

POSITION STATEMENT

American International School Vienna

Vienna, Austria



LEADERSHIP SEARCH

DIRECTOR/HEAD OF SCHOOL

Start Date: August 1, 2028



A Leadership Search conducted by **RG175 Search Consultants**
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Overview

The American International School Vienna (AISV) presents an extraordinary leadership opportunity to capitalize on the strengths of the School and to realize its aspirational future in one of the world's loveliest capital cities—Vienna, Austria.

The foundations for success are firmly in place: a thriving program, a skilled faculty, an engaged community, a thoughtful strategic plan, a strong financial position, and a distinctive location. An ethos of positivity is palpable, from students and parents to the faculty and senior leadership. Under the direction of Dr. Kathy Miner for the past eight years, the School has enjoyed a successful period of growth and stability. The governing body, the Executive Board, works in a collaborative partnership with the Director while supporting the mission, values, and the strategic initiatives in place. Best of all, students at AIS Vienna love their school and proudly describe their appreciation for what they learn, how they learn, and the exciting adventures—and friendships—available to them. The School thrives.

Nestled in the famous Vienna Woods, surrounded by hiking trails and the picturesque vineyards of Neustift am Walde, the campus of AIS Vienna is located in the 19th district on the city map, which makes central Vienna easy to access and clearly part of the appeal of this position. Nature and city life complement each other seamlessly. The international make-up of AISV is also noteworthy. One parent describes the School: "What makes AISV unique, in my view, is its international and diverse community and the opportunity it gives students to learn in a multicultural environment. There is also a strong sense of community and a genuine commitment to supporting students."

And now, the American International School Vienna seeks its next Director (Head of School) for August 2028, offering a compelling opportunity to lead a well-respected international school from strength to strength. We welcome your interest.



History

AISV was founded on September 1, 1959, by the U.S. and Canadian Embassies to provide an American-style education primarily for the children of diplomats posted in Vienna, including families of the U.S. Tri-Mission in Vienna (the U.S. Embassy in Austria, UNVIE, and the U.S. Mission to the OSCE). The School has always warmly welcomed students of all backgrounds and nationalities.

Mission & Values

Our Mission

At the American International School Vienna, we empower each student with the skills and character strengths necessary to be positively impactful global citizens who strive for personal growth and excellence in an ever-changing world.

Our Vision

A community of innovative learners realizing their chosen futures with courage, curiosity, and joy.

Our Values

- Respect: We will be kind, considerate, inclusive, and thoughtful in our interactions with others and the environment.
- Aspire: We will pursue our passions, imagine possibilities, and make them real.
- Achieve: We will apply ourselves to the best of our ability with effort and ingenuity, and strive for personal growth.



The Program

The AISV educational program is well-orchestrated and thoughtfully delivered. The program, PreK-Grade 12, is balanced and coherent. From PreK to Grade 8, it is organized around standards-based curriculum, and in the High School around the IB Diploma. Throughout, knowing and supporting each student is clearly a priority. In fact, every teacher is asked to know three positive facts about each student after the first three weeks of school. Without question, student-teacher relationships at AISV support student well-being and contribute to the development of the agency and maturity of students over time.

In the Early Childhood Program, PreK and Kindergarten, the program emphasizes “joyful and curious learning, social and play-based learning, inquiry and collaboration, community and belonging,” and the use of “intentional learning environments.” Early literacy and numeracy figure in the program, but students have guided inquiry based on their own curiosity, explore their identities, and get to know Vienna. They also engage in physical education, music, art, and German language immersion.

The Elementary program is a balance of content and inquiry with standards-based assessment practices in place. Common Core Standards are used in language arts and mathematics, AERO



standards for social studies, NGSS for the science curriculum, and SHAPE standards for physical education and health. ISTE standards for technology are in place, and a hands-on maker space, SAIL (Science and Innovation Lab) has recently been outfitted for the program. All students study German, whether as Deutsch for mother-tongue students or German for those students acquiring the language. All students also start on “strings” in third grade as part of the commitment to arts and culture, a particular point of pride for the School. Social-emotional topics (CASEL standards) are woven into the daily lives of the School, and there is a clear commitment to supporting the individual learning journey of every student. The School accommodates mild to moderate learning differences.



