

POSITION STATEMENT

Taipei American School

TAIPEI, TAIWAN



LEADERSHIP SEARCH

HEAD OF SCHOOL

Start Date: July 1, 2027 or July 1, 2028



**Taipei
American
School**



A Leadership Search conducted by
RG175 Search Consultants Tom Hudnut, Debbie Reed & Jim Scott

Overview of the Leadership Opportunity

Taipei American School stands at the very top of the world's leading international schools. The breadth of its program, the quality of its facilities, the dedication of its faculty, and the support of its community make TAS one of the brightest of stars in the educational cosmos.

With a student body of nearly 2400 and a faculty of more than 300 with sufficient numbers of administrators and support staff, TAS is a major operation, one that requires significant management skills and strong executive leadership of the flagship school in the world's fifth largest capital market. As one Trustee puts it, "Here in Taipei we are at the nexus of technological advances, and we have the resources to be in the forefront of education across the world."

The school is poised to continue progress on its Strategic Action Plan: aligning programs and curricula, appointing strong administrators to oversee specific areas of growth and improvement, and filling key positions with highly capable personnel. There is a team of three new division leaders, each of whom has international school experience, all of whom are highly able. Technology infrastructure has been strengthened system-wide since the Strategic Plan was launched three years ago, and a new K-12 program of

professional development for faculty and staff is now in place. Through its Office of Learning, TAS is breaking down silos and moving toward full integration of academic programs and curricula.

TAS seeks a Head of proven leadership and executive skill, preferably in an international educational community. Intercultural competence and "executive chops" may be at the top of the list of desired qualities for the next Head because being able to understand and navigate the stakeholders of the school is critical. Not surprisingly, other requisites for the Head include exceptional managerial skills and the demonstrated capacity to lead in a position of high visibility.





The Place

Greater Taipei numbers about 7 million inhabitants, roughly one-third of the country's population. Taipei is a bustling city of bright lights, skyscrapers, restaurants, and commercial life. From the many museums to the famous Night Markets, it is a city teeming with life and excitement. The city features numerous wonderful parks, hiking trails, and a variety of residential neighborhoods. It is one of the safest cities in the world, where pleasant courtesy makes a visitor feel at home. There is a "genuineness" to the city that keeps it informal but respectful and people on the street are friendly and helpful. The outstanding public transit system makes getting around Taipei both a breeze and a treat.

Home to world-leading hi-tech enterprises and headquarters to at least five Fortune 500 companies, Taipei is at the cutting edge of modern capitalism, attracting

businesses, capital, investors and executives from all over the world. Surveys of expats around the world place Taipei in the Top Three of desirable places to relocate, for reasons of family, business, or lifestyle.

Not surprisingly, many such people find TAS to be the school for their children, where a foreign passport is a requisite for entrance. The school site is impressive ;, its 15-acre campus setting it apart from the surroundings. With more than 250 classrooms, multiple gyms and playing fields, a media-IT center, three theaters, a magnificent health and fitness center, and the six-story "Tech Cube" for advanced research, innovation, engineering and design, it is a campus that is second to none in its ability to nourish the insatiable intellectual appetites of the students who go there.

It would be hard to call any campus "world class" once you've been to TAS. This school defines the term.

The People

Faculty, Staff, and Administration

The 300+ teachers at TAS are uniformly well-educated and very positive about their environment, so much so that the average tenure of 9.5 years is greater than that at any other major international school, with many teachers approaching, a few exceeding, 20 years at TAS. In its hiring practices, the school seeks "exemplary teachers who are excited by the TAS mission, have expertise in their teaching areas, and have a passion and enthusiasm for students and their success."

Faculty are experienced in international education and dedicated to their own professional development. Teachers' commitment to their students is palpable. Wellness education is a recent focus at TAS but universally embraced. TAS faculty are dynamic, bright, and engaged. They are experts, whether that expertise is in early childhood education, advanced robotics, English language development, student wellness, or coaching. The aim is to "provide a guaranteed and viable curriculum that addresses students' needs and goals."

