

MIDDLE SCHOOL DIVISION HEAD SEARCH

FRENCH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF OREGON

Portland, Oregon

frenchintl.org

Start Date: July 2025



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES

CARNEYSANDOE.COM

Mission Statement

French International School of Oregon develops curious and critical thinkers through a robust and immersive multilingual curriculum. We are committed to fostering an inclusive community that celebrates diverse perspectives and creates the foundation for reflective learners to thrive and effect change in an interconnected world.

At a Glance



Established
1979



Middle School enrollment
220



Faculty in the Middle School
32



Nationalities represented
by the faculty
20+



Students receiving aid
17%



Endowment
\$1M



Annual operating budget
\$15M



Campus size
17 acres

Enrollment: 618

Total employees: 151



Overview

French International School of Oregon provides an exceptional independent school education through the dynamic convergence of language immersion and the IB World School framework. On a beautiful, 17-acre campus in Portland, a global mindset contributes to the school's collaborative, inquiry-based approach to learning, its open-minded community of families, and the deep value it places on diversity of experiences and cultures starting from the earliest ages. Using language as a powerful tool for learning, French International educates students from a global perspective, preparing them to engage with inclusivity, achieve with integrity, and excel with distinction.

When Jean Claude Paris opened the School with three students in the basement of a Portland church in 1979, it was the beginning of an exciting journey for French International School of Oregon. Through the years, French International has pursued bold innovations, including the creation of the Middle School, additional immersion curricula, a new site, and the adoption of the International Baccalaureate (IB) philosophy and framework. As Portland's longest established language immersion school and the only IB World School in Portland for preschool through eighth grade, French International is the leader in the Portland metropolitan area in preparing young people for a global, interconnected world.

The French International Middle School, which enrolls 220 students in grades 6-8, offers a unique blend of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme and language immersion. With five language pathways, 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 begin 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. 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.

The founding Middle School Head, Emmanuelle Burk, launched the division 26 years ago. Energized by their love of middle school students and dedicated to providing globally relevant education, Emmanuelle and the French International team have built a thriving division characterized by a culture of trust, curiosity, and joy. Emmanuelle will retire in June of 2025 and FI seeks an exceptional educational leader to sustain and build upon her legacy.



Opportunities and Challenges

Succeed a long-serving, visionary leader

Emmanuelle Burk, who founded the Middle School in 1998, has devoted her career to the vision for and growth of the division. In developing the curriculum and culture of the Middle School, she leaves a strong legacy for the next division head to build upon. Emmanuelle's retirement is bittersweet for the community, many of whom have grown accustomed to her steady leadership, characterized by her deep care for the faculty, students, and their families. Her successor will possess the confidence, humility, and sensitivity to lead the faculty and staff in their adjustment to new leadership.

Steward and thoughtfully evolve a rich and complex academic program

As the academic leader of the Middle School, the division head coordinates rich language immersion offerings with the IBMYP framework while ensuring fidelity to the requirements of the French Ministry of Education. Additionally, the Middle School sponsors international travel and exchange programs. All grade eight students participate in an international trip related to their language study. The school recently completed accreditation processes with both the French Ministry and the IB with positive outcomes. These recent accreditations will give the next leader a roadmap for suggested improvements within these essential frameworks.

Support vertical alignment for a one school, united vision

One of the essential elements in FI's current strategic plan is one school, united vision. The next Middle School division head will work closely with the other division heads and the associate head of school to ensure curricular cohesion, smooth transitions between the divisions, and clear professional expectations for faculty and staff.

Join a collaborative team

Members of the leadership team share a strong work ethic, respect for a plurality of voices and experiences, a culture of honest discourse, care and respect for one another, and a desire to continually improve in order to serve FI students. Members of the leadership team support each other as thought partners, mentors, sounding boards, and collaborators. The next Middle School division head will be comfortable asking questions, seeking support, and responding with equanimity to unpredictable day-to-day events while working with the leadership team on long-term strategic goals, including the campus transformation project currently underway.



Bring fresh perspective to systems and processes

The Middle School has flourished under steady leadership and a team of experienced educators. The new division head will bring a lens of appreciative inquiry to understanding the how and why of the division's operations. The division head will look for opportunities to mentor teacher leaders by delegating responsibilities and providing pathways for leadership and professional growth, optimize communication systems, and clarify roles and responsibilities.

Assess and align student support

Considering whole-child wellness as well as the ever-increasing understanding of neurodiversity and the value of differentiation, the next Middle School division head will assess needs and advocate for resources and strategies to provide both student support and professional development so that teachers understand students' challenges, design effective pedagogical approaches, and deliver the best possible program to FI students.

Qualifications and Personal Attributes

In seeking a new Middle School division head, French International desires candidates who possess the following skills and dispositions:

Genuine love and appreciation for Middle School students

Ideal candidates will find humor and delight in the unique characteristics of children on the cusp of adolescence, make authentic connections with students, support the growth of each child to his or her full potential, and lead with empathy and kindness.



Warm presence

FI values visible leaders who know each student and teacher, visit classrooms regularly, model shared values, and express appreciation for the contributions of all members of the community.

Excellent communicator

Engaging with a wide range of constituents - students, teachers, prospective and current parents, administrators, as well as leaders in the broader educational community - the Middle School division head will possess strong writing and public speaking skills, valuing clarity and effectiveness. An ability to listen with an open mind, ask questions, and explain decisions with appropriate transparency are vital in this work, as is the willingness to engage in difficult conversations with candor and tact.

Partnership with parents

The next Middle School division head will respond compassionately and effectively to parents, whose concerns range from questions about academic rigor and readiness for high school to preferences for greater learning support and everything in between. The next Middle School division head will be a compelling, calming, and clear communicator with the school's deeply invested parents.

Internationally minded

More than 40 countries are represented, and 53 languages spoken at home among current families, faculty, staff, and administrators at FI. The community prides itself on openness and sensitivity to cultural diversity. Ideal candidates will have experience working in international or culturally rich schools. Additionally, with the Maternelle and Lower School programs fully accredited by the French Ministry of Education, and a portion of the Middle School program requiring the same accreditation, the next division head must understand and be comfortable with the centrality of French culture within the overall program. Fluency in French is strongly preferred. IB experience, including knowledge of the accreditation process, is a plus.

French International is an equal opportunity employer. Persons of diverse backgrounds are encouraged to apply.

Learn More

Click on the links below to learn more about French International School of Oregon.

[School Website](#)

[Strategic Plan](#)

[International Baccalaureate \(IB\) at
French International](#)

[Middle School](#)

[Language Immersion](#)

[Support French International](#)

[About Portland, Oregon](#)



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 interest in this particular position;
- A current résumé;
- A statement of educational philosophy;
- 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:

Karen Whitaker

Senior Consultant

karen.whitaker@carneysandoe.com

We appreciate receiving your materials by October 30, 2024.