The AISV Middle School builds on the strengths of the Elementary School and provides a developmentally appropriate expansion of standards-based studies and opportunities for students. Two additional languages—Spanish and French—are added to the curriculum alongside engaging electives and exciting opportunities in athletics, drama, music, and speech and debate. All students participate in outdoor education trips, Grades 6-12, with their classes to promote grade-level cohesion and healthy relationships at the start of the school year.

The High School program offers the rigorous IB program in which 83% of the students are enrolled and a High School Diploma with IB coursework or Advanced Placement external exams. Currently, the IB score average is an impressive 36 with two students recently scoring 45. The School adds options that afford engaging

opportunities for students, from coursework in the Global Online Academy to leadership opportunities and connections with Vienna. More about the High School in the 2026-2027 High School Academic Profile:

https://heyzine.com/flip-book/AIS_Vienna_High_School_Profile.html#page/1

AIS Vienna offers a wide range of opportunities for students to pursue their interests and develop new skills beyond the classroom. More than half of middle and high school students participate in athletics, while after-school activities engage 352 elementary students, 70 middle school students, and 51 high school students. With around 40 high school clubs meeting primarily during the school day, alongside activities ranging from debate and chess to gardening and community service, students have many ways to explore their passions and connect with others.

AISV prepares students for a future in which technology will shape how they learn, work, and connect with the world. The School's goal is to develop ethical, critical digital citizens who use technology with purpose, evaluate information and AI with discernment, and keep a healthy balance in their digital lives. Two goals in the current strategic plan say this directly: "Discerning Digital Citizens" and "Balanced Digital Learners." AISV is a 1:1 Apple school. Younger students learn with iPads, and every student in Grades 5-12 has a MacBook.

Devices are replaced on a regular four-year cycle, and the most recent refresh was completed for the 2026-27 school year. Guided by the ISTE standards and a school-wide Technology Plan, the technology team works alongside teachers so that technology supports learning in every subject. Digital citizenship is taught throughout the School, and technology electives run from Middle School through High School, including IB Computer Science. The School has also taken a thoughtful, proactive stance on artificial intelligence, adopting guiding principles grounded in the belief that “learning happens between people.” The approach is balanced and purposeful: technology serves learning and never replaces the relationships at the heart of an AISV education.

A true strength for AISV is the alignment of the three divisional principals who are committed to orchestrating a coherent PreK-Grade 12 program. Equally noteworthy, the size of the School allows for a personalized, individualized experience for students—the chance to be known and supported fully. Building self-confidence and student agency are goals from start to finish.

The School's website provides an excellent explanation of the full academic program at Academics: <https://www.ais.at/academics/welcome>

The People

Students: The School currently enrolls 790 students, PreK-Grade 12, and the blend of nationalities and languages is truly remarkable with 77 different countries represented in the student body, PreK-Grade 12. In broad strokes, 40% of students are American citizens (15% connected to the US Embassy), 20% are Austrian, and 40% hail from many other European countries and many countries outside of Europe--Canada, Korea, and Israel, for example. Enrollment yield is strong, most recently 86%. Attrition is low, approximately 12% per year.

The students are endearingly positive about their School, starting with their appreciation for student-teacher relationships. Several students praised “school spirit” and expressed appreciation for the size and “tight knit” community feel. New students said that transferring into AISV was seamless and positive. (An Ambassador program of getting to know new students is a plus.)



The Belonging Team underscores the “psychological safety” afforded the community at AISV where all students have “the ability to show up as you are.” The academic and social languages on campus are firmly established as English.

University placement is both competitive and wide-ranging. In the classes of 2024-2026, 36% of the graduates decided to attend university in the EU, 35% in the US, 19% in the UK, 8% in Canada, and 2% headed off to a variety of universities in Thailand, Singapore, and Japan, among other countries. Ensuring that university opportunities are as strong and competitive as possible is a priority going forward.

Employees: The AISV faculty is impressively experienced, well trained, and committed to AISV. Currently numbering 103 FTE, the School also employs 23 Instructional Assistants and 49 Non-Teaching Staff. A majority of faculty hail from the US, Austria, and Canada, and there is also significant representation from other European countries and farther afield. Retention is high, and the average rate of attrition is below 10% on a yearly basis. The average tenure is ten years for faculty with several who have served for twenty years or more. Professional development at AISV is both purposeful and robust.

