



FRENCH AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Unlock The World
Portland, Oregon

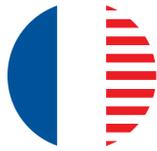
ASSISTANT HEAD OF SCHOOL

Start Date: July 1, 2021

faispdx.org



Carney
Sandoe
& ASSOCIATES



FRENCH AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

MISSION

The French American International School cultivates intellect and character through rigorous multilingual academic programs in an environment that promotes appreciation of diverse cultures and experiences.

VISION

We believe the future starts here. As educators, we develop internationally minded and actively engaged citizens who help create a better and more peaceful world.

OVERVIEW

The French American International School (FAIS), a preschool through grade eight independent school in Portland, Oregon, seeks an Assistant Head of School starting July 1, 2021. Fully embracing the 21st century, FAIS develops global citizens, fosters multi-language abilities, and shapes active learners for life, work, and civic roles in a globally interconnected world. The School is committed to providing a comprehensive education that is unique in its international focus.

As the largest and longest-established private language immersion school in Portland, FAIS provides the critical edge that empowers students to become nuanced thinkers and engaged citizens with a global perspective. The academic program allows students to blossom according to their strengths as they develop a firm foundation in the traditional disciplines and a deep knowledge of at least one other language and culture. FAIS is the only school in Portland authorized as an International Baccalaureate (IB) World School for preschool through eighth grade. FAIS develops curious, creative, and critical thinkers, and its students consistently perform as well as or above their French and U.S. peers on standardized tests and move on to enroll in a number of academically challenging high schools—and eventually universities—in the Portland area and beyond.

The primary role of the Assistant Head of School is to support the mission of the School by promoting and developing a culture of open-mindedness, international mindedness, integrity, collaboration, and inquiry among faculty, staff, parents, and students. The Assistant Head will partner with the Head of School to ensure that the School's educational and operational programs, policies, and practices are interconnected and aligned with its mission, guiding principles, and core values. The individual in this inaugural role will supervise cross-divisional programs and departments, partner with the division heads to develop curriculum and programs that serve the school, and support faculty, staff, and administrators in their continued growth.

FAST FACTS

Founded: 1979

Total students: 511

Teaching faculty: 65

Student/teacher ratio: 8:1

Endowment: \$600K

Operating budget: \$9.8M

Financial aid awarded: \$463K

Students receiving aid: 14.8%

FAIS'S FOUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Develop Global Citizens: We develop internationally minded and actively engaged citizens who help create a more inclusive and diverse world.

Foster Multi-Language Ability: We harness the power of languages to build greater intellect, openness, and problem-solving ability.

Shape Active Learners: We challenge students to inquire across multiple disciplines.

Deliver Academic Excellence: We build a foundation for academic achievement through a triple-accredited curriculum.

SCHOOL HISTORY

In 1979, in the basement of an Episcopal church in Southwest Portland, Oregon, every weekday from September to the end of the school year, five toddlers and a French woman spent their days singing songs, reciting nursery rhymes, and playing games—all in French. This was the humble beginnings of the French American International School, a school with over 500 students today and growing in both numbers and stature.

The School was the brainchild of Jean Claude Paris, a Frenchman who just six months earlier had moved to Portland with his wife Maarja and their two young sons. The couple had been sold on the value of bilingual education through their previous involvement with the Lycée Français la Pérouse, a bilingual private school in San Francisco. Not finding a similar school in Portland, Paris decided



to start one. Though the first year proved difficult, in the next three years the School would grow to two classrooms in the church basement, then move to four new locations in Beaverton and Portland. Each semester saw a near doubling in the number of students, and each year the School added a new grade until it settled into its current form as a PS-8 school. Under Paris's leadership, the French American International School adopted the French public school curriculum and became accredited by the government of France.

With the success of the School as the longest-established and most recognized immersion school in Portland, and the growth of the city, FAIS is poised to mature even further as a leader in the Portland metropolitan area in preparing young people for the global world in the 21st century.