Department chairs are content experts who support their departments. They take pride in their teachers whose subject matter mastery and knowledge of child and adolescent development create a welcoming culture for their students. The faculty endorse the curriculum's path forward but would like it to be a bit more linear with fewer detours than has been the case.

Where to go and whom to ask are hard questions to answer at TAS given the circuitous nature of the org chart.

There is a pervasive sense among faculty that there has been too much change, too fast, in recent years. No matter how experienced and capable the new administrators are, they are still new, and arriving at a time when the School Head was on the way out provided challenges in the summer of 2026. A team of administrators in the Office of Learning work with the division leaders led by the Deputy Head to ensure the alignment mandated by the Strategic Action Plan and recommended by the WASC Visiting Committee. Fortunately, the skill sets of these administrators are exemplary, and the reorganization will doubtless achieve that aim.



The current Head of School has created a new org chart in which he has the Deputy Head, the Chief Advancement Officer (CAO) and the Chief Financial Officer as his direct reports. All the academic leadership reports to the Deputy Head, while Enrollment and Communications are in the realm of the CAO. Most of these administrators have been hired within the past four years and form a strong, cohesive team. They are experienced in international schools and capable in their positions, and some have prior experience in Asia. Together, they provide a strong and clear sense of direction for operations and academics.

Still, there is "change fatigue" within the faculty. The recent past has included multiple changes in leadership that have proved exciting on the one hand, but enervating on the other. New division leaders have chosen to work at TAS

because of its reputation for excellence and its future as reflected in the Master Plan, but have been surprised by the multiplicity of new ideas, goals, and initiatives. "We add consultants and programs with little explanation about the reasoning or the org chart. The volume of new initiatives results in multiple new directives for divisions, department chairs, faculty and staff. It's unsustainable," says one administrator.

The desire to align program, policy, and practice has led to the creation of new positions: Director of Faculty, Director of Student Success, and the Director of Belonging and Social Impact. The restructured Director of Curriculum position works across all divisions with the academic deans. The new division directors have been well-received by the faculty and report to the Deputy Head, also new and also well-received.



Students and Families

The nearly 2,400 TAS students and their families are multi-lingual, multi-cultural and multi-ethnic and represent 37 different nationalities, with almost 70% US citizens and strong representation from Canada, Australia, and Korea. Typically, 85% of the graduating class will attend university in the United States.

Almost 40% of enrolled students joined TAS in Pre-K or K and are affectionately known as Tiger Babies. Of those who transfer in, seventy percent (70%) come from local Taiwanese schools, but North American representation has recently grown. Many students are children of alumni. Financial support from corporations, the American Institute, or TAS itself helps 19% of the student body. In recent years, the mix of corporate partners has changed. Coupang has emerged as the largest corporate sponsor, followed by Samsung, taking the spots previously occupied by American companies.

There has been a shift in recent years in the demography of the student body. More international, less American, with many Taiwanese parents who are themselves not products of American education but desirous of it for their children. With strong local pre-schools, a diminishing number of parents are interested in sending a child to TAS in pre-school or even the lower elementary grades because they see the Middle and High School programs as the determinants of their child's success at university.



The Program: Breadth of Opportunity and Choice

The published curriculum at TAS could easily be confused with the course catalogue of a major university. It is one of the few schools in Asia to offer a range of both International Baccalaureate and Advanced Placement courses. The curriculum is rigorous and standards-based while using the “Understanding by Design” framework that underpins all classes throughout the grade levels. TAS takes a holistic approach to American education that demands a high standard of academic performance while developing balance, collaboration, curiosity, and resilience.

Given its size and the spread of the campus and the range of ages, the school's three divisions are distinctive and address the ages and stages of the Tiny Tigers in Kindergarten to the graduating seniors headed for colleges across the globe.

