

**POSITION STATEMENT**

# **AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL CHENNAI**

**CHENNAI, TAMIL NADU, INDIA**



**HEAD OF SCHOOL SEARCH**  
**START DATE: JULY 1, 2027**





## OVERVIEW

Few schools balance global perspective and genuine belonging as thoughtfully as the American International School Chennai (AISC). Since 1995, AISC has offered an education that is truly internationally minded and purpose-driven. And in an extraordinary setting: Chennai offers world-class career opportunities in a safe, affordable metropolis of major historical, cultural, and economic significance—a city both future-focused and steeped in tradition.

Kindness and inclusion permeate the community. At AISC's heart is a clear alignment around mission, values, and purpose. Students are open-minded and engaged, participating enthusiastically in academics, arts, athletics, service, and experiential learning. There is strong pride in students' character

development and sense of belonging, alongside their academic preparation for university and life beyond school.

Faculty are caring and student-centered, building strong relationships while remaining eager for reflection and growth. The school offers a genuinely holistic education that promotes curiosity and purpose.

There is now a compelling opportunity for the right leader to become AISC's next Head of School, to catalyze the school's great strengths and propel it forward into an exciting new chapter. The Board is committed to working in partnership to pursue an ambitious standard of excellence across every aspect of the school.

The new Head of School, who must be a United States citizen, will assume the role on July 1, 2027, following a comprehensive international search concluding in spring 2026.

# GUIDING STATEMENTS

The American International School Chennai recently refined its mission, vision, and values through a community-engaged planning process to clarify the school's identity and direction. This process redefined the school's "core"—the collective sense of purpose, identity, and aspiration that unifies students, faculty, families, and leadership. The community also articulated a definition of learning and a "Vision for an AISC Learner."

The vision positions AISC as a place "where diverse paths meet, learners innovate, and we make meaningful change together." The mission centers on nurturing learners who transform curiosity into purpose and knowledge into action. The values—responsibility, belonging, purpose, and growth—frame the learning environment.



# HISTORY, GOVERNANCE, AND FINANCES

AISC is a private, nonprofit institution in Chennai, Tamil Nadu in southern India. Founded in 1995, the school moved to its current purpose-built 13-acre campus in 2003. Its location provides access to speakers and experts from Chennai's business, arts, and diplomatic communities, along with extensive opportunities for experiential learning throughout India.

AISC is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, and authorized to offer both the IB Diploma Program and AP courses. It is a member of the European Council for International Schools and the Near East South Asia Council of Overseas Schools.

A nine-member Board governs the school: two representatives from the U.S. Consulate in Chennai, four members elected by the School Association, and three appointed Board members. The Board Chair is appointed by the U.S. Consul General and required to be a U.S. national. This Board appoints the Head of School, who oversees the administration, including three Principals who directly lead faculty and the educational program.

The school enjoys solid financial health. Operating expenses include employee benefits at approximately 80% of costs, reflecting a favorable 1:6 faculty-student ratio. Enrollment fluctuates with the expatriate business and diplomatic community. Despite having to recover from pandemic-related enrollment decline and addressing misappropriation of funds that occurred in recent years, AISC maintains good financial liquidity and low debt.

# PEOPLE

AISC serves a vibrant and diverse community of students, faculty, staff, and highly engaged families. With enrollment of around 760 students from Early Years through Grade 12, the school admits students on a rolling basis throughout the year. Per Indian law, the only Indian nationals the school may admit are ones transferring from schools that use an international curriculum.

The student body represents over 30 nationalities, including nearly half Korean nationals and ~10-15% each of Japanese, American, Indian, and European students. Classes generally have under 20 students. The faculty numbers around 100, 80% of whom hold advanced degrees.

The parent and family community includes expatriates on temporary assignments and longer-term residents, many working in Chennai's corporate, government, and educational sectors. The Parent Community Association is engaged and supportive of AISC's holistic education, international perspective, and American style curriculum.



# PROGRAM

AISC fosters a vibrant, student-centered culture that values intellectual challenge, intercultural understanding, and human connection. The curriculum develops learners who are resilient, critical thinkers, skillful communicators and effective collaborators who are well prepared for global citizenship and lifelong learning.

AISC provides a robust American curriculum from Early Years through Grade 12, with both high IB Diploma Program and AP options in high school. Graduates attend leading universities in the US, UK, Korea and internationally. Academic outcomes are strong; students with English as a first language average 38.5 on IB exams, and over 50% of the Class of 2025 received offers from Top 50 universities.

The English as an Additional Language program supports students in Grades 1-12, as many students enter elementary and middle school without prior English knowledge. Intermediate English proficiency is required for high school admission. Learning Resource Specialists, counselors, and learning support staff serve students with varied needs, and a robust pastoral care program supports student wellbeing.

Co-curricular programs extend learning beyond the classroom. Elementary students participate in after-school arts and sports programs. Older students compete in basketball, soccer, swimming, and other sports, and participate in visual and performing arts. Experiential learning is central to the program at all ages. The Outdoor Learning Center, teaching kitchen, and maker spaces provide hands-on opportunities for younger students. Older students participate in 'week without walls' and other travel programs throughout Chennai and India. The SEVAI program —'service' in Tamil—launched in 2013 to foster socially aware, empathetic problem-solvers engaged with the broader community.





