

SCHOOL DIRECTOR SEARCH

KOREA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Seoul, South Korea

kis.or.kr

Start Date: July 2026



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES

CARNEYSANDOE.COM

KIS Mission

To inspire students with a passion for learning and to cultivate the competence, self-assurance, initiative, and creativity necessary for success in the global community.

At a Glance



Established
1999



Enrollment
1,400+



Total faculty
200



Student-teacher ratio
7:1



Percentage of
international (non-
Korean) students
70%



Countries represented
29



Faculty with advanced degrees
73%



Campus size
4,760 SM

Percentage of expat faculty: 90%

Athletic teams: 17

AP courses: 26



Overview

Korea International School (KIS) is a leading PK-12 international school in Seoul providing excellent academic and co-curricular programming to both domestic and international families in the Seoul metropolitan area. Founded on the belief that great teaching and learning is a process of positive risk, authentic opportunities, reflection, and refinement, KIS has continued to grow in enrollment, now totaling over 1400 students on two campuses, since its founding in 2000 with graduates matriculating at many of the top colleges and universities around the world.

The core values of global citizenship, integrity, adaptability, balance in life, and empowerment guide curricular development and provide a sound foundation for school life. This school year KIS expanded co-curricular and experiential education offerings, opened a new orchestra space, and hosted multiple professional development events for the school community as well as regional educators. Faculty and students support each other, and a strong sense of belonging pervades the campuses. KIS is seen as a “good place,” with a positive atmosphere and high job satisfaction.

The student body is highly motivated, focused, and driven, engaging in a rigorous, (somewhat) pressurized academic environment, especially in the high school which nonetheless also offers students many opportunities for self-discovery, risk-taking, and growth with a focus on educating global citizens. Students and families bring diverse perspectives and interests to the KIS community. Diversity and inclusion are core values, with nearly 20 nationalities represented and support for varied learning needs within an inclusive environment.

KIS is proud of where it stands — enrollment, programming, and finances are strong; salary and benefits packages are competitive, attracting and retaining high-quality staff; and KIS is pursuing spring 2026 CIS accreditation in addition to its current WASC accreditation. The process will help shape the strategic planning currently underway as well as generating future aspirations which include campus expansion and growth as well as program development. Faculty indicate that their colleagues are hardworking, caring, approachable, and supportive of each other and work in an environment that is highly collaborative, with good work-life balance and mutual respect. KIS provides solid and ongoing professional development opportunities, and the faculty is quite international, enhancing the learning.

The school seeks a unifying, visionary, and supportive educational leader who can bring stability, foster collaboration, and maintain high academic and community standards in a demanding and dynamic environment. S/he should excel at effective, transparent communication, community building, and team management, carried out with engagement, visibility, patience, good humor, and energy. A high level of inter-cultural sensitivity and understanding of working with host country administrators and staff in and out of school will be most useful.



Seoul and Pangyo Campuses

The Seoul campus (the school's original site) sits in the vibrant Gangnam neighborhood. Housing 170 PK-5 students on a campus described as “an oasis,” this small, intimate elementary school located in the urban area is surrounded by a natural park-like settings with trees, parks, hiking trails, and river paths. KIS Seoul offers a play-based, Reggio-inspired curriculum for early years, emphasizing independence, collaboration, and curiosity, with early literacy and numeracy embedded in discovery and play. The elementary program (K-5) follows project-based learning aligned with US Common Core standards in Mathematics, English Language Arts, and Social Studies, supplemented by specialist classes in Korean, Chinese, Music, PE, Library, Art, Design, and STEM. Features of the campus include makerspaces, design studios, auditoriums, all weather fields, and multiple play areas.

The well-equipped main Pangyo campus, located in a dynamic, tech-centered suburb about nine miles south of Seoul in Bundang-gu, is home to over 1,250 PK-12 students and accessible for families from across the city. Opened in 2006, the campus is uniquely built on a hillside and bordered by forest, offering a blend of natural surroundings and modern facilities. KIS Pangyo provides an American, college-preparatory curriculum for students PK-12 using a standards-based curriculum, with a strong emphasis on applied learning, critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration.

The secondary program offers a robust Advanced Placement (AP) program, with over 25 AP classes available, as well as a wide range of electives such as Web Design, Video Production, Theater, Concert Choir, Psychology, and Creative Writing. The elementary program (PK-5) emphasizes foundational skills, the arts, athletics, and internationally minded learning opportunities. Pangyo campus is purpose-built to accommodate elementary, middle, and high school needs and features that include Modern classrooms, labs, studios for art and music, libraries, theaters, gyms, pool, fitness center, greenhouse, and cafeteria with fields surrounding.