THE SCHOOL

The French American International School is one of the three largest independent schools in the Portland metropolitan area, and one of almost 50 French schools in the United States and almost 500 schools worldwide accredited by the French Ministry of National Education.

FAIS is the only independent school in the Portland area that is fully accredited by both the French Ministry of Education and the Northwest Association of Independent Schools (NWAIS). Additionally, FAIS is authorized as an IB World School, embracing the curriculum framework of the International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Programme (PYP) in the Lower School, and the Middle Years Programme (MYP) in the Middle School. FAIS is also registered with the Child Care Division of the State of Oregon and is a member of the Oregon Federation of Independent Schools, the National Association of Independent Schools, the Association of French Schools in the Americas, Agence pour Enseignement Français à l'Étranger (AEFE), and Mission Laïque Française (MLF).



The School has 511 students and 121 faculty and staff members in its three divisions. Class size is generally limited to 18 in all grade levels, and the average class size is 15. Approximately 75% of the faculty hold advanced degrees. Teachers continuously seek opportunities to grow professionally and stay up-to-date in their practice.

FAIS also offers classes on campus for graduates who wish to pursue their French studies. In addition, the School offers an Advanced International High School French Program off-campus. The year-long program includes specialized courses focused on increasing students' fluency and proficiency in reading, comprehension, and written and oral communication.

ACADEMICS

The research is clear: students who are well prepared for the global economy of tomorrow must have a solid grounding in the traditional disciplines, communicate in more than one language, and appreciate the diversity of world cultures. FAIS is committed to preparing its students in all three areas.

FAIS follows the French national academic curriculum within the framework of the International Baccalaureate and includes a strong preparation in English. The School offers students a thorough knowledge and understanding of core subjects while striving to focus on essential skills such as creativity and critical thinking. The academic approach also emphasizes the development of a sense of self in society—the rights and privileges, but also the duties and responsibilities, of citizenship. Students leave FAIS with a very solid preparation not only for high school but also for university work and beyond.



In all school divisions—Early Childhood, Lower School, and Middle School—teachers adhere to shared characteristics of professional excellence by modeling and respecting the School’s core values of international mindedness, open-mindedness, integrity, collaboration, and creative inquiry. In fulfilling the mission of FAIS, teachers use a wide array of teaching strategies to meet the learning, emotional, and psychological needs of a wide range of diverse learners. They skillfully and collaboratively contribute to the curriculum planning and evaluation process, using student assessment to improve learning and teaching. Understanding that all students can learn and experience success in different ways, they create classroom environments that promote student learning while fostering respect, understanding, and acceptance of differences.

Early Childhood—Toute Petite Section (2 ½ year-olds) through Kindergarten

The French American International School’s early childhood program at FAIS—preschool, prekindergarten, and kindergarten—is known as the Maternelle. A French immersion program, the emphasis is on socialization, helping students develop strong relationships with other children and adults. Through this process they begin to establish independent identities and gain autonomy. The program places additional emphasis on the development of fine and gross motor skills and language acquisition. A central overall objective is to provide children with a wide variety of experiences that will prepare them for more systematic learning. FAIS refers to this phase of education as Cycle One, which is the foundation for two additional cycles in the Lower School years.

Lower School—Grades 1-5

Cycle Two, for grades 1-3, builds logically upon the curriculum of Cycle One. A key objective during this stage is for students to learn to communicate in both French and English with expanded English instruction beginning in the second grade. The program emphasizes bilingual language arts—including reading, writing, speaking, and grammar. It also includes core instruction in mathematics, history and geography, civics, science and technology, art and art history, and physical education.



In Cycle Three, grades 4-5, students reinforce, consolidate, and expand their knowledge across the curriculum. They apply a new exactitude to their studies that facilitates communication, lends depth to reasoning, and permits increasingly complex oral and written expression. In Cycle Three, students further establish the structural and organizational foundation that culminates in the autonomy required for future academic success. Here, the language arts remain central. Mathematics and science add a layer of study in problem solving, statistics, and probability. History and geography are combined in a focus on World Culture. The arts and physical education extend on skills and knowledge built in Cycle Two.

