

# POSITION STATEMENT

# TASIS PORTUGAL

SINTRA, PORTUGAL



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



# OVERVIEW

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TASIS Portugal is, quite literally, a dream come true! Founded a short six years ago, the school, flourishes with over 950 students, a beautiful new campus home, a stunning location, and a compelling set of enviable and positive predictors for its next chapter.

The first word that everyone uses to describe TASIS Portugal is Community, with a capital C. The school has grown exponentially since 2020: 245 students in Year One, followed by 495, 675, 795, 890, and now 952 with a 92% retention rate. But much more than numbers, all constituencies laud the international mix of families, a community of nationalities, experiences, and viewpoints that blend with deep appreciation from all involved. The students themselves describe the kindness of their peers, the quality of their teachers, the opportunities available to them from all-school House competitions to the arts, athletics, and “good playgrounds!” Their parents concur, and the TASIS Parent Association (TPA) has extraordinary support from current parents.



The faculty at TASIS Portugal laud the “environment of excellence,” from the quality of the students and relationships with colleagues to the commitment to achievement and student growth. The best comment? “Here, ideas come to life!” In its short history, it is evident that a commitment to best practices along with a nimble ability to learn and grow the school has taken root, in large part due to the leadership of Keith Chicquen, Founding Headmaster, and its innovative inaugural Board. The academic results are noteworthy, and the first graduating class has received excellent university placement results as of spring 2026.

And next, the challenges ahead—which are both understandable and appealing. Now that the initial “start-up” phase is completed, how will the school continue to strengthen its academic programs and clarify pathways for success for all students? How will the school approach the increasingly competitive school landscape in Lisbon? The next head of school will have the opportunity to address the maturing identity and next stage of development for the school. Also, establishing clarity about the additional needs in systems and structures as well as learning support to reflect the increased size of the school are topics on the docket. Continuing to attract and retain an excellent faculty in an expensive Western European location will be critical. Ensuring an excellent senior leadership team will be equally critical. And finally, supporting the master plan for facilities to completion while running a complex school operation is an important challenge ahead.

In summary, it is clear that TASIS Portugal is thriving—the strengths are in place and the challenges reasonable—so that the school is

well poised to launch a leadership search for July 2027. An experienced, highly qualified Interim Head of School has been appointed for the 2026/27 school year to respond to the recent ISM survey and build on the school's early success, thereby laying the groundwork for the new head of school.

This is an opportunity of note, and the school welcomes applications of interest. Please be in contact with RG175 consultants Coreen Hester, [chester@rg175.com](mailto:chester@rg175.com), and John Farber, [jfarber@rg175.com](mailto:jfarber@rg175.com), for next steps in the search process.



## HISTORY AND MISSION

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TASIS Portugal is the newest campus of the family foundation established by M. Crist Fleming, an American educator and philanthropist, who founded The American School in Switzerland (TASIS) in 1956. The goal of the school was “to give students strong preparation for American colleges and universities, with the additional dimension of exposure to cultures and training in languages other than their own.” Mrs. Fleming (1910-2009) also founded TASIS Schools in England and Greece and many summer programs in Switzerland, England, France, Spain, and Italy. To learn more about the extraordinary legacy of Ms. Fleming: <https://www.tasisportugal.org/about/mission/history>

Most recently, the Foundation established TASIS Dorado in Puerto Rico, and now, TASIS Portugal, already the largest of the four TASIS Schools is in place under the direction of the TASIS Portugal Board with oversight by the TASIS Foundation, a non-profit entity based in Switzerland.

**Mission:** TASIS Portugal challenges and nurtures students to pursue academic and personal excellence with the goal of helping them become engaged global citizens and innovative, selfless leaders.

The Values and Ideals of TASIS are carefully honed and curated to reflect the thoughtful direction of the schools, and the school wants to ensure a clear and deep understanding of the school's mission in its next head of school. To learn more about the mission and vision of TASIS Portugal:

<https://www.tasisportugal.org/about/mission>



# THE PLACE

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The creative vision behind TASIS Portugal campus is undisputed. The Foundation Board purchased a shopping center in Sintra, Portugal, and has transformed it into a stunning international school in keeping with the vision of Mrs. Fleming and her insistence on classical beauty. The location allows the school to draw enrollment from Lisbon and the Cascais area as well as Sintra, thus an attractive commute from all directions. (Wonderful historical note: the school actually opened in a 14th century monastery on the property of the beautiful Penna Longha Hotel near the School site, although within three weeks, the school was relocated to the campus upon completion of its first phase of construction.)

