

HEAD OF SCHOOL SEARCH

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF DENVER

Denver, Colorado

isd-denver.org

Start Date: July 2025



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES

CARNEYSANDOE.COM

Mission Statement

Our inclusive, globally minded community develops highly motivated and academically successful bilingual learners who are inter-culturally adept and make positive contributions in a complex world.

At a Glance



Established
1977



Enrollment
~675



Students of color
33%



Campus size
7.5 acres



Total faculty
~150



Financial aid awarded
\$2.0M
(\$1.3M FA + \$0.7M Remission)



Faculty with advanced degrees
83%



Student-faculty ratio
1:8

Countries represented: 28

Faculty of color 24%

Students receiving aid: 162

Annual operating budget: \$16M in 23-24;

likely \$17M in 24-25



Overview

Within a few minutes of being on campus, it is clear that International School of Denver (ISDenver) is a joyful and vibrant community where children’s academic and social emotional needs are truly supported, resulting in children who love learning.

ISDenver is an accredited, coeducational, not-for-profit, Early Childhood (ages 3-6), Primary (grades 1-5), and Middle (grades 6-8) School in Denver, Colorado, USA. Founded in 1977 and the oldest language school in the region, the school serves approximately 675 students who graduate as bilingual, bi-literate, multicultural 8th graders. Students learn in and through English and one of the target languages, Spanish, French, and Chinese (Mandarin). ISDenver is a thought leader and innovator, leading the way in data-driven and best-in-class practices.

ISDenver’s inspiring mission speaks to its commitment to students to embrace a truly global culture, “Our inclusive, globally minded community develops highly motivated and academically successful bilingual learners who are inter-culturally adept and make positive contributions in a complex world.” The ISDenver community of students, teachers, staff, and parents work together to make the world a more compassionate and curious place, one student at a time.

The school’s mission, vision, and values, and the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program (PYP) and Middle Years Program (MYP), serve as the cohesive framework for ISDenver to be “four languages, one community.” The academic program is driven by inquiry and utilizes concept-based learning built on a PreK- G8 IB Curriculum Framework. As students mature and strive for fluency in the target language, they gradually spend more time in English to prepare them for high school and beyond.

Driven by shared commitments to academic excellence, inclusive community, global citizenship, and whole-student approaches, ISDenver leverages a horizontally and vertically aligned IB curriculum framework and data-driven instruction to uniquely prepare children with agency, curiosity, empathy, and an appreciation for diversity. All languages at the school are taught by native speakers. The school and its programs are accredited, recognized, and / or members of highly regarded educational organizations including the Association of Colorado Independent Schools, National Association of Independent Schools, AEFÉ (Agence pour l’enseignement français à l’étranger), MLF (Mission laïque française), ISA (International Spanish Academy), and the Confucius Institute (Chinese Center for Language Education and Cooperation).



At the school's heart are students, nearly 15% of whom are citizens of two or more countries, representing over 30 countries of citizenship. Nearly 50% of students are exposed to at least one non-English language at home. The students are nurtured and challenged by nearly 150 full-time faculty and staff who have lived and / or worked in more than 60 countries.

Tuition assistance is provided to 20% of families, with an average award of more than \$10K per student, totaling \$1.8M in total tuition discounts in 2022-23. Families, faculty, and staff are encouraged to be part of a growing culture of philanthropy, dedicated to inclusively supporting the school's priorities from financial assistance to capital projects. The last campaign to build a new teacher-designed middle school with whole community spaces concluded with the 2021-22 school year.

ISDenver is seeking a growth mindset-driven, culturally competent Head of School with outstanding academic, leadership, and fundraising experience with passion to build on momentum that guides the academic success of students preparing for the 21st century.

ISDenver celebrates diversity and values the strengths that come with having a diverse community. People of color, LGBTQIA+ candidates, and people from other historically marginalized communities are strongly encouraged to apply. ISDenver is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, physical or mental disability, or any other characteristic protected by law.

Opportunities and Challenges

Advance and lead International School of Denver's strategic direction

International School of Denver constituents value bilingual education, an international mindset, respect for cultural differences, and a rigorous, inquiry-based academic program. The next Head of School will shape and launch the School's strategic direction in collaboration with the Board, leadership teams, faculty, and School community. An integral part of this vision will be retaining the "One School" approach while celebrating the diversity of languages and cultures and fostering a sense of belonging. Additional aspects will include growing the Middle School, investigating the feasibility of a High School, expanding the extracurricular program, and ensuring the optimal utilization of space, as explained in the Master Plan.



