



**FRENCH AMERICAN
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL**

Unlock The World
Portland, Oregon

DIRECTOR OF ADMISSIONS

Start Date: July 1, 2022

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 a Director of Admissions starting July 1, 2022. 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 enroll in a number of academically challenging high schools—and eventually universities—in the Portland area and beyond.

The Director of Admissions provides strategy and vision to FAIS and the leadership team in shaping and sharing the compelling story of the school and its mission, designing and facilitating outreach to potential families, and optimizing enrollment across divisions. The Director of Admissions attracts and enrolls students whose abilities and expectations are compatible with the school's program, which embraces international mindedness, collaboration, inquiry, and a sense of belonging. The Director of Admissions partners closely with and reports directly to the Head of School.

At a Glance

Founded: 1979

Total students: 550

Teaching faculty: 65

Student/teacher ratio: 8:1

Endowment: \$750K

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, 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 the leader in the Portland metropolitan area in preparing young people for a global, interconnected world.

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 550 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.

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.

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

The French American International School's early childhood program —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 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, 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 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. The main goal is to provide students with the opportunity to live a balanced lifestyle, build sportsmanship in teams and healthy physical stamina.



The 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.

SCHOOL LIFE

FAIS is a very active community designed to engage students and faculty in a variety of contexts. 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 exchange trip to France and various on and off-campus cultural events.



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.

The incoming Director of Admissions will take part in the ongoing site plan development for new buildings that will house the Lower School, Maternelle, and other crucial learning spaces.

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, 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

A Bold Future

In close partnership with the Head of School, the Board of Trustees will complete three bold initiatives by the end of the school year: approval of a three-to-five-year strategic plan, a revised mission statement, and execution of a new master site plan. These three initiatives will launch FAIS into an exciting future that will include a capital campaign to replace aging infrastructure.



High Aspirations Shaped by the International Baccalaureate Curriculum

The FAIS faculty, staff, parents, and trustees seek to model the attributes valued by the IB curriculum, which provides a progressive framework for students to become internationally minded. 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.” FAIS aims to develop students who are courageous, open-minded inquirers.

Challenging 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 admission process serves as a critical introduction to FAIS’s mission of cultivating intellect and character through rigorous multilingual academic programs in an environment that promotes appreciation of diverse cultures and experiences. The ideal candidate will be a proven team player with a warm collaborative nature, optimism, and a sense of humor. The Director of Admissions will ensure that families have a positive experience and favorable impression of FAIS regardless of the outcome of the admission decision. This is a compelling opportunity for a strategic, dynamic admission/enrollment leader.



Core responsibilities, priorities, and challenges include:

Tell the story of FAIS – By knowing faculty and staff, visiting classrooms, attending events, understanding desired learning outcomes, and participating in the life of the school, the Director of Admission will share the compelling story of an FAIS education with accuracy, knowledge, and joy. Additionally, in representing the community at admissions fairs, open houses, and other gatherings, the Director will embody the School’s values of international mindedness and academic excellence.

Communicate with kindness and integrity – As the first point of contact for applicant families and the person who shapes initial impressions of the School, the Director of Admissions frames the expectations for how prospective families will be welcomed to FAIS: with warmth, curiosity, and responsiveness. The next Director will have strong interpersonal and communication skills and enjoy being present and engaged with all constituents, maintaining high professional standards while also creating a space where every family feels valued. Every facet of the role requires skilled relationship management. Tact, cultural competence, and integrity are essential in managing relationships with parents, faculty and staff, fellow administrators, trustees, and young applicants.

Collaborate with leadership team – Selecting and shaping the incoming classes at FAIS is a collaborative process, and the Director of Admissions welcomes the team approach to decision-making while managing the overall process. Collaboration extends to welcoming and transitioning new families and tracking the overall progress of the class over time. Additionally, the Director of Admissions will participate in the implementation of the School’s strategic plan.

Build community partnerships — FAIS strives to reach families who may not be familiar with independent schools. To increase outreach and create an even more diverse student body, the Director of Admissions will seek and/or strengthen partnerships with community organizations and preschools beyond the traditional feeder schools.



DESIRED QUALITIES AND CHARACTERISTICS

- An authentic, approachable, and down to earth presence that welcomes conversation and connection while respecting the views of others;
- Demonstrated personal and professional commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion;
- Exceptional interpersonal skills and the ability to communicate with inspiration and clarity to current and prospective parents, students, community organizations, faculty, staff, and community members;
- 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;
- A leadership approach that empowers colleagues and accomplishes objectives;
- Demonstrated success in managing people, with a style that is characterized by integrity, collaboration, and flexibility;
- Experience in competitive admissions or a related field.

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

TO APPLY

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;
- A writing sample, such as an educational philosophy statement, blog post, or speech;
- 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 consultant in confidence and to submit materials to:

Karen Whitaker
Senior Consultant
karen.whitaker@carneysandoe.com