The TAS Strategic Plan <https://www.tas.edu.tw/about/strategic-plan> explicitly commits the school program to seek alignment, integration, and coherence that is researched-based and ensures that every student's academic and social-emotional needs are

identified and addressed. Such alignment begins in the Lower School where the American standards-based course of study leans heavily on English language literacy and fluency that will be essential to the students as they advance.

Whether in English, math, science, or social studies, Lower School teachers employ both RULER and Responsive Classroom among other instructional techniques. Specialty areas include Mandarin, Technology & Design, Visual and Performing Arts and Physical education. The Lower School curriculum is age and developmentally appropriate and fosters learning through play mindset. In a balanced and rich program students in the lower school benefit from broad and meaningful opportunities for learning characterized by care, joy, and discovery.

<https://www.tas.edu.tw/academics/lower-school>



The TAS Middle School serves over 600 students from diverse backgrounds in grades 6-8 who benefit from a broad range of exploratory courses in addition to a rigorous academic core. The Middle School program follows an American curriculum developed to help students become academically successful and to become more independent, adaptable, and resilient as learners and as people. The Middle School seeks to balance the social-emotional well-being of the students with academic vigor through small group instruction focused on the core areas of English, History, Science, Mathematics, and Mandarin, and other languages. Interscholastic sports are hugely popular with Middle School students, as are drama, music, and debate. The robust TAS Middle School program and curriculum are described in depth through the following link:

<https://www.tas.edu.tw/academics/middle-school>

The Middle School is a happy place, notwithstanding the sudden adoption in the 2025-26 school year of a previously-studied block schedule that features 70-minute classes. Still, the energy among students and faculty alike is palpable. The students like their teachers and they like being known and appreciated. The Middle School musical is open to all comers and regularly features as many as 85 performers in addition to a tech crew and orchestra. The same is true in sports, with teams that reflect the levels of the participants; everyone gets a chance to participate.



There are currently 850 students in the Upper School and 209 students in the Class of 2027. Typically, over 80% of TAS graduates matriculate at colleges and universities in the United States. TAS offers nearly 200 Honors level or higher courses within the AP and IB programs. Just a sample of courses in the Upper School will suffice to demonstrate both the breadth and depth of the offerings: architecture, energy systems in science, film production, international relations, music production and technology, quantum mechanics and relativity, philosophy, research in food chemistry, the history of minorities in America, and marketing & entrepreneurship. In sum there are unparalleled opportunities and choice for TAS students in all divisions through an innovative program grounded in tradition.

As newly appointed TAS Upper School Principal commented, "I see students who are curious, deeply engaged, and eager to make meaning of the world around them. Our role as a school is challenge them to think critically and creatively while giving them the confidence to direct their own learning, care for their own well-being, and to learn with and from others."

To learn more about the Upper School Program see:

<https://www.tas.edu.tw/academics/upper-school>

<https://www.tas.edu.tw/about/school-profile>



Programs

Health and Wellness

An early leader in the area of student wellness, the school has a demonstrated commitment to health, wellness, and character education. The Lower School's Responsive Classroom approach and its faculty training in RULER begin the program that extends across the divisions. In the Middle School's homeroom periods provide a special focus on student wellness. Middle school students take the VIA Character Strength survey annually, the results of which are further explored during homeroom and small groups of students meet on a bi-weekly basis as part of Student Wellness Action Teams to identify areas of need and initiate wellness. For details see <https://www.tas.edu.tw/student-life/wellbeing>

Robotics, Computer Science and Innovation

TAS excels in the Science, Technology and Engineering areas. The Computer Science and Robotics department offers three levels of Robotics courses, an Introduction and Advanced Courses in AI, programming for web design, courses in web design and engineering. These are the courses that often fuel the work in the Tech Cube, a six-story, 5,000sqm building in the center of campus dedicated to the robotics, technology, and science programs. The Tech Cube facility is truly unique and has established TAS as a leader for K-12 STEAM excellence in the Asia-Pacific region and around the world.

