a wide range of perspectives and views concerning the seriousness of COVID-19, practical precautionary methods, and realistic procedures. TIS will continue to follow the recommendations and guidelines published by the CDC, WHO, and the Albanian Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education.

This document is meant to outline the re-opening plan for TIS, including a plan if we need to close campus due to government regulations. We recognize that we must remain flexible and that we may be in a situation requiring us to shift from one model to another. We understand that with both models, we will need to share many more relevant and specific details. As we realize that some government guidelines and health recommendations may change, we will continue to provide support and communicate all updates

TIS EDUCATIONAL MODELS

Model #1: Opening with Health Strategies

TIS will operate our regular daily schedule with increased health and screening practices. In this scenario, we would be able to have all students on campus at the same time due to the fortunate situation that our classrooms are big and can allow for appropriate spacing. TIS will abide by the recommended social distancing restrictions. By reducing the number of students in classes and restricting the mixing of students across groups, TIS will continue to teach and learn with added health and safety expectations. Our day-to-day program is enhanced by incorporating lessons learned from Distance Learning into our curriculum. All school activities will continue to be modified to allow for social distancing.

PRECAUTIONARY STRATEGIES

TIS may consider implementing several strategies to encourage behaviors that reduce the spread of COVID-19.

- Staying Home When Appropriate Policy will be enforced that encourages sick employees and students to stay at home without fear of reprisal. Staff and students should stay home if they have tested positive for or are showing COVID-19 symptoms.
- Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette Teach/reinforce hand-washing and encourage staff and students to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue.



PRECAUTIONARY STRATEGIES CONTINUED...

- **Cloth Face Coverings** Face coverings should be worn by staff and students as feasible and are essential indoors and when physical distancing is difficult.
- **Adequate Supplies** TIS will support healthy hygiene behaviors by providing sufficient supplies, including soap, hand sanitizer (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer), paper towels, tissues, disinfectant wipes, face coverings (as feasible) and no-touch trash cans.
- **Signs and Messaging** TIS will post signs in highly visible locations (e.g., school entrances, restrooms) that promote everyday protective measures and describe how to stop the spread of germs.
- **Cleaning and Disinfection** Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces within the school and on school buses at least twice daily and between use. The use of shared objects will be limited when possible and shared areas (example: playground equipment) will be cleaned between use.
- **Modified Layouts** Space seating/desks the prescribed appropriate distance apart when feasible. Turn desks to face in the same direction (rather than facing each other), or have students sit on only one side of tables, spaced apart.
- **Physical Barriers and Guides** Installing physical barriers, particularly in areas where it is difficult for individuals to remain at least 1 meter apart. Provide physical guides, such as tape on floors and signs on walls, to ensure that staff and children stay at least 1 meter apart in lines and at other times.
- **Communal Spaces and Food Service** Closing communal spaces where needed and follow guidelines for appropriate food preparation and disposal.
- **Communication Systems** Notifying staff, families, and the public of school closures and any restrictions in place to limit COVID-19 exposure. Provide a system that is consistent with applicable law and privacy policies, having staff and families self-report to the school if they or their students have symptoms of COVID-19, a positive test for COVID-19, or were exposed to someone with COVID-19 within the last 14 days. As appropriate, the community will report international travel to the school.
- **Staff Training** Training staff on all safety protocols.
- **Recognize Signs and Symptoms** Conducting daily health checks (e.g., temperature screening and/or symptom checking) of staff and students. Health checks should be conducted safely and respectfully and will be in accordance with any applicable privacy laws and regulations.
- **Isolate and Transport Those Who are Sick** School administration has identified an isolation room or area to separate anyone who has COVID-19 symptoms or tests positive but does not have symptoms. Establish procedures for safely transporting anyone who is sick to their home or a healthcare facility with appropriate parental permission and guidance.
- **Notify Health Officials and Close Contacts** In accordance with local laws and regulations, school administrators will notify local health officials, staff, and families immediately of any case of COVID-19 while maintaining confidentiality.
- **Access to the Campus** TIS has a vibrant campus full of activities and opportunities. We may need to close off our facilities to some of these activities. Access for parents and visitors will be carefully evaluated, limited, and monitored.
- **Health and Wellness** TIS is committed to monitoring and supporting the physical and mental health and wellness of our students, teachers, and staff in connection with the school's health service and the School Counselor program.



