



How to Survive an Earthquake at KAIS

We live in earthquake country. Although most of the infrastructure in Japan is designed to survive an average earthquake, one never knows when “The Big One” might hit. Described below is how we at KAIS handle large earthquakes. We learned a great deal from the Great Japan Earthquake in 2011 but hope we never have to use these procedures for anything other than drills.

I. General Building Safety

Regular maintenance and upkeep are critical to earthquake, fire and general disaster preparedness. In addition to general upkeep, the following items require specific care:

All exits remain clean, clear of obstacles and generally operable.

Fire extinguishers are available on each floor and checked annually for expiry and proper operation.

Bookshelves and other tall furniture items are properly secured to a wall.

Clocks, painting and other wall fixtures are properly mounted and secured.

Water mains and gas lines are regularly checked for leaks and proper operation.

II. Earthquake Preparedness

Every year, KAIS conducts two earthquake drills, one announced and one unannounced.

A. Announced Earthquake Drill

Every fall, an announced earthquake drill is scheduled. This is designed to remind the staff and educate the students as to the proper procedures to be followed in an earthquake.

1. Discussion

On the day of the drill, 15-20 minutes of class time is dedicated to discussing the earthquake drill with the students, particularly addressing hazards and behavior expectations.

a. Hazards - Students are encouraged to look around the classroom and point out the potential hazards. Particular

hazards that should be pointed out include glass windows and sliding doors, large furniture and structures, and anything mounted to a wall. Students also discuss potential hazards in other parts of the building that might affect evacuation. Teachers and students also discuss hazards that may be found outside of the building. Particular hazards that should be pointed out include power lines, waterways and bridges, and tall buildings.

b. Preparing for the Drill - Teachers lead a discussion of all aspects of the actual drill - the 60-second count, primary evacuation and secondary evacuation.

2. The Drill

The beginning of the drill is marked by bullhorn siren. At that point, teachers coach students through the proper procedures and ensure compliance with the procedures.

a. 60-second count

In an actual earthquake, whether the 60-second count is used depends on the length and severity of the earthquake. Teachers and staff - and, inevitably, a group instinctive reaction - decide whether to engage in the 60-second count.

For severe earthquakes, all members of the school should take cover under a table, desk, or other similarly grounded and stable structure and count to 60 out loud. Everyone should move away from windows, glass sliding doors, and other items that might injure and/or fall on them. As most earthquakes last no longer than 60 seconds, this 60-second count ensures that building occupants are protected from any falling objects for the duration of the earthquake. Counting out loud also calms the group as people are focused on counting rather than the severity of the earthquake. The 60-second count should be repeated as needed for earthquakes lasting longer than 60-seconds and for severe aftershocks.

3. Primary Evacuation



Upon completion of the 60-second count, teachers and staff assess the condition of the building. If the building is at risk of becoming structurally unstable or otherwise unsafe, everyone will proceed to Kotoba Art (言葉アート), the primary evacuation site located two blocks west of KAIS. This is also the location where students and staff not at KAIS during an earthquake but still in the Meguro Station area can reassemble with the group.

Students, teachers and staff should evacuate the building quickly and quietly. If the primary exit is rendered unsafe, secondary exits should be considered. Secondary exits include the sliding doors in the teacher's office and library and the ground floor garage. Everyone must wear shoes. Everyone must wear a crash helmet and/or protect their heads with their hands as they exit the building. No one should attempt to retrieve anything from the building during the evacuation. To the extent that doing so does not endanger anyone's safety, teachers and staff should ensure that all gas ranges, water faucets, and electrical appliances are turned off before exiting the building.

In preparation for the primary evacuation, designated staff members should have the following items ready and bring them to the primary evacuation site:

- Attendance List
- First Aid Kit
- Emergency Contact List
- Two-way Radio provided by the US Embassy

KAIS Cell Phone

Upon arrival at the primary evacuation site, attendance is taken to ensure everyone made it out of the building. The need for medical assistance, water or other necessities is assessed. Local authorities should be contacted as needed to provide assistance.

4. Secondary Evacuation



If an earthquake renders the building structurally unsound or otherwise unsafe and/or if anyone is in need of medical assistance, everyone then proceeds to the Nature Museum Park (自然教育園) in ShirokaneDai, approximately 7 minutes northeast of the primary evacuation site. This is the designated open evacuation site for

residents of Shinagawa-ku, Kami-Osaki. Local authorities are able to provide water and medical assistance at this location.

5. Communication and Safe Return of Students

If an earthquake is so severe that it renders the building unsafe and/or disrupts local transportation, school will be cancelled and all reasonable efforts will be made to ensure that students are reunited with their parents. Parents and emergency contacts will be contacted via phone, email and/or social media and asked to pick up their children. In the event that a student lives far away, arrangements may be made for such students to return home with other families, provided that parent permission is obtained first. Teachers and staff return home after every student has been reunited with his/her parent or otherwise provided shelter. If necessary and if the building is structurally sound, KAIS can operate as a shelter for students, teachers and staff.

B. Unannounced Earthquake Drill

Every spring, an unannounced earthquake drill is scheduled. The procedures for the unannounced drill are the same as the procedures for the announced drill. However, there is typically no discussion of the procedures and hazards before the unannounced drill.

C. For Teachers, Students and Staff not at KAIS during an Earthquake

If a KAIS teacher, student or staff member is out to lunch, on a field trip, or otherwise not at KAIS during an earthquake, the following procedures should be followed:

1. In a Building

The instructions and evacuation procedures of the particular building in question should be followed. In the absence of such instructions or procedures, the procedures outlined here can be used as a guide on how to respond to an earthquake in another building.

2. Outdoors

Generally speaking, an open field is the safest place to be during an earthquake. In an urban outdoor environment, buildings, bridges, stairs and waterways should be avoided.

D. Fire Drill

The procedures outlined above should also be used in the event of a fire emergency but with the following modifications:

No 60-second count is necessary.

The secondary evacuation is necessary only in the event of a very large fire affecting several blocks or more.

III. Staff Responsibilities

Staff Member	Responsibilities
Thomas House, Principal	Schedule earthquake drills. Take attendance at the primary evacuation site. Ensure general compliance with procedures.
Misako Horikawa, Director Chihiro Takeuchi, Assistant Director	Maintain student list and emergency contact list. Contact local authorities and US Embassy (via two-way radio) as needed. Contact parents to arrange safe return of students home.
Lewis Baker, School Nurse	Maintain first aid kit. Treat minor injuries as needed.
Teachers and Staff	Ensure student safety and general compliance with procedures.

As of August 23, 2018, the following staff members are First Aid/CPR certified:

Lewis Baker

Christopher Jones

IV. Resources

NHK World TV Smartphone App

Most cell phone carriers in Japan send alerts about natural disasters to phones.

The NHK World TV app allows users to receive such alerts in English.

Shinagawa City Disaster Prevention Map

<http://www.city.shinagawa.tokyo.jp/e.ke.hp.transer.com/PC/bosai/bosai-bosai/bosai-bosai-siryu/hpg000016095.html>

US Embassy & Consulates in Japan

<https://jp.usembassy.gov/u-s-citizen-services/local-resources-of-u-s-citizens/emergency-assistance/emergency-preparedness-americans-japan/>