In both Cycles Two and Three, the program includes regular field studies to provide the students the opportunity to observe and experience real-world science processes in a natural setting. The Lower School experience culminates in a two-week trip to France for the fifth graders at the end of the school year after graduation, during which students stay with a host family, attend school, and take field trips to local historical sites—a way to experience and deepen their understanding of French culture.

Middle School—Grades 6-8

The Gilkey International Middle School is a welcoming community of approximately 200 students and 25 teachers. The program's goal is to ensure that students develop the knowledge and skills that will enable them to become autonomous, responsible, and confident students headed for high school and beyond. The program strives for an environment in which students are known well by their teachers in a community where their intellectual, personal, and social development is supported. Students study eight subjects in a global context and around key concepts to help them connect facts and knowledge to the wider world, leading to a deeper understanding of subjects. Through classwork, projects, group work, and electives, students are given many opportunities to develop their leadership and creativity, to take intellectual risks, and to communicate and reflect.



The Middle School offers five language “tracks.” Students with high-level second-language skills enter the French, German, Spanish, or Mandarin immersion tracks, while capable students with no second-language experience enter the International track. All students pick up a new language, which they will pursue for three years or until the end of eighth grade. Both beginning and advanced language classes are taught exclusively by native speakers. There is collaboration across the language tracks, with the same curriculum delivered across all five language tracks.

The Middle School IB program focuses its studies on eight subjects (math, science, language and literature, language acquisition, individuals and societies, design, physical education, and the arts), with a strong emphasis on collaboration and interdisciplinary teaching and learning. All Middle School students belong to an advisory group and are given time for independent study.

THE ARTS

At FAIS, all students engage in the arts. In the Lower School, students are encouraged to discover works of art and music, experience musical instruments, grasp artistic processes, and develop their sensitivity and creative capabilities. Through alternating between receptive and productive activities, students enhance their artistic curiosity, develop their skills, and learn to express themselves creatively.

The Middle School focuses on learning and applying the six elements of art and the seven principles of design. During this process, students understand more about the role of the visual arts in different cultures and times in human history. Creativity in solving design problems is encouraged as students develop risk taking and multiple answer solutions. Through direct involvement in artistic creation and reflection on their own artwork and the work of peers, students will gain a lifelong personal enjoyment and appreciation of the artistic process.



The music program at the Middle School is designed to provide a broad exposure to a variety of musical genres, both historical and cultural. Students are given instruction in the basics of music, music literacy, ensemble skills, composition, improvisation, listening, and understanding form and structure. Students work collaboratively and alone to learn and appreciate music from other cultures around the world and make connections between music and other subject areas.

ATHLETICS

In the Lower School, emphasis is on physical education to help students develop physically, socially, cognitively, and emotionally through a wide variety of activities. These activities include collective, individual, and expressive activities. Students spend a great deal of time outdoors.

The Middle School sports program was officially launched in 1998 with the first basketball teams. The Gilkey Eagles have now grown to five sports, more than 10 teams, and are comprised of more than 100 athletes competing against other area schools. The sports participation rate is over 80%. The program actively promotes the health and safety of the student athletes and provides opportunity for personal growth through individual and team participation. Sports include cross-country, soccer, volleyball, basketball, and track and field. Most teams compete in the Metro Christian League (MCL).

SCHOOL LIFE

FAIS is a very active community designed to engage students and faculty in a variety of contexts. The Middle School Student Council is one such activity. The Council is a democratically elected representative body of student leaders from all grade levels (6-8). Each advisory group elects and



sends one representative to the council, which meets once a week during the student leadership class. Student representatives help to plan and implement school activities such as charitable fundraising campaigns, social events, and other community-building activities.

Community service is also an essential part of the life of the School. Throughout their three years at the Middle School, students are given opportunities to serve their communities. Projects vary from year to year.

