

International School of Hamburg

Head of School Position Statement

Hamburg, Germany
July 1, 2021 or 2022



INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF HAMBURG



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"Our teachers are keen to continue along the path of future-learning and innovative teaching practices within our culture of wholeness, kindness, and warmth."

The Lonely Planet offers an unambiguous statement about Hamburg, Germany, "When all's said and done, Hamburg's appeal can be narrowed down to one simple calling card: *Welcome to one of the coolest cities on earth.*" It is the best of Germany and Europe where one can safely navigate easily on foot, bicycle, or by public transport, yet a city large enough to offer a sophisticated urban vibe, world-class infrastructure, dining, and culture.

The International School of Hamburg is woven into the fabric of the city. It is the oldest international school in Germany, located within the cosmopolitan and most important commercial city of Hamburg. The birthplace of Mendelssohn and Brahms, the cultural present-day opportunities of Hamburg provide the best in music, museum life, opera, theatre, and top-flight sports.

The city and school interact with a large number of nations, with more consulates than any other city in the world, except New York City.

Hamburg is indeed a water city with its naturally sheltered port at the divide of the Baltic and the North



Seas and on the Elbe River. No surprise then that the school invites everyone to "embark on a voyage of learning."

Altogether, the quality of life is high, and the school bridges history and old-world grace with progressive aspirations. Not unlike Hamburg itself, ISH has a growing population of 790 students (55 nationalities), has created and maintained essential traditions over its 63 years, and provides a robust international education and unique learning opportunities to a diverse international school community.

MISSION AND VISION

The school is in the midst of a design and creative strategic thinking exercise meant to push everyone in the community to take an introspective and dynamic approach to set into place a new mission and vision. The school community is developing a shared

language to guide objectives for innovation across the curriculum, differentiated instruction for the continuum of learning needs, inclusion, and a more robust commitment to international-mindedness. There is an openness to experimenting and prototyping new ideas, with a faculty ready to provide responsive classrooms. In the words of one group of teacher leaders, "People are hungry for change and ready to take on the needed professional development to implement new strategies."

School stakeholders are weighing keywords and concepts to guide ISH and identify the school as an international community where inquiry is nurtured to prepare students to use knowledge and to be creative and critical thinkers. Equally important, the school is confirming that an educated heart is as important as an educated mind.

Students need to find balance and wellness as an outgrowth of the ISH program. The school recognizes that caring for others promotes agency in students and makes for a more resilient community.

As a community, ISH seeks to deepen its mission to serve an international community of learners and prepares young people by nurturing “inquiring minds, compassionate hearts, and balanced lives.”

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

The ISH program is organized around two divisions: the Junior School that includes an Early Childhood Center, ages 3-Grade 5, and the Secondary School, Grades 6-12.

The ECC Program

Play-based learning is integrated into all areas of the ECC curriculum, during which teachers observe, offer support, nurture, assess and extend learning. All ECC teachers provide

developmentally appropriate and differentiated tasks that are both practical hands on and teacher directed activities.

Students are encouraged to understand that mistakes are part of the learning process and to find solutions to problems. The small class sizes allow students to develop their imagination and creativity through following their own discoveries and explorations. English as an Additional Language is also a part of the program.

Since 2010, the ECC has its own purpose-built section of the school building with direct access to a separate, developmentally designed playground area.



The Junior School Program

The Junior School program at ISH provides a comprehensive, differentiated learning environment for all students Grades 1 through 5. Students follow a research-based program of study that includes Reader’s and Writer’s Workshop, the Singapore approach to mathematics, and the IPC, which integrates inquiry-based units in science, history, geography, art, technology, and international understanding. The IPC Personal Goals highlight the critical role that personal and interpersonal skills play in a child’s development. Students are encouraged to think critically and solve problems individually and within learning groups.

All Junior School students experience a cross-curricular program that includes specialist lessons in music, German, PE, library skills, and Information and Communication Technology. Students build connections to the Hamburg community through local trips and outdoor education.



The Junior School at ISH was the first in Germany to follow the coaching model of professional development with two academic coaches in the area of literacy and math. Recent professional development for Responsive Classroom training and other new initiatives has been put into place.

In the words of the Junior School Principal, “The Junior School is a community of students, teachers, parents, and friends who support the development of learning, the culture of caring, and the celebration of everyone’s potential!”

The Secondary School Program

The Secondary School at ISH utilizes the IB Middle Years and Diploma programs. All secondary students are assigned to a tutor group that meets regularly to engage in age-appropriate pastoral care discussions and activities.

In Grades 6-8, students take English, German, math, history and geography, science visual arts, music, drama, PS, design and ICT. French or Spanish as a third language begins in Grade 6. The Grade 9-10 program offers a curriculum that will best prepare students for the IB Diploma in Grades 11-12.

ISH has adopted an *inclusive* approach to entrance in the DP, and the school has also just introduced the Career-related Certificate (CP) program for the 2019-20 school year, one of about 200 international schools now offering this opportunity.