The campus is currently comprised of approximately 160,000 sq.ft of newly minted classrooms, libraries, art studios, science labs, playgrounds, offices, wide hallways, and attractive meeting areas, carefully blending the new with the old. A former cinema complex has been converted into an assembly hall for

student performances and assemblies, as well as a sports hall presently being extended and upgraded to provide changing rooms and spectator seating as we write. Athletic fields are adjacent to the campus. A large supermarket, still operating, hugs the campus, and plans to convert that space to provide a new kitchen and spacious dining area, additional classrooms to increase student capacity, and relocation of the Welcome Center and Admissions offices are also part of the master plan for facilities. The next five years will see additional major construction to complete the campus.

The school's location in Portugal is, of course, significantly appealing. On the whole, the country offers an affordable quality of life, including a reliably safe living environment, a rich history, and enjoys a mild climate with many sought-after holiday adventures. The expatriate community is robust and reflects the school's successful outreach to the international population.



# THE PROGRAM

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TASIS Portugal is divided into four divisions which are overseen by two Directors. The Head of the Lower School supervises the Early Learning Center and the Elementary School, Grades K-5. The Head of the Upper School supervises the Middle and High Schools, Grade 6-12.

The school has implemented four distinct curricula to develop the academic skills and intellectual capacity of every student. Each program uses clear metrics to measure student success and growth, and the school has implemented academic programs of note:

- Core Knowledge curriculum for the Pre K 1-Grade 8.
  - Note: TASIS Portugal is one of the few international schools to earn School of Distinction status for its lower school curricular fidelity in Core Knowledge.
- Singapore Math is used in Lower and Middle Schools
- Cambridge IGCSE for Grades 9-10
- International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme for Grades 11-12

Cognitive skills, with an emphasis on problem-solving, are developed through language study, coding and logic, the music curricula includes violin instruction for all younger students, chess, and public speaking. IGCSE and MAP data (Measure of Academic Progress) exam results are stellar, and early anticipated DP results also reflect the academic rigor of the program. The culture of the school libraries supports the school's intentional priority of deep intellectual enterprise.

Essential to the program, ELC-Grade 12, is a commitment to social-emotional learning and the importance of building confidence and self-esteem for all students, as well as service and leadership skills.

Contributing to the holistic goals of the TASIS Portugal program are top-drawer opportunities for visual and performing arts and performances, an array of opportunities in athletics, speech and debate, design and technology, and internships as well as service learning and off-campus adventures. Students have busy lives at TASIS Portugal.

Learn more about the TASIS Portugal academic and social-emotional programs here:

<https://www.tasisportugal.org/academics>



# THE PEOPLE

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An indisputable strength of the school is the well-balanced international nature of the constituencies. Currently, 20% of the students have US passports, 12% are from the UK, 12% are Portuguese, 7% are Brazilian, 4% are French, and 45% a combination of 60 other nationalities including students who are Ukrainian, Israeli, and Russian. A true feeling of “the world” draws families to the school—and keeps them there—with a 92% retention rate.

The TPA, TASIS Parent Association, is very active in the life of the school. Currently over 50 parents hold some kind of responsibility for various activities around the school, from social activities to establishing student internships, and serve on ten committees, with 36 parents helping out as class representatives. TASIS parents are hoping for a continuation of the current administrative style that operates with clear communication and authenticity, prioritizing academic excellence and embracing multiple political perspectives. They love the values and the traditions of the school, and at the same time, they want the school to be unafraid of embracing new research and trends in education.

The student culture at TASIS Portugal is singularly positive. Students report that the school makes the transition into the school both inviting and smooth. Faculty members are available and eager to support student success. A vibrant House program, named for different cohorts of medieval knights, for the entire school energizes the students—everyone is assigned to one of four Houses—and pictures of the House captains for Lower School and High School decorate the school hallways. Throughout the year, the students wear House colors and feel a keen sense of loyalty and fun about House competition.