Maintain and strengthen academic excellence

International School of Denver has incorporated language and cultural immersion into the International Baccalaureate's Primary Years and Middle Years Programmes. Academic excellence is a norm, including a strong Singapore math curriculum. The faculty has focused on curriculum alignment among the four languages, while maintaining accreditation by the French and the Spanish governments and recognition by Chinese educational institutions. The Head of School will have a passion for language acquisition and the International Baccalaureate framework. The ongoing systemic review of curriculum will be leadership priorities to ensure cohesion and continuous improvements. In addition, points of entry, support for neurodiverse students, and advancing inquiry-based pedagogy will require continuous efforts.

Clarify and communicate International School Denver's value proposition

Those who know and understand ISDenver – from trustees to faculty to students to parents – describe ISDenver as “a unique and special place.” Not enough people in and around Denver know and understand how melding the four languages with the IB framework produces curious, determined, responsible, collaborative, and interculturally adept individuals. Communicating ISDenver's uniqueness will be pivotal in the space of increased competition from schools. The next Head of School will elevate the School's profile, communicate the value of an ISDenver education, and sustain the School's special culture to grow enrollment.

In partnership with the Board of Directors and a skilled Advancement team, the next Head of School will prioritize external relations to cultivate donors, engage families and alumni, and strengthen student admissions. Seeking philanthropic support will be essential in helping the School realize its strategic goals.

Recruit, develop, and retain mission-aligned faculty

The next Head of School will need a strategic framework to recruit and retain faculty, continue to address the cost of living in the Denver area, and provide opportunities for professional growth, all while balancing the demands of Visa-based hiring. Members of the leadership team in partnership with faculty representatives are exploring evaluation models that will focus on growth and support. In addition, many members of the academic leadership team are new to their positions and will benefit from mentoring, support, and clearly articulated roles and responsibilities. The next Head of School will encourage and support teamwork and dedicated planning time across the school, emphasizing collaboration amongst administration and faculty and different cultures in pursuit of a shared institutional vision.



Formalize communications, structures, and systems

The International School of Denver community desires accurate and timely communications from the school in order to be informed about school activities, issues, and decisions. The next Head will create and maintain processes and will clearly define roles and responsibilities for teacher communication and class and individual progress. Opportunities to learn more about language development, inquiry-based pedagogy, and learning progress will be welcome as the school staff seek to communicate, educate, and celebrate its dynamic community.

The next Head of School will partner with the Board for active Director involvement in visioning, professional development, evaluation, and engaged Board committees to ensure strategic and generative thinking for the sustainability of the school.

Qualifications and Personal Attributes

Successful candidates will demonstrate most of the following qualifications and attributes:

- An open, culturally competent, and collaborative leadership style that genuinely invites and respects the perspectives and views of others and builds a culture of trust.
- A learner who has experienced the cognitive benefits of learning languages and can advance the development of intercultural competencies in the school.
- Prior experience leading international communities, skill in building inclusive communities, and the ability to respectfully navigate diverse cultural and social situations.
- An ability to listen and connect authentically and effectively with faculty members, staff, administrators, parents, students, community members, alumni, and the Board of Directors so that these groups are appropriately involved and informed of school events, potential challenges, key decisions, and needs.
- Experience in recruiting, retaining, supporting, and developing the growth and evolution of a talented faculty, staff, and administration, including recruiting and developing individuals from diverse backgrounds.
- Commitment to the International Baccalaureate PYP and MYP frameworks and depth of experience leading an inquiry-based school with a commitment to excellence.
- Ability to manage financial resources thoughtfully and intentionally with a commitment to serving as a responsible steward of financial and human resources alike.
- Facility for building relationships and inspiring financial support and a commitment to fostering a culture of engagement and philanthropy.
- Enjoyment at being an active and visible presence in the life of the school as a foundation for strong, supportive relationships with all community members.

The full-time equivalent salary range for this position is US \$225,000-300,000. The starting salary is based upon but not limited to, several factors that include type and years of experience, education level, and expertise.

Applicants must have legal authorization to work in the US (dual citizenship or green card status).

Learn More

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

[School Website](#)

[Strategic Plan](#)

[School History](#)

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

[School Vision, Values, and Diversity & Inclusion Policy](#)

[About Denver, Colorado](#)



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 résumé;
- Statement of educational 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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