**For School Districts** (focused on United States statistics, but can be customized for use other countries)

Greetings [insert name],

Every day, about ten people die from unintentional drowning. Of these, two are children aged 14 or younger. For youth between the ages of 1-14 years old, fatal drowning is the second-leading cause of unintentional injury-related death, and it ranks fifth for people of all ages in the United States (CDC, 2016). A study commissioned by the USA Swimming Foundation and conducted by the University of Memphis found that nearly 70% of African American children and nearly 60% of Hispanic children have low or no swim ability, compared to 40% of Caucasians. This situation is putting these children at a further risk of drowning due to lack of water safety skill and education.

The good news is that the vast majority of drownings are preventable and that starts with you. A growing body of research provides evidence of a strong link between water safety education and a reduction in drowning deaths. These facts have prompted the American Red Cross to partner with Diversity in Aquatics to advocate for your school district's participation in International Water Safety Day on May 15 through simple engagement activities.

With your help from this year going forward, water safety can become an essential part of every child’s education while at school. The goals for this type of engagement are to reduce drowning fatalities by:

* Bringing awareness and knowledge on how to be safe in and around aquatic areas.
* Increasing knowledge and awareness to recognize hazardous environments.
* Encouraging students to communicate the importance of water safety to their communities, family and friends and steps they can take to be safer in and around water.

Your engagement can range from reading a water safety message over the public address system during daily announcements to a single brief lesson intended to raise awareness of water safety on May 15 or go even further with a series of lessons that can delve deeper into primary water safety concepts.

A resource guide will be provided that includes a script and lesson plan that is aligned to the standards set by CDC National Health Education as well as planning tips and tools to implement the different levels of engagement throughout your district. Additional resources are available to support these activities at:

* International Water Safety Day at [internationalwatersafetyday.org](http://internationalwatersafetyday.org/)
* American Red Cross at [redcross.org/watersafety](http://www.redcross.org/get-help/prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/water-safety)
* *Pool Safely* at <https://www.poolsafely.gov/>

Thank you, in advance, for your consideration of this important initiative for your community. We hope you will participate in celebrating International Water Safety Day on May 15th within your district. To get started, simply register at  [internationalwatersafetyday.org/get-involved/](http://internationalwatersafetyday.org/get-involved/).

Sincerely,

Name

Title

Phone Number