## PLACE

Chennai is renowned for its classical music and dance traditions, historic temples, colonial architecture, seaside location and vibrant contemporary arts and culinary scene. With a population of around 10 million, Chennai is India's fourth-largest city and a major economic, cultural, and educational center. Chennai is a hub for the automotive industry, and its economy is vibrant across diverse sectors such as manufacturing, technology, and healthcare, attracting numerous multinational corporations and diplomatic missions.

The city's year-round tropical climate, proximity to the second-longest urban beach in the world, and ease of travel throughout India and the region make Chennai an appealing location for international educators and families. AISC maintains strong relationships with both local and expatriate communities, serving as an anchor for international education in southern India.

AISC's state-of-the-art facilities reflect sustained investment in an environment that enhances learning, wellbeing, innovation and connection. The school's 13-acre campus is in suburban Taramani, 6 kilometers from both downtown Chennai and the international airport. In 2017, AISC became one of the first schools in the world to receive LEED Gold certification using the ARC platform, followed by LEED Platinum certification in 2019

The campus features comprehensive facilities for learning, arts, and athletics, with distinctive amenities including a music recording studio, climbing wall, and clay kilns. In 2019, the school upgraded learning spaces with better lighting, acoustics, and furniture. Technology is thoughtfully integrated throughout classrooms, libraries, laboratories, and studios. In fact, AISC is recognized as an Apple Distinguished School, affirming its culture of continuous innovation in teaching and learning. Security, safety, and transportation services provide a well-organized environment for students, faculty, and families.

# OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The next Head of School at AISC will build on the school's deep-rooted strengths and collaborate with all constituencies to take on opportunities and challenges as follows:

**Redefine and pursue excellence.** Lead AISC to sharpen and vividly communicate its understanding of educational excellence. Elevate instructional leadership and drive ongoing improvement in teaching and learning. This includes driving a culture of excellence across the whole educational program, addressing English as an Additional Language needs, ensuring meaningful faculty growth, and clarifying how rigor, wellbeing, and inquiry coexist within the AISC context.

**Guide the school strategically into its next chapter.** Work with the Board and community to develop and execute a clear strategy for AISC. The strategy must leverage on the school's strengths, define critical choices to keep AISC thriving, bring along all constituencies, and elevate its reputation in coming years, positioning the school among the very top tier in international education. This will necessarily include making some choices between good alternatives, saying no to some possibilities to pursue world-class excellence in others. The school's embedded tradition of Futures Planning will be a valuable resource to leverage in this work.

**Uphold AISC's culture and values.** Preserve and strengthen AISC's remarkable culture of kindness, belonging and wellbeing, where students are genuinely cared for as whole people. Continue to nurture the school's deep strength as a

values-driven institution. Critically, foster an adult culture of high engagement, trust, collaboration and continual learning, that models essential qualities the school seeks to develop in our students.

**Build gold-standard school operations & finance functions.** Following a substantial turnover in the school's business side, a key priority is to build high-performing, mission-aligned operational and financial leadership, teams, processes and systems. School operations should go beyond delivering the essentials to “surprise and delight” with quality, efficiency and service.

**Lead organizational excellence.** Ensure clear communication, internally and externally. Uphold an ethos of high expectations and continuous improvement in all aspects of the school, from teaching and learning to recruitment, technology to facilities management. Maintain a very effective senior leadership team to address the multiple challenges of working in Chennai and managing complex layers of Indian legal and civic expectations.



# QUALITIES AND ATTRIBUTES

The ideal candidate for AISC will bring most or all of the following mindsets, skills, and experience to the position:

- A track record of successful senior leadership in high-caliber American independent or international school(s)
- Ability to build and develop a cohesive leadership team that leads a healthy school culture, and to successfully hire, manage, and mentor impactful, mission-aligned staff
- A skillful communicator and community builder who fosters trust, collaboration, transparency and upholds core values among AISC stakeholders and partners
- A leader with uplifting, positive presence who is visible, confident, and accessible in the community
- Proven executive management skills to build outstanding teams across educational, operational and finance areas, manage complex operations, and lead change
- Strong ability to develop a strategic direction with key partners, ensure teams execute effectively and achieve goals, develop long range financial plans, and make strategic decisions that position the school for growth and success
- A highly experienced and collaborative partner with the Board of Directors, who is consistently engaged in governance best practices
- Good judgment, high self-awareness, and resourcefulness
- Excellent cultural competence to lead in a highly diverse international community
- Expectation to embrace the joys and complexities of living in India and to provide leadership longevity for the school
- Per school bylaws, the Head of School must be a citizen of the United States

# COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

The AISC Head of School receives a comprehensive compensation package that includes competitive salary, housing allowance, tuition remission, and other benefits.

## APPLICATION PROCESS

AISC has retained Resource Group 175 (RG175) to support the search for its next head of school. Interested candidates should prepare a cover letter, updated resume, and writing sample for the application materials. Five references are also required.

The application deadline is February 20, 2026, for a start date of July 1, 2026.

**Candidates are encouraged to submit their materials well in advance of the deadline at:**

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

For any questions to register your interest, please contact the RG175 consultants directly:

Diego Merino  
[diego.merino@rg175.com](mailto:diego.merino@rg175.com)

Jeremy Moore  
[jeremy.moore@rg175.com](mailto:jeremy.moore@rg175.com)

Coreen R. Hester  
[chester@rg175.com](mailto:chester@rg175.com)