At each grade level, an overnight field trip is offered. Sixth graders go on a science-oriented four-day trip at the beginning of the school year. Seventh graders travel for a three-day humanities and arts-based trip. Eighth graders put their language skills to work during a two-week overseas trip.

The Lower School offers field trips (including overnight excursions), an annual Fête de la Musique, field studies, theatrical performances, the fifth graders' annual trip to France, and various on and off-campus cultural events. Other activities include a student-written and produced web radio program in French.

CAMPUS

Surrounded by woods and wetlands, the 15-acre campus in Portland's West Hills boasts a well-equipped library and multicultural center, science and computer labs, two gymnasiums, a large commons area, a nature trail and outdoor classrooms, a playground with covered play structures, a nature-focused, interactive discovery park, and a covered play area for outdoor sports. The FAIS Center for the Arts is a separate facility dedicated to the creative arts, with music and art studios and a movement room. A new, sustainably designed Middle School building opened in the fall of 2019.



PORTLAND, OREGON

Portland is a vibrant and growing city at the confluence of the Willamette and Columbia rivers in northwestern Oregon. The city covers 145 square miles and has a population of around 650,000, making it the second most populated city in the Pacific Northwest, after Seattle. Approximately 2.5 million people live in the greater Portland area. Named after Portland, Maine, the city was founded in 1830 and grew quickly with the timber industry. Today, the economy is diversified—from sports apparel to technology, forest products, trade, and manufacturing. Nike, Adidas, and Columbia Sportswear all have their U.S. headquarters based here. The single largest employer in Oregon is Intel, located outside Portland in nearby Hillsboro, and the single largest employer in Portland is Oregon Health and Sciences University, a renowned medical research institution and home to the Knight Cancer Institute.

Portland is one of the nation's most progressive and beautiful cities with a thriving arts and food culture and some of the best restaurants in the country. The city helped launch the food culture of microbreweries, coffee roasters, and eclectic food trucks. Portland has the most breweries of any city in the world (84 in the metro area).

Portland has an excellent public transportation system, with miles of bike trails and urban bike lanes. The city is home to one of the largest urban parks in the nation—Forest Park, covering more than 5,000 acres and stretching for miles from downtown Portland north toward the Columbia River. When the skies are clear, the snowcapped peaks of Mount Hood, Mount Saint Helens, and other Cascade mountains are easily visible from various locations. Portland is a great base for outdoor activity, within easy driving distance to the Pacific Ocean, the remarkable Cascade Mountains, and the stunning Columbia River Gorge. The Willamette Valley wine country is a short distance south of the city and boasts over 500 wineries.



Portland is home to the Portland Trail Blazers, an NBA team, and the Portland Timbers and Thorns, the city's professional soccer teams. The city is also home to the Portland Museum of Art, the Oregon Symphony, Portland Opera, the Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall, and numerous other theaters, and boasts a vibrant contemporary music scene. Powell's Books, one of the best-regarded and largest bookstores in the nation, is also located in the city. Local colleges and universities include Portland State University, Reed College, Lewis and Clark College, the University of Portland, and Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU). Overall, Portland has one of the highest concentrations of college graduates in the nation.

STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL

High Aspirations Shaped by International Baccalaureate Curriculum

The FAIS faculty, staff, parents, and trustees seek to model the characteristics valued by the IB curriculum, which provides a progressive framework for students to become inquirers, thinkers, communicators, and risk-takers. The Lower School curriculum combines a rigorous French immersion program with the IB Primary Years Programme. The Middle School follows the IB Middle Years Programme while expanding language offerings to include Spanish, Mandarin, and German in addition to French.

Internationally-minded Community

More than 70 countries are represented among current families, faculty, staff, and administrators at the School. The community prides itself on openness to cultural diversity. In the best possible way, FAIS students understand and appreciate that society should be viewed in its broadest context, and that, as the IB mission articulates, "other people, with their differences, can also be right."