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Distance
Learning

TIS EDUCATIONAL MODELS

Model # 2: Distance Learning

If Albania determines that schools must close their campuses, TIS will return to providing educational services via online platforms and following the established distance learning plan. If the public health situation in Albania, as determined by the appropriate governmental agency, significantly worsens due to an escalation of the pandemic, QSI Headquarters, TIS Advisory Board, and the TIS Director, in addition to the Albania authorities, may determine that on-campus learning is not possible.

Distance Learning Platforms and Communication System at TIS

The following Online Platforms support both Distance Learning and faculty/student/family collaboration to ensure a quality student learning experience when planning and learning remotely:

Office 365 – All staff email accounts are through Office 365, along with a variety of tools to communicate and collaborate. Some tools, such as Teams will be used with students who are also issued school email accounts (11YO-SEC4). The Teams video conference platform may be used as the tool for video conferencing in those age groups.

Seesaw – is a platform for student engagement that provides creative tools to take pictures, draw, record videos, and more to capture learning in a portfolio. Teachers can find or create activities to share with students and parents (PreK-10YO).

Zoom – is a virtual classroom platform that may be used by lower preschool and lower elementary teachers. This is very easy for students and parents to access, as the classroom teacher simply sends a link via email for individuals to join the meeting/class (PreK-10YO).



Please note, if distance learning is needed at any point in the school year, TIS will be sending out a more detailed Distance Learning Handbook with student expectations, teacher expectations, schedules and added support.

Blended Learning

Any student that is required to stay at home, due to COVID related reasons, TIS will work to support that child with a blended learning option.

Covid Related Reasons in Which Blended Learning Will be Supported

- Student contracted Covid
- The students is defined as a 1st Level Contact by TIS
- If in the process of determining if a student is at-risk
- Student has been asked by school to remain home.

If a student is absent due to Covid-related reasons, they will be supported with a blended learning option beginning 24 hours after communication the information to the school.



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**Health
Routines**

Student Absences for Non – COVID19 Reasons – Blended Learning Will Not Be the Expectation

- **Sicknesses and Injury (non-Covid)**
- **Family trips/vacations**
- **Personal/ Family Appointments off Campus**
- **Other non-Covid reasons for absence**

Blended Learning Protocols for All Students/ Ages

- **Approved blended learning will begin after a 24-hour time period to allow staff sufficient time to plan and prepare.**
- **Students are expected to follow the provided schedule and follow-through with diligent effort.**
- **Parents are expected to support students, as needed.**
- **Students are expected to attend online for the duration of the schedule provided to them.**

Additional Blended Learning Protocols for Elementary (5-10yo students)

- **Communication to School: Parents of Elementary will either contact School Reception/or be contacted by School Reception to determine the reason for the student's absence. The reception will communicate information with the Academic Coordinator and the relevant teachers. At times, the school doctor is involved in some of this process.**
- **Homeroom Teachers: Teachers will communicate their blended learning support plan for each student for literacy, math, cultural studies/science. This will be developed thoughtfully considering what will be the maximum benefit/impact for student learning based on the subjects and activities currently taking place. This may include students Zooming in during portions of live classes, during some times of teacher preparation periods, or a mix. The teacher will strive for schedule consistency as much as possible, but this may vary based on what is most conducive for learning during that time.**
- **LOE Teachers: Teachers will communicate times for students to either Zoom in during their normally scheduled class or provide an instructional activity offline. LOE stands for Languages other than English – formerly called Foreign Language**
- **Teachers of Essential Classes: Teachers will provide 1 Seesaw activity per full week of absence. The Essentials classes are art, technology, music, physical education, and library.**

Additional Blended Learning Protocols for Middle School/Secondary (11yo through Secondary IV)

- **Students who qualify for blended learning will be expected to attend each class synchronously unless otherwise directed by the teacher.**
- **Any parents requesting blended learning for their students must fill out the Blended Learning Form. This will be provided to parents each week in the TIS Newsletter. Students not approved through this process but have a COVID-related absence during the school week must provide COVID-related documentation as soon as it is available. Upon approval, students should expect to join blended learning within 24 hours.**
- **This process is extremely important as teachers are not able to provide the support needed without sufficient time to prepare.**

TIS ROUTINES & PROCEDURES

Staff and Faculty

- **Take body temperature before leaving home**
- **Arrive at school no later than 7:40am**
- **Wear protective masks throughout the day**
- **Temperature checked at reception**
- **Use hand sanitizer upon entering school and, if possible, wash hands**
- **Open windows, if possible, in work areas**