Service projects for DP students are currently organized in Sri Lanka, Tanzania, and Ghana where ISH students are involved in supporting and rebuilding communities.

ISH students produce strong IB results: 93% pass rate in 2019, 95% in 2018. The average overall school IBDP average for ISH students was 32 in 2019.



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develop their own talents & leadership skills.” (Parent)

About 30% of ISH students claim German heritage, so there is an acknowledgement of the German influence on the school. At the same time, there is unanimous agreement that the diverse, international composition of the school, and international-mindedness itself, are important to preserve and nurture.

Finally, the Board of Trustees demonstrates a commitment to best practices in governance. A wholesale change in Board composition and leadership was achieved mid-year, and there is widespread agreement that this move has strengthened the Board and improved the relationship among the Board, school leadership, and all stakeholder groups.

In summary, the people of ISH care deeply about their school and look forward to welcoming new leadership in 2021.

PEOPLE

There is remarkable consistency across constituencies when asked to describe the ISH community. With 790 students, over 150 faculty and staff, and well over 1,000 parents, the themes emerge clearly: welcoming atmosphere, care for the individual student, appreciation for the international mindset. The quotations here from students, faculty, and parents are touching and nearly interchangeable when characterizing ISH:

“Respect for others, freedom of thought and expression, enjoyment of learning and personal responsibility for everybody as a part of the community with an international understanding.” (Faculty/Staff)

“The care and dedication given to each individual student.” (Faculty/Staff)

“Open-mindedness. Truly international spirit.” (Faculty/Staff)

“ISH gives students countless opportunities to learn and grow. This is an extremely important part of ISH because it is what students value so much: the opportunity to find new passions.” (ISH Student)

“The school provides a friendly and secure environment for the students making them feel like it is a home away from home.” (ISH Student)

“ISH cares about the wellbeing of students.” (ISH Student)

“ISH is a community where the international spirit is lived and taught in an atmosphere of trust and friendliness.” (Parent)

“Offering a variety of opportunities to students, allowing them to discover &



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Head of School Search for July 2021 or 2022

FINANCES

As a not-for-profit entity in Germany, the school presents a healthy financial picture that ensures it can deliver on its mission and educational program imperatives, particularly so since the 2016-17 school year. With much-improved budgeting and development of cost efficiencies, the school holds enviable equity and balance sheet numbers that are richly in the black.

Further proof of financial stability is annual budget surpluses, allowing future investment in program and school facilities.

The school faces uncertainty, as all

international schools around the world, due to the onset of a pandemic. ISH is prepared for the future, based on strategic budgeting, risk management, and an accumulated surplus of 2.6M. The school has debt service on the new campus, yet has already paid off any higher interest loans. Like many overseas schools over the next two years, ISH will experience liquidity dips in the early spring.

The overall financial picture for ISH indicates confidence that the school has the necessary resources to continue to invest in retaining and hiring high-quality educators, to upgrade its current facilities, and the means to pursue new program investments.

FACILITIES

The school moved to a new campus in 2010. As proof of the school's importance to the broader Hamburg community, school facilities are located within the privileged green belt area of the city at 130 Hemmingstedter Weg.

Expanded and remodeled in 2015, ISH now has 41,000sqm of school grounds and 19,000sqm of building floor plan surface and was built with growth in mind, with space to allow for up to 950 students.

The campus complex fully supports the diversity of daily school life. At the heart of the school is the



performing arts center. It incorporates a 400-seat multifunctional auditorium, drama teaching spaces, music classrooms, music practice rooms, and display areas. The auditorium features professional sound, lighting, and projection technology to ensure that many different theatrical genres can be staged professionally.

Classrooms are fully equipped with iMac technology, interactive whiteboards where Apple-certified instructors support teachers. Science education is helped also by the necessary technology, seven laboratories, and a seminar room.

The hub of the school is the library and information center. It is described as a college-level facility based on its holdings, multi-disciplinary spaces, and the level of professional services provided.

In the name of the school's commitment to wholeness and balance, there are three gym halls, a climbing wall, fully-equipped fitness studio, a 100m four-lane tartan running track, a FIFA full-size soccer pitch, a permanent volleyball court, and two multipurpose areas for basketball, volleyball, and soccer. The [Rot-Gelb Club](#) next door allows ISH student access to tennis, cricket, and hockey facilities.



KEY LEADERSHIP SKILLS AND ATTRIBUTES

The next leader of the International School of Hamburg will have the opportunity to provide stewardship for this vibrant and successful school. In order to serve the school fully and well, the next head of school for ISH will bring a set of key leadership skills and attributes to the work, as described here:

Internationally-minded strategic thinker: Identify and clarify the long-term vision of ISH as an internationally-minded school, bringing all constituencies into clear and well understood alignment with ISH's identity. Commit the school to thoughtful innovation and continuous improvement, setting both the broad vision as well as appropriate systems to make this vision a reality. Use complementary skills to combine strategic initiatives with operational expertise to articulate and embed the aspirations

for this flagship international school.

