



INTERNATIONAL
SCHOOL OF ARIZONA



Head of School Search

Scottsdale, Arizona

Position Starts July 1, 2027



Mission

Opening Doors to Success in a Constantly Changing World

Voted the best private school in Scottsdale three consecutive years, International School of Arizona (ISA) seeks its next head of school for the next stages in its inspiring evolution. The honor is appropriate, given that ISA is the only school in North America that holds accreditation from Cognia, the French Ministry of Education, the Spanish Ministry of Education, and Instituto Cervantes.

Since its start with just 14 students in 1998, the school has grown to serve 380 students through 8th grade. The trajectory, however, has been neither straight nor easy. Seven years ago the school was struggling, and closure loomed. However, vision, commitment, and hard work have rejuvenated the school to its current flourishing state. It's become a school very comfortable with and proud of what it can become. In the words of one parent, ISA is about "very global possibilities."



FAST FACTS

ISA School at a Glance

- Day School, Coed, Preschool (18 months), Elementary and Middle School
- Independent Co-Ed School
- Founded: 1998

Finances

- Total Operating Budget: \$7,167,000 (26/27)
- Endowment (Unrestricted/Restricted): None
- Reserve (Operations Reserve): \$1.4 million
- Project Equity: \$8.6m (estimated equity in the building)
- Debt: \$7,475,930

Development

- Annual Fund: \$150,000
- Gala: \$170,000
- Endowment: Starting an endowed scholarship called the Maria Mercedes Berman Endowed Scholarship

Capital Campaign

- \$3.1 million total in pledges and verbal commitments to date

Student-Body

- Students: 356
- Preschool: 134
- Kindergarten: 40
- Elementary: (grades 1–5) 145
- Middle School: (grades 6–8) 38
- Student to adult ratio: 1:4.5 (this includes all employees)
- French Track: 148
- Spanish Track: 208

Student Diversity

- Female: 193
- Male: 159

Nationalities represented

French, Russian, Mexican, Persian, Canadian, Ukrainian, Lebanese, Lithuanian, Kazakhstani, Malaysian, Filipino, Indian, Spanish, Italian, British, Australian, American

Teachers, Staff, Administrators for 2025-2026

- Number of Teachers: 37
- Number of Teaching Assistants (classroom based): 13
- Educational Assistants (floating, supervision, etc.): 9
- Support Staff: 10
- Number of Administrators: 10
- Board of Trustees: 16 (Including HoS who is ex-officio and 3 new just voted in, starting July 1.) 15 voting board members, 1 nonvoting members (Head of School)

Tuition Assistance

- Families receive Needs-Based Tuition Assistance: 11 families (28 if including staff remission)
- Amount of Needs-Based Tuition Assistance awarded annually: \$140,000 (\$520,000 if including staff remission)
- French citizens may be eligible for Bourses Scolaires through the French Consulate in San Francisco