All TIS Students

- **Take body temperature before leaving home**
- **Wear protective masks throughout the day for students aged 5YO-Secondary and follow the distancing expectations**
- **Avoid sitting in common areas**
- **Upon arrival at the school, they will have their temperature checked and confirmed**



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Mask Use

Healthy Hand Hygiene Behavior

- All children, staff are expected engage in hand hygiene at the following times:
 - Arrival to the facility and after breaks
 - Before and after eating or handling food
 - After using the toilet or helping with toileting
 - After playing outdoors
- Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If hands are not visibly dirty, alcohol-based hand sanitizers can be used if soap and water are not readily available
- Students will be supervised when they use hand sanitizer
- Students will be assisted with hand washing, including those who cannot wash hands alone
- Developmentally appropriate posters describing hand washing steps will be placed in prescribed areas

Wearing a Mask

Students, teachers, and staff will be expected to wear masks throughout school while inside the building. The purpose of wearing a mask while at school is for two main reasons:

- Prevent the spread of droplets
- Reduce individuals touching their faces

We ask that all individuals bring a mask that fits the requirements of your family's needs. The condition of wearing a mask is dependent on the age level of the student and the situation they are in.

- Students are expected to wear a mask for entry into TIS.
- Students are expected to wear a mask when moving through common areas and hallways of the school - anywhere where they may come into contact with others.
- Students in the 5YO class or older are required to wear a mask in all indoor locations.
- The TIS team of teachers and sanitization staff will work to ensure the classrooms are sanitized and cleaned many times throughout the day to ensure a safe and healthy environment for our TIS students. TIS provides a controlled classroom environment that is cleaned and sanitized throughout the school day. The classes at TIS will be set up to ensure each student is distanced properly.



Arrival & Dismissal Procedures

Until further notice, parents will not be permitted to enter the campus building, to limit the number of people on campus.

Arrival Procedures

- Parents and drivers will be allowed to drive through the front gate and proceed to the right, dropping students off at the designated area.
- Bus riders will be dropped off at the roundabout next to the main entry. Temperature checks will be done at all entry points.
- Mask will be required at all entry points to the interior of the campus.

Dismissal Procedures

- Students should not gather or linger in common areas, such as cafeteria, gym, library, or outside on school grounds, as they wait to get on their bus or get picked up.
- Staff will escort elementary and preschool students directly to the bus and load to their assigned seats. Middle and Secondary students will report directly to their bus and sit in assigned seats. Buses will be lined up within the roundabout.
- Parents need to wait for students to exit the building; parents will not be allowed in to the school building without an appointment.
- No student or family will be allowed to stay to use any unapproved facilities or equipment.
- If approved activities are being held after school, those students will report immediately to the designated area.



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Busses

TIS TRANSPORTATION PROCEDURES

All buses will operate at lower capacity. In addition, to maintain a safe and healthy environment for students who are taking the bus to school, our transportation services will do the following:

The Bus Driver and Bus Monitor Must:

- Not ride the bus unless they do not have a fever and/or other COVID-19 symptoms.
- Wear a protective mask at all times.
- Check student temperatures before entering the bus. *If a Student has a temperature higher than 37.5 the driver will not allow the students to get on the bus. Driver should contact the transportation coordinator who will inform the parents. Driver should wait with the student until their parents come to pick him/her up. Student should never be left unattended
- Clean and disinfect the bus after each use to prepare for the next pickup.
- Keep the bus windows open for proper ventilation (weather permitting).
- Communicate to the school and parents immediately upon recognition of symptoms or temperature of any student before entering the bus.

All Students Who Take the Bus Must:

- Not ride the bus unless they do not have a fever and/or other COVID-19 symptoms.
- Wear a protective mask before, during, and after the bus ride.
- Sit in the assigned seat and avoid touching.
- Make use of provided or individual hand sanitizer.

Arrival to Campus


Once students arrive on the campus, we ask them to wait for students to exit the bus slowly and leave a distance between the person exiting ahead.

Departure from Campus

Students will be dismissed from their homeroom or last class to collect their things and go straight to the bus. Once on the bus, they should find their assigned seat and wait patiently for the bus to depart. If there is a line waiting to get on the bus, students should keep an appropriate distance apart. Siblings will be allowed to sit with each other in adjoining seats as part of assigned seating.