Every Lower School student has one extended 60-to-90-minute period in the Tech Cube every ten days. The school believes that as a result of extended STEAM time students are displaying more advanced skills, and the curricular challenges are becoming more complex. The Lower School science curriculum was recently revised to include STEAM projects.

The Middle School Tech Cube Program provides students with a strong foundation in Design Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Computer Science and Physical Computing. This program is taught by art teachers, robotics teachers and science teachers.

The Upper School Tech Cube Program focuses on innovation and creativity. Required introductory level courses and in successive Tech Cube courses are team and project oriented. Several co-curricular clubs and teams provide further opportunities for students to explore tech related interests, take part in international competitions and provide support for local Taiwan schools to start and grow their robotics teams. For more detail see:

<https://www.tas.edu.tw/academics/the-tech-cube-program>

<https://www.tas.edu.tw/academics/information-and-educational-technology>

Character Development

The school strives to incorporate wellness and character development into the student experience. The school collects and analyzes longitudinal data to guide the

programs and activities that support child wellness. Lower School staff have received training in RULER, a systematic approach to SEL that aims to infuse the principles of emotional intelligence throughout the school. The Middle School's culture is based upon its mantra ("Character is doing the right thing when nobody's looking"). More than half of all Middle School students participate in after school sports teams where coaches model the expectations of the Positive Coaching Alliance. For more detail see:

<https://www.tas.edu.tw/student-life/wellbeing>

Each of the divisions is well supported with counselors, psychologists, learning specialists and a speech pathologist shared between the Lower and Middle School. These are well trained, experienced, and caring adults who appreciate the resources dedicated to the students' well-being.



Athletics

The TAS athletics program continues to set the standard for excellence while reflecting the strength, depth, and commitment of the community. 500 student athletes participate in one of 42 JV or Varsity sports teams.

From broad student participation across divisions to sustained success in league play, the TAS athletic program is exemplary. To read more about the extensive athletic program see:

<https://www.tas.edu.tw/athletics>

Arts

TAS has outstanding programs in the arts and could be mistaken for a school for the performing arts or an art academy. The offerings in dance, music, and theater are extensive—with programs for the beginning musician, the novice dancer and for the student interested in a career in the performing arts. In the Lower School all students have general music classes, building a foundation for later programs. In grades 3-5 a Music Activity program

focuses on the development of skills in the areas of dance, instrumental or vocal skills. In grade 3 and 4 students chose a stringed instrument and in Grade 5 choose Band, Choir/Dance, Strings.

The middle and upper school performing arts programs are dazzling! A student can take classes in AP Music Theory or Musical Production or try her hand at composition and song writing. A child can learn to play a brass instrument and perhaps develop the skills that lead to an Honors Symphonic Band. There are choirs for all comers to audition groups and instruction for beginning instrumentalists who need to read music to jazz ensembles and a symphony. The theater and dance productions are extraordinary.

Listen and view the arts program on the following links:

<https://www.tas.edu.tw/school-life/the-arts/dance>



Admissions

TAS has 898 students in the Upper School, 616 in the Middle School and 849 this year in the Lower School. TAS benefits from strong demand and low attrition. Many alumni return to Taiwan, and others remain on Island so that their children can benefit from a TAS education. Students are considered for admission to TAS according to a priority system that ranks in order: Parents employed by American Institute in Taiwan; American passport holders; other non-US passport holders. The Taiwan government requires that students hold foreign passports for attendance at TAS.

The most significant long-term enrollment trend continues to be the Lower School pipeline. Lower School enrollment has declined from 915 students in 2025–26 to 898 this year, and applications have decreased over the past several years, particularly in Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten. Middle and Upper School application levels remain comparatively healthy. This makes early-years recruitment and engagement an important area of continued focus, as smaller entering cohorts have the potential to affect enrollment across the school over time.

Finances

TAS is in enviable financial condition with robust accumulated reserves, with a healthy sum deployed for building or operations as the Board and Head determine. There are few demands for Financial Aid. Tuition and fees are the primary drivers of TAS finances. The CAO, CFO and Head of School are exploring a long-term financial plan that may include an endowment. The Annual Fund raises about \$1 Million per year in addition to monies solicited for other mission-aligned initiatives.