The faculty laud the “longevity and institutional memory of the sort that enable excellence” and appreciate the multi-generational commitment to AIS Vienna in the faculty. At the same time, there are recent employees who were definitely “scouting” for the



opportunity to join the AISV community, so at present there is a healthy combination of veteran and newer employees. A Teachers' Association Committee (advisory only) meets regularly with School leadership to discuss issues of note and to promote collaboration.

From one faculty member: “AISV is a warm, close-knit school. The overlap between divisions, close relationships between students and teachers, and balanced approach to academics, arts, and athletics are essential elements of the culture.”

Families: Parents are complimentary and appreciative of the AIS Vienna experience: "AISV provides a warm and welcoming learning environment where both students and families feel valued, respected, and appreciated for their individual strengths, talents, and unique qualities. In a secure and encouraging environment, students feel comfortable stepping outside their comfort zones, challenging themselves, and taking risks without being afraid of making mistakes, an essential part of meaningful learning and personal growth."

"What makes AISV unique is its ability to remain innovative and responsive to current events and changes in the world, incorporating real-world issues and global perspectives into the curriculum."

"What makes AISV unique is its caring and multicultural environment, where every student is valued as an individual and given a genuine sense of belonging. The School provides support across many dimensions, enabling students to develop their individual strengths, discover what they are truly passionate about, and grow with confidence. We value an education that allows every student not only to achieve academically, but also to experience joy, personal fulfillment, and meaningful growth. At the same time, AISV equips students with up-to-date knowledge, skills, and perspectives that prepare them for a rapidly changing world."

Governance

The School operates under a dual-entity governance structure that separates property ownership from daily educational operations. The Austrian Verein was founded in 1960 specifically because U.S. Government Marshall Plan development funds could only be received by an Austrian entity; it continues to hold the School's real estate assets and facilities. The Association (est. 1965) governs and operates the School itself. Additionally, an independent U.S. 501(c)(3) Foundation (est. 2009) facilitates U.S. tax-deductible contributions in support of the School.

The current Executive Board of AISV has nine voting members: eight elected members from the parent body, and one representative from the US Embassy. The AIS Vienna Director sits *ex officio* on the Board, and a faculty member also sits as a liaison to the Executive Board. Board terms are two years with no upper limit on the number of terms. The strategic plan includes a review of the Executive Board structure.





As compared to most international schools, AISV has a distinct institutional standing, legally anchored by two 1991 bilateral treaties between the U.S. and the Republic of Austria: the AIS Treaty, which confers specific administrative privileges, tax exemptions, and regulatory flexibilities under Austrian law, and the Social Security Treaty, which provides tailored social security exemptions for eligible personnel. The School Director works closely with the U.S. Ambassador to Austria and Austrian authorities to uphold these historic treaties and preserve the School's diplomatic protections.

Finances and Facilities

The financial position of AISV continues to develop very positively. Over the past six years, AIS Vienna has doubled its financial reserves. For 2026–27, annual gross tuition and capital assessment revenue exceeds €23M. Of this amount: approximately 3.5% (€800,000) is allocated annually to facility improvements.

Student enrollment is stable. This provides a solid foundation for the School's long-term financial planning which takes into consideration a major facility investment in the near future. The projections continue to show a positive operating budget over the long term. The future annual repayment obligations associated with the significant loan required for the planned facility development will make prudent and disciplined financial management essential.

AIS Vienna owns its entire 11-acre campus, including the school buildings. The School facilities have developed over several stages into the current 45,000 m² campus. Separate Elementary School, Middle School, and High School buildings are connected by shared catering and sports facilities. A 150-year-old historic villa serves as a shared space for the administration and the Language and Arts Departments.

The campus's unique location on a steep hillside adds a distinctive character—and a particular architectural challenge—to the facilities. The buildings follow the natural

topography of the site, resulting in a complex layout spanning 17 different levels, which makes accessibility one of the major challenges of the facility. The planned facility upgrade will have a significant impact on the School's future learning spaces, facilities, and programming, while also representing a major long-term investment in the School's infrastructure and educational environment.

In 2026, the Executive Board approved the first portion of a campus reorganization plan involving the construction of a new Athletics Center to replace the School's temporary sports hall. Construction should begin in 2028, so the next Director will arrive as building gets under way. The School plans to then convert the existing gymnasiums into new learning spaces, an atrium, and an enlarged cafeteria allowing for more efficient scheduling. The project will be financed largely through borrowing, and the School is preparing a major capital campaign alongside it.