On all TIS school busses, reminders are posted like the one below.



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BUS SAFETY RULES

During COVID-19

	SOCIAL DISTANCING 1 M
	CHECK TEMPERATURE 37.5 C NOT ALLOWED TO ENTER THE BUS
	STERILIZE HANDS BEFORE ENTERING THE BUS
	WEAR FACE MASK WHEN INSTRUCTED

TIS CLASSROOM PROCEDURES

Space Arrangement

Classrooms will be set up to allow for at minimum 1 meter between each student. In the hallways and common areas, we encourage appropriate distancing.

Precautionary Routine

After each class, teachers will spray each student's desk/workstation with an approved disinfectant solution for students to disinfect their desks/workstation.

- Elementary students will not need to wipe down their stations unless this seems necessary between classes.

Student School Items and Resources

To reduce the amount of sharing items, we ask that students:

- Have their water bottles
- Use their school items
- Understand that teachers will limit the sharing of non-essential classroom resources.

PE Class Protocols

Teachers should plan outdoor activities whenever possible.

Teachers will avoid activities that require physical contact.

Sports equipment will be disinfected after each class.

Music Class Protocols

Singing and instruments that require deep breathing/exhaling have been shown to have an additional increased risk for the spread of COVID-19. The use of these types of instruments will not be allowed, and a mask will remain on during the class. The determination as the year progresses will be made as to the use of these instruments. Students should not share equipment. Teachers will spray music stands and any other surfaces touched by the students with disinfectant for students to wipe down at the end of each class. Teachers will spray and wipe down community equipment (percussion instruments, guitars, pianos, etc.) with disinfectant after each class.


Technology Class Protocols

Technology classes will move from class to class or be provided smaller cohorts for entering the computer lab. Teachers will disinfect after each use.

Library Class Protocols

Our library will use a book rotation system to disinfect books before they are placed back into circulation.






In TIS hallways, reminders are posted like the one below.



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Safety Rules During COVID-19

BEFORE ENTERING THE BUILDING

	<p>SOCIAL DISTANCING</p> <p>1 M</p>
	<p>FOLLOW THE PAWS</p>
	<p>CHECK TEMPERATURE 37.5 C NOT ALLOWED TO ENTER THE BUILDING</p>
	<p>STERILIZE HANDS BEFORE ENTERING THE BUILDING</p>
	<p>WEAR FACE MASK WHEN INSTRUCTED</p>



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Lunch
Room &
Facilities

SCHOOL LUNCH PROCEDURES

The TIS cafeteria staff will comply with all necessary precautions and regulations concerning safe food preparation and serving.

- Lunch Schedule will be changed to allow for fewer people in the lunchroom at one time.
- Lunches will be prepared for pre-school students and delivered to pre-school classrooms.
- Student seating in the cafeteria will be socially distanced.
- Please notify the school by calling first if your student did not arrive with their home lunch and will have it delivered during the day. No outside lunch deliveries allowed.
- Students lining up should keep their masks on until it is time to eat.
- Students lining up should keep an appropriate social distance while waiting for their food.

Seating for Students

- Student seating in the cafeteria will be arranged to provide more space between all students
- Cleaning in between groups – cleaning staff will clean and disinfect tables and chairs between student groups that are using the school cafeteria.

FACILITIES

Typically, TIS has a vibrant campus full of activities and classes for students, teachers, and parents. We recognize that during this time, we may need to close off our facilities to some of these activities and opportunities. We will keep parents and the community aware of any decisions to open and offer activities and athletics.

Cleaning

- Increased School Cleaning with Disinfectants – TIS will increase the frequency of cleaning and place a more significant emphasis on commonly touched surfaces, such as door handles, rails, and shared classroom items.
- Student Transitional Cleaning - Middle School and Secondary students will also be asked to disinfect their workspaces before transitioning to a new classroom.
- All classrooms will have spray bottles and wipes for disinfecting desks and workstations.

TIS Doctor: Valbona Selmani (valbona-selmani@tismail.org)

1. Screening

- Primary temperature checks will be done at the front two interior entrances to the campus.
- General monitoring of student health by teachers – any students showing any symptoms should report to the Nurse center for a health check and interview.

2. Recording - Health Data Collection

- The Doctor center maintains student records that are organized by age level or cohort.
- All COVID-19 related symptoms will be documented.
- Any student sent home for isolation until confirmation should be documented and reported.
- Students who stay home but have any COVID-19 symptoms should inform the school for documentation.