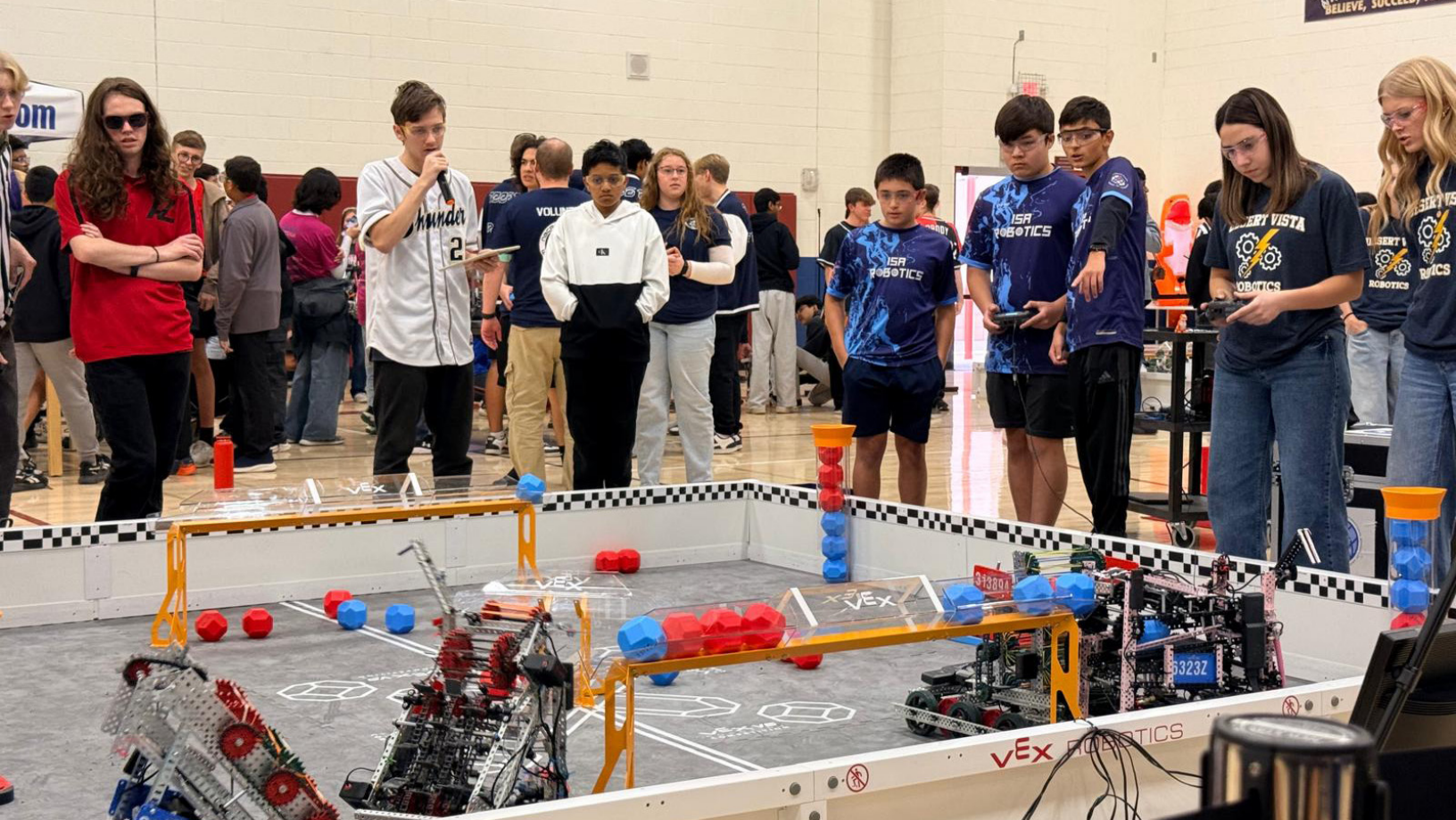
Affiliations and Memberships

- NAIS Member School

Accredited

- AEFÉ (Agence pour l'enseignement français à l'étranger) is the Agency for French Education Abroad
- International Spanish Academies
- Instituto Cervantes
- Cognia





Program

Students who complete the program at ISA can leave with a high degree of fluency in English and Spanish or French. In the early years, students are immersed in a single language track (either Spanish or French), and they come together for English and other courses such as general music and physical education. In 4th grade students begin instruction in the language they had not studied previously. Extracurriculars such as chess and robotics extend the program. The robotics team recently placed high in an international competition.

A comprehensive Portrait of an ISA Graduate with guiding principles undergirds the programmatic framework: Curious Problem Solver; Compassionate Communicator; Inspirational Leader; Advocate of Self and Others; Purposeful, Ambitious, Balanced; Citizen of the World. Students maintain a portfolio with anchor pieces to illustrate their progress towards this fulfillment of mission.

Faculty

The school has 80 employees who are strongly committed to the mission and culture of the school. The teaching faculty is strong, consisting of native speakers who also are experts in pedagogy. The students say that learning here “feels free” and the teachers “look to make learning easier and fun.” One administrator affirmed this by praising people’s “sponginess” for growth.



Facilities

ISA has converted a former medical office building into a visually appealing school. The first two floors are completely finished, and the third floor (the middle school) remains in process. Every aspect of the school is bright and cheery, full of color and student work. In addition, the school's missions and graphics appear throughout the building. Rooms are large and well-lit, with sizable windows. Each floor has a central area that serves as library and gathering space. Along with classrooms, there are areas for music, rhythm and movement, robotics, and a cafetorium. Carpool access is smooth and there is ample parking.

Fundraising has begun for a large new gymnasium and the renovation of the third floor. The gym, in particular, will serve as a multi-purpose area and community gathering spot. The third floor work could help with middle school retention.

Leadership

The current head of school has instituted a very effective distributed leadership model. It consists of a matrix that includes both an executive team and a leadership team. Some of the benefits have been increased communication and ownership throughout the school, along with spreading the workload in key areas. Documentation of policies and processes has improved. Within this system people feel the freedom to take risks and offer suggestions. It is a large reason the school has been able to improve so rapidly.





Governance

The ISA board consists of twelve trustees who come from various backgrounds and represent the various constituencies of the school. They are highly-qualified and committed. They do their work through committee and task force, and they are currently working on the next strategic plan for the school. The necessary information flows smoothly between school leadership and the board.

The board appropriately focuses on fiduciary oversight along with strategic and visionary work, delegating operational matters to the head. They engage in their own development work. Their partnership with the present head of school is admirable and they are very excited to partner with the next head to discover the possibilities for ISA.

Philanthropy

The school is slowly developing a stronger culture of philanthropy, educating the community on the need for both annual and capital giving. The community is primed for this. As one parent leader remarked about volunteerism and giving, "We give something to the school, but the school provides even more back."

Enrollment and Students

ISA draws students primarily from the immediate Scottsdale area, although some come from the broader Valley area. After several years of attrition averaging around 20%, primarily in the higher grades, this has decreased to 8% currently. The school has improved its enrollment management systems and focused on retention.

The students are very passionate about ISA. In particular, they can articulate their appreciation of the school and the reasons they value receiving a multi-lingual international education.