Opportunities and Challenges

The next Director at the American International School Vienna will build on the School's strengths and work with all constituencies to take on the opportunities and challenges ahead:

Community and Communication: Be a visible and engaging presence. Communicate often and well. Build

community engagement through telling the inspiring stories of AIS Vienna's successes and achievements, listening thoughtfully, cultivating belonging, and strengthening relational trust across diverse constituencies.

Academic Excellence: Ensure and extend the School's commitment to academic excellence, using the lens of coherence, depth, and innovation for the academic program. Continue to attract and hire an outstanding cadre of teaching faculty to deliver a rigorous and engaging curriculum. Devote equal attention to building and supporting an outstanding senior leadership team. Ensure that educational programming uses emerging technologies thoughtfully in support of learning, with the healthy balance and digital discernment called for in the strategic plan. Strengthen university guidance and relationships, so that graduates have the strongest possible access to universities in the US, Canada, the UK and Europe, and beyond.

Operational Expertise: Exercise exceptional managerial skills for the leadership of a school that negotiates complex legal relationships with the local and national government agencies and implement a range of shared decision-making topics with the Executive Board and parent body. Steward the School's relationships with the U.S. Embassy, the international organizations in Vienna and the Austrian authorities, and preserve the mission that underpins the School's treaty standing.

Financial Acumen: Bring substantial financial acumen to the leadership of AIS Vienna, working collaboratively with the Executive Board and senior leadership to make responsible and disciplined decisions about the financial and fund-raising priorities of the School.

Advancement and Philanthropy: Lead the School's major capital campaign and build an enduring culture of philanthropy among current families, alumni, the corporate community and partners in Vienna. Serve as chief storyteller for the campus plan, working alongside Board volunteers.

Facilities Development: Demonstrate the experience and capacity to manage a large facilities master plan in partnership with a capable team of experts. Lead and

articulate the impact of facilities development while remaining uncompromising in prioritizing the culture of learning and the importance of community engagement in a high-performing international school.

Governance and Collaboration: Lead with strategic intent and disciplined commitment to complete the current strategic plan which is grounded in excellence in teaching and learning, wellness, financial sustainability, facilities improvement, and good governance. Align the collaboration of governance and leadership to ensure that decisions are implemented and strategy translates into impact. Provide continuity and institutional memory alongside a parent-elected Board whose membership changes regularly.



Key Attributes

- A visible community builder who engages effectively and enthusiastically with all constituencies.
- A bold, compelling communicator who leads AIS Vienna with warmth, clarity, and unimpeachable integrity.
- A leader who sees beyond immediate operational demands and translates emerging opportunities as a strategic architect into community supported direction for the School.
- A trusted and collaborative partner to the Executive Board to fulfill the dimensions of fiduciary and strategic responsibilities and support excellence in governance.
- A master educator who can lead excellence in education on all fronts, especially in light of new technologies and new frontiers for students.
- Professional familiarity with the American international school model, with its commitment to the whole child, community and parent partnership, university guidance and advancement.
- An educator who values the diversity of powerful programmatic experiences for students, from service-learning and apprenticeships in Vienna to extended and transformative personalized learning and effective learning support.
- A skilled change manager who understands how organizations and people experience change, building momentum while ensuring the trust, clarity, capacity, and commitment required to sustain it.
- A leader confident in managing a large facilities project, at the same time, prioritizing and leading the academic program in collaboration with school administration and faculty.
- A skilled manager of a complex and multi-faceted organizational structure who demonstrates both sensitivity and backbone.
- A successful leader with the know-how for building and sustaining strong senior leadership teams.
- A leader with fundraising skills, who can build a culture of philanthropy for AIS Vienna and inspire families, alumni, and partners to invest in its future.
- Finally, the next Director of AISV will have the ability to build confidence across stakeholders through a warm and approachable presence, inviting differing perspectives and constructive feedback, and embracing candid dialogue as essential to growth and genuine partnership across all constituencies.





Application Process

AIS Vienna 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 **January 5, 2027**, for a **start date** of **August 1, 2028**. Candidates are encouraged to submit their materials in a timely manner (and well before the actual application deadline). Apply at:

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

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

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