3. Contact Tracing - Based on our current information, close contact is someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes over a 24 hour period. The school considers 48 hours before illness onset until the time the patient is isolated as the possible contact timeframe. (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/principles-contact-tracing.html>). The school and family can work together to be responsible for contact tracing.



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Outdoor
Play

PLAYGROUND FACILITIES

As proven in COVID-19 research, outside areas provide a safer environment with decreased risk of transmission. There are a number of ways that TIS will prepare playgrounds and keep them maintained for health safety.



As seen above, while students are off the playground, TIS maintenance staff will be spraying equipment and railings multiple times a day. Wiping them afterward will prevent slippery or dangerous surfaces.

RECESS PROCEDURES

Recess times for students have been staggered in order to ensure that the number of students outside together is controlled and at a minimum.

During the beginning days of school, as well as reinforced during PE classes throughout the year, students will be taught appropriate and safe ways to play at recess while being cautious about transmission.

Waste Management

TIS will use open waste containers and remove waste regularly from school areas throughout the day.



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Parent &
Community

PARENT & COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Parents are critical in keeping our school community safe.

Please, consider the following:

- Always check your child for COVID-19 symptoms, before sending them to school.
- Never give your child medication that could mask/reduce a fever before sending them to school.
- If your child has a fever and/or other COVID-19 symptoms, please keep them at home and contact the school Director or school doctor to tell them why your child will be absent.
- Make sure that your child has masks, their water bottle, and any other personal protective equipment you deem necessary as a parent.

Parents or visitors wishing to access the campus must have an appointment and will need to:

- Wear a mask
- Have temperature checked
- Receive a visitor's badge or present parent identification badge
- Check-in at the front desk upon arrival and wait to be escorted to the appropriate meeting location
- When leaving, make sure to sign out and return the visitor's badge

All visitations or appointments can be scheduled by calling the school reception. The school director will confirm all campus visitations.

Contact information for school doctor:

Valbona Selmani; valbona-selmani@tismail.org , +355 69 70 21 290

First Level Contacts- an individual who was in contact with an infected person within 1.5 m for at least 15 minutes starting from 48 hours before illness onset. First-level contacts are asked to self-isolate for 10 days from their last contact with the infected person.

Second Level Contacts- individuals who were in contact with a first level contact individual (someone who was within 1.5 m of an infected individual for at least 15 minutes). Second level family members are asked to self-isolate if their first level family member is showing symptoms.

Isolation is required for any person who has had confirmed first level contact with an individual who is confirmed to have COVID-19 for 10 days, or second-level family members for 7 days from their last contact day if the first level family member is showing symptoms.

Communication Plan

Active and ongoing communication is a critical component before, during, and after any school crisis. TIS, by implementing specific communication procedures and protocols, will allow staff, students, families, and the community to safely re-engage in the education process.

Effective communication procedure for TIS:

- The Director will be the central point of contact and communication for TIS
- Messages from the Director will have a directed focus on the health and safety of the students and staff.
- The TIS Director will determine when the information will be shared. There will be a consistent schedule for releasing information, and school employees will work directly with the appointed age level supervisor, Director of Instruction, for the essential need for communication with outside stakeholders.
- All primary communication will be directed via email from the Director's office via the email parent list. If communication needs to be individualized for age levels, TIS will initiate the emergency phone tree. The weekly Director's newsletter will be the consistent weekly update for all communication. All emergency-related information will be communicated and transmitted in English. The school will work with local community agencies and attached Embassies to communicate planning items and receive feedback on local conditions. All communication regarding COVID-19 will be carefully designed to counter discrimination against or stigmatizing any person.
- Students, parents, and employees will be able to contact the Director after regular business hours via phone or email if they have symptoms of or have been exposed to COVID-19.
- Director contact: Mr. Jon Mudd; Email: jon-mudd@qsi.org