Community

The sense of community is palpable at ISA. Everyone—from students to employees to parents to trustees—extolled the close relationships throughout the school: “feels like a small town”; “dual-lingual but one school”; “everyone knows each other and looks out for each other.” Both school and parent leadership take conscious steps to make sure everyone feels included and can participate. The students feel this closeness both within their own cohorts and across them and other grades. A robust house system brings students together for spirited activities.

Finances

Some simple numbers capture the transformation of the school. Seven years ago the school had accumulated a roughly one million dollar deficit. Now the school holds \$1.3 million dollars in reserve and is looking at how it may start an endowment. They achieved this through greater fiscal oversight, bold but reasonable tuition increases, a forgiven PPP loan, and better enrollment management. The finance committee has exercised careful fiduciary oversight.

Currently the school is having all finances reviewed going back to 2023 and is about to begin its first full audit.

Scottsdale

Located just east of Phoenix, Scottsdale is one of the fastest growing housing markets and cities in the United States. Several large national and international companies and retail firms are headquartered there, and it is a center for corporate aviation. Medical care is outstanding, with the Mayo Clinic having three sites in the area.

Tourism is one of the major economic drivers. The year-round weather makes this a mecca for outdoor activity, ranging from golf to outdoor sports to spring season baseball. Phoenix also is home to professional teams in the four major sports. Scottsdale also boasts a vibrant cultural arts district, and each year is an annual festival honoring the city's western heritage.





Leadership Profile

Challenges / Opportunities

The work done during the past six years has placed ISA in a strong position and poised it to embrace its next opportunities. By partnering with all of the school's constituencies, the next head of school can accelerate ISA's ascension.

Particular areas include:

- Crafting a more vigorous articulation of ISA's value proposition to bolster enrollment, increase retention, and support advancement efforts.
- Maximizing the benefits of the Preschool (18 months) to 8th grade model to create an exemplary and richer program across the continuum with a strong school identity.
- Enhancing the culture of philanthropy and implementing strong best practices for development.
- Solidifying and enculturating essential processes and policies recently put in place and filling in remaining gaps.
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Desired Characteristics and Skills in International School's next Head of School



The next Head of ISA will be an experienced, approachable, and strategic leader with essential qualities and experience in the various operational aspects of a complex independent school. This person will embrace the culture of the School and possess the passion and the skills to move the School forward. Of utmost importance is a commitment to academic excellence, the care and well-being of every student, providing leadership and support for a diverse faculty/staff, and the desire and skills to work in partnership with the board.

In particular, the next Head of School will possess the following personal and professional qualities:

- An educator with a strong background and passion to work in an immersion school with students in a Preschool (18 months) through Grade 8.
- A life-long learner committed to education and maintaining a culture of excellence by keeping abreast of current pedagogy, latest research, and innovative practices.
- A leader who exemplifies ISA's core values: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship.
- An authentic and enthusiastic commitment to being part of a diverse community, augmented by high cultural competency and the commitment to engage with groups of diverse individuals in respectful, equitable, and inclusive ways.
- An outgoing, warm, and positive leader who will maintain high visibility and continually engage with the school community.
- A confident leader with a collaborative mindset who can, and will, partner, make decision, manage and/or lead depending on the situation while working towards a shared and inspiring vision of a strong and sustainable future.
- An active, astute, and patient listener and observer who fosters an inclusive culture that values each individual.
- The ability to delegate and hold others accountable with fairness and clarity.
- An approachable leader with exceptional interpersonal and communication skills who will build mutually beneficial and creative relationships with the School's various constituencies.
- An articulate, charismatic spokesperson for ISA in and beyond the school community.
- The ability to create a vision, set the direction, and inspire the community to support the short/ long range priorities.
- The ability to partner well and sometimes lead the Board in creating a vision, determining strategy, and executing on short- and long-range priorities.
- Sound financial acumen and working knowledge of school budgeting, fiscal management and plant maintenance.
- Demonstrated experience and success in fundraising and marketing and a willingness to participate in a leadership role in both of these areas.
- A proven record of identifying, developing, motivating and retaining talented faculty, administration and staff.





To Apply

A preliminary conversation is encouraged with Mark Crotty and/or Joan Beauregard (see below) of Educators Collaborative to learn more about this opportunity. Those interested are asked to submit the following materials, in the order listed, in a Single Merged PDF Document:

- EC Candidate Summary Sheet (contact consultants below for this documents)
- Letter of Interest, addressed to the Search Committee
- Current résumé
- Statement of Educational Leadership
- A list of five or more references with contact information (including phone numbers and email addresses)
- EC Disclosure Form (contact consultants below for this document)

Please Address Inquiries to:

Mark Crotty, Partner, Educators Collaborative

mcrotty@educatorscollaborative.com

and/or

Joan Beauregard, Partner, Educators Collaborative

jbeauregard@educatorscollaborative.com

Nondiscrimination Policy

It is the policy of ISA to prohibit illegal discrimination against and harassment of any employee or applicant. ISA administers its personnel policies based on individual qualifications without regard to race, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, or other legally protected status.



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