Visionary academic leader: Lead and drive research-based academic excellence, implement world-class, future-focused programming and pedagogy with skill and courage. Assure the academic rigor that will inspire students through consistent implementation of an aligned and responsive standards-based curriculum, excellent instructional practices, and impactful professional development. Highlight student agency and voice. Promote continuous improvement of student learning outcomes by attracting, hiring, and retaining a high-quality faculty, using data-driven decision-making, and implementing innovative program and assessment strategies.

Inspiring change leader: Employ a creative and nimble mindset to inspire effective and sustainable change in the ISH program, making sure to bring the entire community

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Head of School Search for July 2021 or 2022



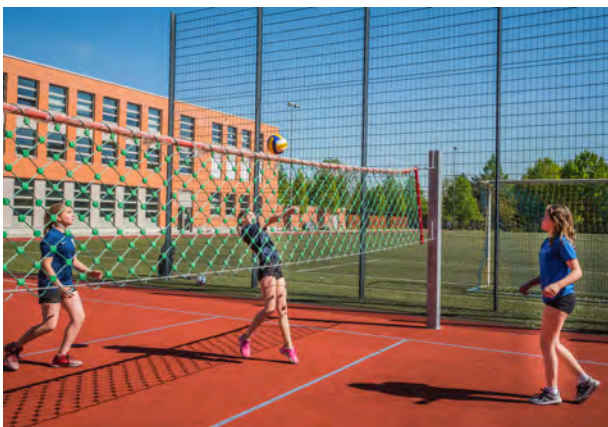
along. Think and inspire “beyond the box” ideas and, at the same time, be able to build the structures and collaboration that will put ISH in the forefront of impactful educational direction.

Collaborative team-builder: Use collaborative teams to define and solve important school issues. Build and align connections among students, teachers, staff, trustees, and senior leadership to ensure everyone contributes expertise and creative thinking for continuous improvement and innovation. Employ effective practices for coaching and supporting all constituencies as well as the ability to establish and nurture a talented, long-serving senior leadership team.



Dynamic communicator: Implement a consistent and intentional communication model across constituencies, clarifying the rationale for decisions and building shared understandings across divisions. Employ a clear and compelling voice to articulate unequivocally the value proposition of the ISH experience. Ability to speak effectively will be a pivotal skill for success.

Enthusiastic community builder: Demonstrate empathy and employ excellent listening skills to build a community that inspires all stakeholders, including students and their ideas, for a collective way forward for the school. Know and support each student’s path through ISH. Combine vision and implementation of that vision to build enthusiasm, trust, and confidence in the school’s path to the future for all constituencies. Lead the way as an ambassador for the school to connect ISH to the broader community, locally and globally.



Wellness advocate: Bring expertise and sensitivity in building programs and community assets that support the pastoral care of ISH students as well as faculty and staff. Bring a conviction about the importance of social emotional learning and developmental support and a willingness to implement programs for students and adults alike. Integrate school values into wellness work.

Commitment to organizational

coherence: Bring coherence to the systems and infrastructure of the school through thoughtful analysis and planning. Clarify roles and responsibilities and transparency in decision-making along with a collaborative approach to problem solving that will maximize trust, access community talent, and promote a positive school climate. Develop trust through reliable and consistent policies and follow-through.

Governance partner: Ensure clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of both the governing body and the senior leadership of the school. Cultivate a robust partnership with the Board and provide direction for the fiduciary, strategic, and generative work of the Board. Provide clear and useful recommendations for the direction of the school, operationally and strategically.

Project manager: Demonstrate the skills and know-how to plan and execute on important projects, both educational and institutional, for ISH. Clarify the aspirations of the school and plan for execution of those aspirations, everything from program growth to facilities improvement. Set priorities among the initiatives proposed for ISH.

PERSONAL QUALITIES

The successful candidate will demonstrate the background, experience, and disposition characterized by the following personal and professional qualities:

- Brings an international mindset to school leadership
- Possesses expertise and passion for IB program development
- Solves problems collaboratively
- Demonstrates strong communication skills
- Promotes a compelling vision for the school
- Makes decisions and drives implementation effectively
- Builds alignment around ideas of progressive education
- Demonstrates high emotional intelligence, warmth, and empathy
- Leads with creativity and inspiration, energy and ambition
- Commits to schoolwide alignment and collaboration
- Demonstrates energy and ambition for the future of ISH

APPLICATION PROCESS

Interested candidates may apply online at:

<https://rg175.com/candidate/signup>

If you have any questions, please contact the consultants on the search:

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TIMELINE: The school seeks to make an appointment for the next Head of School at ISH for July 2021 or 2022. **All applications should be submitted expeditiously and no later than December 4, 2020.** The school will soon begin to interview for the position and reserves the right to move forward with this appointment when the appropriate candidate has been identified.