The first cohort of graduates is finishing up this coming June, and university results are impressive. Students applied (in order of preference) to universities in Spain, the UK, the US, Netherlands, Portugal, Italy, and Ireland, again reflecting the international nature of the student body. Most students applied to universities in two or more countries and received positive responses from their top choices.



# FINANCES AND HUMAN RESOURCES

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TASIS Portugal operates from a position of strong financial stability. Tuition revenues remain resilient, providing a predictable and sustainable income base, while liquidity levels are sufficient to support ongoing operations and near-term commitments. Expenditure remains broadly aligned with budget expectations.

From a human capital perspective, staffing levels are stable and faculty retention remains strong. The school continues to benefit from an experienced and internationally diverse workforce, supporting the consistent delivery of its academic program and reinforcing its institutional positioning. As of May 2026, TASIS Portugal employed 179 staff members, comprising 126 faculty and 53 administrative and support staff, representing 25 nationalities. This diversity remains a defining strength of the school and a key contributor to its international identity.



## OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

**The new head of school at TASIS Portugal will have the leadership skills and experience to address the opportunities and challenges ahead. Among the most important are to:**

Cultivate community enthusiastically and well. Connect with the students with kindness and care. Support the esprit de corps of an outstanding faculty. Dedicate time and resources to the parent community who appreciate their partnership with the school. Continue to foster an inclusive international community where all members feel they belong.

Continue to develop and sharpen the academic program, ensuring “high challenge and high support” for a talented international student body. Continue to assess the program and pathways to success for all students and build upon the school’s reputation for excellence.

Recruit and retain an extraordinary cadre of faculty who are dedicated to the intellectual and personal growth of all students. Bring inspired and experienced educational oversight and leadership to a dynamic program and champion forward-looking innovations in education wisely. Prioritize faculty and staff well being and attend to the specific opportunities and challenges of living and working in Portugal.

Clarify and reinforce the identity and next stage of development for the school. Assess the needs of a School that aspires to be “the

premier American international school” in Portugal and the steps needed to shape the path forward. Communicate the strengths and position the school well in a competitive regional market.

Ensure organizational efficiency and program strength through assessing the administrative structure and alignment of the school. Continue to support a high-functioning senior leadership team with particular attention to the need for teamwork and seamless collaboration throughout the entire organization. Assess the systems and structure of a growing school with particular attention to program and human resources.

Support the completion of the campus master plan in collaboration with the Chairman of the Board who oversees all CAPEX projects. Attend to the necessary safety and security measures that accompany a school of TASIS Portugal’s size and complexity.

Bring a seasoned understanding of the partnership between governance and management to the relationship of the Board and Senior Leadership at TASIS Portugal. Furthermore, understand the workings of the TASIS group of schools and the advantages of working together for the benefit of the network and TASIS Portugal.

Understand and support the School’s Paideia including traditional family values and other foundational documents in [The TASIS Academy](#).

## KEY LEADERSHIP ATTRIBUTES FOR THE SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE

- A mission-aligned leader who wholeheartedly embraces the promise of the TASIS commitment to its vision, values, and purpose



- An exceptional community builder who listens deeply, cultivates connections, and strengthens bonds across all constituencies
- An educator with deep understanding of teaching and learning, committed to academic excellence, thoughtful innovation, and the commitment to supporting all learners
- An inspired, compelling communicator, capable of speaking and writing about the TASIS Portugal story with clarity, resonance, and a good sense of humor!
- A leader with the emotional intelligence to manage competing tensions, to listen across differences with equanimity and wisdom, and to ensure a “common language of respect”
- A systems thinker who can assess the organizational structure of the school, expand when needed, delegate when warranted, and bring skilled management skills to the job
- A leader who brings a calm, steady, and warm presence and demeanor to build relationships and to manage change with skill and diplomacy
- A leader who delights in creativity and curiosity, yet can be decisive and clear

# APPLICATION PROCESS

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TASIS Portugal has retained Resource Group 175 (RG175) to support the search for its next head of school. Interested candidates should prepare a cover letter, an updated resume, and writing sample(s) to submit as part of their application materials. Five references are also a required component of the application process.

**The application deadline is September 7, 2026, for a start date of July 1, 2027.**

Candidates are encouraged to submit their materials in a timely manner (and well before the actual application deadline) at <https://rg175.com/candidate/signup>

For any questions about this exciting leadership position and to register your interest, please contact the RG175 consultants directly:

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