Rigorous Academic Program Combined with a Portland Sensibility

FAIS delivers a strong academic program while providing appropriate levels of support and embracing a holistic view of each student in a joyful learning environment. Graduates of the Middle School are not only well prepared for high school, they bring a global perspective and ability to communicate in multiple languages to the next phase of their education. The School has several outdoor learning spaces, and the students feel a strong sense of connection with the natural beauty of the Pacific Northwest.

CORE RESPONSIBILITIES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND CHALLENGES

The Assistant Head of School serves on the senior administrative team and reports directly to the Head of School. The Assistant Head will partner with the Head of School to ensure that the School's educational and operational programs, policies, and practices are interconnected and aligned with its mission, guiding principles, and core values. The Head of School and Assistant Head will shape this role based on the needs of the community while focusing on the following opportunities and challenges:

Partner with Head of School: The Assistant Head will serve as a thought partner and collaborator with the Head, helping to design and implement initiatives and develop strategic priorities to shape the future of the school. Visible, active, and engaged, the Assistant Head will be an inclusive presence in the everyday life of the School and at special events and will demonstrate strong interpersonal and communication skills to build trust and foster community.

Articulate and Connect Work Across Divisions: The Assistant Head will support the work of the division directors in identifying, developing, and assessing new programs and clarifying and supporting existing programs across divisions. Additionally, the Assistant Head will supervise technology, summer offerings, athletics, counseling, library, and the nurse, all essential cross-divisional programs.



Support Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Global mindedness and cultural competence are fundamental to the FAIS community. The Assistant Head will ensure the School’s continued commitment to programs that meet the diverse needs of students, faculty, and staff across divisions and will leverage community resources to support DEI initiatives.

Support Development of Leadership Team and Faculty: The Assistant Head will design coaching, feedback, and professional development programs and retreats to support adult learning. Additionally, the Assistant Head will support the division heads in faculty evaluation.

Lead Key Institutional Projects: The Assistant Head will play a significant role in implementing the Strategic Plan and coordinating essential projects like accreditation.

DESIRED QUALITIES AND QUALIFICATIONS

It is not necessary that the Assistant Head of School be fluent in French; however, basic proficiency in French, Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, or German would certainly prove beneficial.

The ideal candidate will offer most or all of the following qualifications and qualities:

- Demonstrated alignment with FAIS’s [mission, guiding principles, and core values](#);
- A strong knowledge base and experience with Early Childhood, Lower School, and Middle School pedagogy and curriculum planning, and familiarity with the International Baccalaureate PYP and MYP;
- Experience in an international school environment;

- Experience leading and supporting other adults;
- Commitment to staying abreast of current best practices in international education and facilitating faculty growth towards that end;
- The ability to articulate mission-aligned vision and strategy and the tactical skills necessary to deftly manage the systems and processes necessary to implement strategy;
- Knowledge of best practices in diversity, equity, inclusion work and the requisite skillfulness to support student and faculty growth in this area and to facilitate critical conversations in the design of more inclusive curriculum and programs;
- The confidence and humility to advocate for new ideas, invite disagreement, and welcome feedback, engaging in challenging conversations with grace;
- Excellent organizational, project management, and communication skills;
- Willingness to engage fully in the life of the school, prioritizing visibility in the midst of professional responsibilities, and building meaningful connections with students and faculty;
- A collaborative, consensus-building style built on active solicitation of input and excellent listening skills; a demonstrated commitment to creative problem solving.

TO APPLY

Review of candidate materials will begin immediately. Interested candidates should submit electronically in one email and as separate documents (preferably PDFs) the following materials:

- A cover letter expressing their interest in this particular position;
- A current resumé.

Selected candidates will also be asked to provide the following:

- Responses to writing prompts, in lieu of a traditional statement of educational philosophy;
- A list of five professional references with name, phone number, and email address of each (references will not be contacted without the candidate's permission).

Candidates are invited to contact the consultants in confidence and to submit a resume and cover letter to:

Karen Whitaker

Search Consultant

karen.whitaker@carneysandoe.com

Marsha Little

Search Consultant

marsha.little@carneysandoe.com