RESPONSE & COMMUNICATION: POSSIBLE COVID-19 CASE



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2021-2022

COVID19
Case



Tirana International School COVID Reporting Procedures Flowchart

REPORTING TO THE SCHOOL

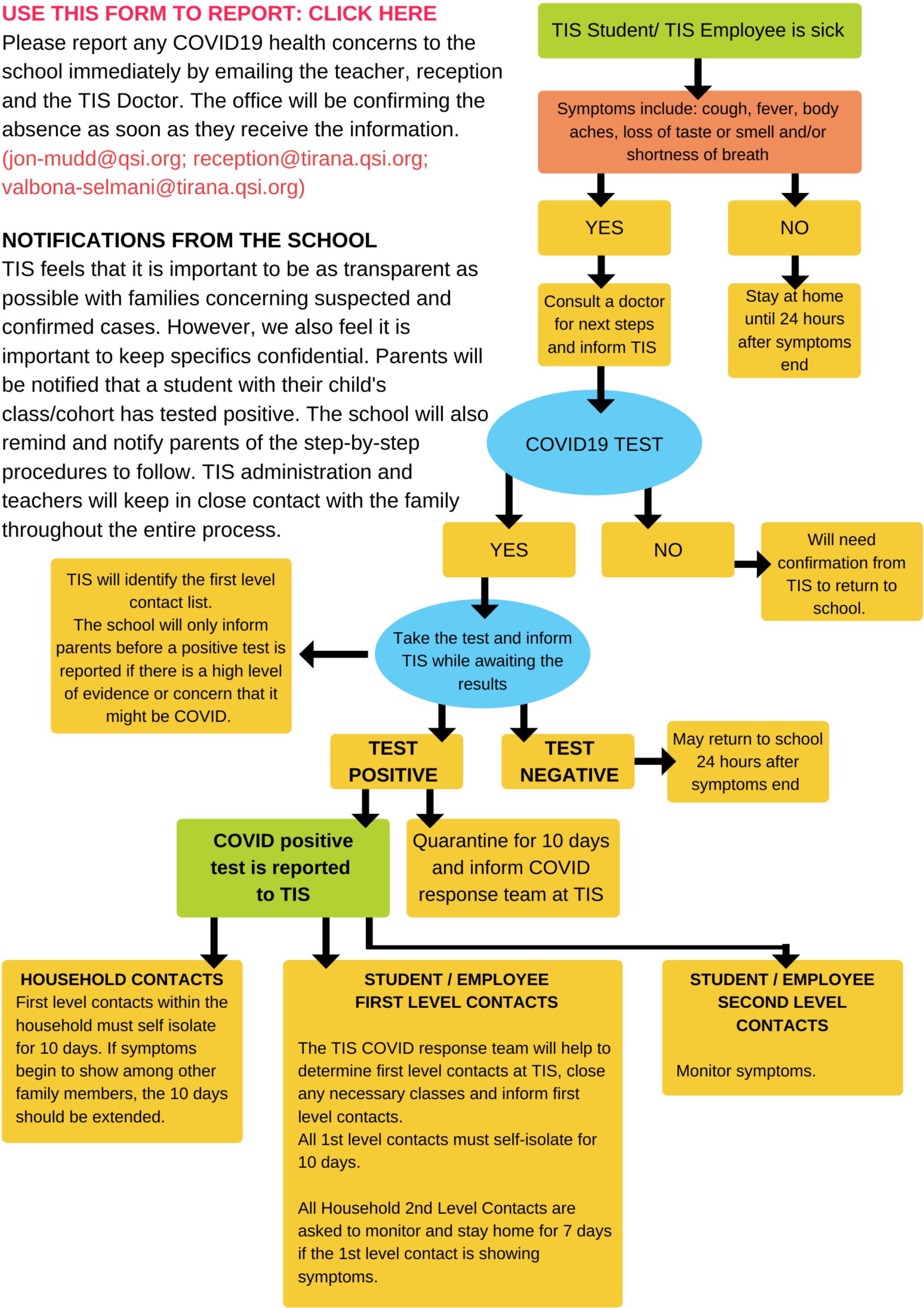
USE THIS FORM TO REPORT: [CLICK HERE](#)

Please report any COVID19 health concerns to the school immediately by emailing the teacher, reception and the TIS Doctor. The office will be confirming the absence as soon as they receive the information.

(jon-mudd@qsi.org; reception@tirana.qsi.org; valbona-selmani@tirana.qsi.org)

NOTIFICATIONS FROM THE SCHOOL

TIS feels that it is important to be as transparent as possible with families concerning suspected and confirmed cases. However, we also feel it is important to keep specifics confidential. Parents will be notified that a student with their child's class/cohort has tested positive. The school will also remind and notify parents of the step-by-step procedures to follow. TIS administration and teachers will keep in close contact with the family throughout the entire process.





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