About Seoul, South Korea

As both South Korea's capital and largest city, Seoul is home to a population of approximately 10 million, a number that includes a large and welcoming community of more than 250,000 international expats. Seoul is notable for its mix of traditional and modern – in architecture, culture, food, and disposition. The city, founded in 18 BCE, is home to five UNESCO heritage sites. Yet Seoul has also been recognized as the world's most wired city, home to Fortune 500 companies such as Samsung, LG, and Hyundai-Kia. As such, Seoul is one of the world's largest metropolitan economies, with a high quality of life, cutting-edge (multilingual) medical services, and low crime rates.



Seoul's many neighborhoods offer a wealth of art, culture, shopping, and dining. In addition to being the birthplace of K-pop, an up-and-coming food destination, a bustling 24-hour city, Seoul is a developing model of urban design, with parks and green spaces becoming an increasingly prominent feature of the cityscape. Outside Seoul, mountains and national parks offer further opportunities for walking and hiking, and the beach beckons a few hours to the west. Served by Gimpo for short-haul flights and the much larger world-class Incheon airport, many parts of Asia lie only a 3-4 hour flight from Seoul.

The city is highly convenient, boasting efficient public transportation, fast internet, and a wide range of delivery services, including rapid online shopping and food delivery. Seoul offers a dynamic, modern lifestyle with a unique blend of tradition and innovation, making it an attractive destination for expats.

Opportunities and Challenges

The School Director is responsible for the school's leadership, strategic direction, and daily operations and both the Pangyo and Seoul campuses. Inspiring stakeholder collaboration and providing decision-making clarity will be required as KIS continues to grow in a competitive market.

Strategic and Educational Leadership

- Articulate and advance the school's mission, vision, and strategic plan.
- Ensure academic and co-curricular programs align with international accreditation standards and best practices to ensure effective learning outcomes, including college matriculation.
- Continue to address AI and other evolving technologies for application in teaching and learning.
- Cultivate inquiry, collaboration, and professional learning among staff.

Organizational and Operational Management

- Oversee academic budget and resource management that secures fiscal sustainability and operational efficiency.
- Plan facilities and infrastructure development that creates an optimal learning environment.
- Strengthen systems for communication, staffing, and scheduling to enhance school operations.
- Confirm compliance with local and international regulations, accreditation requirements, and school policies.



Community and Stakeholder Engagement

- Foster a strong, collaborative relationship with students, staff, parents/guardians, and alumni.
- Work alongside the PTO to align parent engagement with school initiatives.
- Represent KIS locally and internationally, enriching the school's reputation and strategic partnerships.
- Build connections with corporations, universities, and embassies to further strengthen enrollment and program opportunities. Ensure that admissions and communications are structured for better integration and long-term planning.
- Create greater synergy between the two campuses which operate separately, with unique challenges so there is no sense of being overlooked.
- Maintain the school's reputation and academic standards as the parent community is highly invested in student success and college placement, particularly in US universities. Willing and able to engage in meaningful dialogue with parents, especially when opinions differ.

Academic Staff Leadership

- Recruit, retain, and develop world-class international educators.
- Cultivate an inclusive, high-performing professional culture.
- Support leadership development within the academic staff and administration.

Qualifications and Personal Attributes

There is a strong need for a leader who is patient, persistent, and has excellent organizational and managerial skills. The ideal candidate should be able to unify the school's divisions, foster collaboration, and provide stability and a clear, shared vision for the future. The successful candidate will possess most or all of the following qualifications:

- Advanced degree in educational leadership, administration, or related field.
- Proven experience as a school director, head of school, or principal in a high-performing private or international school.
- Strong understanding of international education standards, accreditation processes, and best practices.
- Financial acumen and ability to oversee significant budgets and strategic planning.
- Excellent communication, cultural competency, and relationship-building skills.
- Demonstrated success in leading change and school improvement initiatives.
- Commitment to fostering a culture that inspires curiosity, creativity, and continuous learning.
- Ability to engage corporate and community partnerships to support enrollment and school initiatives.

Learn More

Click on the links below to learn more about Korea International School.

[School Website](#)

[College Matriculation](#)

[Belonging at KIS](#)



Compensation

KIS offers, for the School Director position, a competitive salary and strong benefits package that includes furnished housing, tuition remission, annual home travel, professional development, medical/dental/optical/life insurance, automobile, and matching retirement among other features.

To Apply

Interested and qualified candidates are invited to contact the consultants in confidence. Candidates will ultimately need to submit the following materials as separate PDF documents:

- A cover letter expressing their interest in this particular position;
- A current and comprehensive résumé of no more than four pages;
- Statement of educational leadership philosophy and practice;
- A list of five professional references with name, relationship, phone number, and email address of each (references will not be contacted without the candidate's permission) to:

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