The finances at the Taipei American School are strong, with solid cash flow, minimal debt, appropriate cash reserves, and excellent oversight by the CFO, the Controller, and the Finance Committee of the Board. The school's strong student enrollment allows for certainty and confidence in budgeting and financial management.



Governance

The Taipei American School Board of Directors is a hybrid board consisting of up to 14 members: 9 elected board members and 5 appointed board members, including one appointed representative from the American Institute in Taiwan, the de facto United States Embassy in Taiwan. Elected Board members are current TAS parents and serve staggered three-year terms. Appointed Board members are not current parents and serve for four-year terms.

A nominating committee, comprising TAS parents and board members, seeks candidates from the parent community to run for the Board election. Elections are held in March and new Board members are announced at the annual meeting of the General Members in April. The role of the Taipei American School Board of Directors is to establish a clear mission, vision, and strategic goals; to ensure the financial healthy, stability, and stewardship; and to select, support, and evaluate the TAS Head of School. The Board of Directors has actively engaged in board training, led by internationally recognized experts in independent school governance, in their efforts to maintain the NAIS Principles of Good Practice.

The TAS Board of Directors accomplishes its goals through various board committees that include Finance Committee; Advancement Committee; Committee on Directors and Governance Audit

mittee; and Ad Hoc task forces.

Members of the current Board are talented, dedicated, hardworking, and invested in the success of school overall and its Head of School. In the transition of leadership to the next Head of School, the Board is resolved to provide effective communication with the TAS community.

The Opportunity

The Head of the Taipei American School is one of the attractive school leadership opportunities in the world for 2027 or 2028. There is much appeal to an experienced and accomplished educator. And there is much to build upon, including:

- Healthy student enrollment and a very strong financial position
- Outstanding facilities
- Motivated and focused students in a school where every child is known and has the potential to shine
- Impressive breadth of opportunity and choice for students
- Excellent and caring teachers with relatively low faculty turnover and a strong commitment to faculty professional development
- A well-resourced instructional program known for its excellence across the school

The Expectations of the next Head of School

Transcending any specific expectations as outlined below, there exists a wonderful opportunity for the new Head to implement a Strategic Plan, develop a Master Plan, and accomplish this by prioritizing multiple good ideas; understanding and fostering team dynamics; and managing the pace of change.

Specifically, the next Head of TAS will:

- See this as a career capstone position
- Have experience in a large, complex school, ideally in an international setting
- Be a visible presence in the school and community
- Rebuild trust with the Board
- Understand the necessity of partnering with the Board
- Have a high degree of self-awareness and self-confidence
- Recognize the need for cultural awareness and adaptability
- Work closely with CFO and Board on budgets and fundraising
- Understand and manage the range of parent expectations
- Embrace Taiwanese culture
- Collaborate with the board on mission, vision, and strategic priorities



The Ideal leadership Attribute and Personal Qualities of the Next Head of School

- Successful school leadership experience within a large, complex, multicultural setting
- Strong and decisive leadership style; willing to embrace hard decisions through an inclusive and collaborative leadership style
- Ability to manage organizational change
- Able and skillful communicator; highly relational, visible, warm, welcoming campus presence
- Charismatic, inspiring community builder
- Culturally sensitive and diplomatic; deft at working within a vocal multicultural community
- Successful experience with financial management and fundraising
- Forward-thinking educational thought leader who will inspire, support, and challenge the faculty



Process and Timeline

Interested candidates should apply for the Head of School position through the portal on the Resource Group 175 website:

www.rg175.com/login

We require a current resume, a cover letter of interest, and a writing sample for an application to be considered. Our advice is to apply early.

The **deadline** for applications is **November 30, 2026**.

If you have any questions, please reach out to the consultants from Resource Group 175 who have been assigned to the search:

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