

Chinese American International School Middle School Director

**LOCATION**

San Francisco, CA

VIRTUAL SEMIFINAL ROUND

Week of January 19

START DATE

July 1, 2026

POST DATE

November 22, 2025

ON-SITE FINAL ROUND

Week of February 2

REPORTS TO

Head of School

PRIORITY DEADLINE

December 28, 2025

DECISION ANNOUNCED

February 16, 2026

ANNUAL SALARY RANGE

\$178,500 - \$218,400

While Mandarin proficiency is desirable, CAIS invites both Mandarin-speaking and non-Mandarin-speaking candidates to apply



**12M & Ed Tech
RECRUITING**

Summary

Founded in 1981 as the first Mandarin immersion school in the United States, the Chinese American International School (CAIS) educates 571 students age two through 8th grade. Over the last four decades, CAIS has been recognized globally as a leader in bilingual education and an innovator for its commitment to immersive, cultural education through the study of language. CAIS is “a safe place to tinker and try,” with deep support for educators who lead with curiosity and vision and a culture that values creativity, risk-taking, and collaboration. Within the middle school, students in grades 6–8 study an intellectually challenging, competency-based curriculum that includes math, science, design technology, English language arts, social studies, Chinese language arts and social studies, music, studio art, and physical education.

With the upcoming retirement of the current middle school director, who has been at CAIS since 2014, the school now looks forward to welcoming its next middle school director to lead an outstanding academic program and foster community connection across the school’s new, unified campus.

The director will oversee the ongoing implementation of competency-based learning in the middle school program, and promote Mandarin immersion excellence that distinguishes CAIS among its peers in an increasingly competitive market. This is an exciting opportunity for a mission-driven academic leader to join a visionary community and help define what it means to be a CAIS graduate in a global, multilingual world. The next middle school director will also join CAIS two years after the school relocated to a single, spectacular, unified campus, following a period of operations on three separate campuses. Reporting to the head of school, the middle school director will directly supervise middle school faculty and learning specialists, and the athletic director. CAIS looks forward to welcoming the incoming director to begin July 1, 2026.

CAIS MISSION

At CAIS, we are committed to inspiring and empowering learners to:

Embrace Chinese

Become our best selves

Contribute to a better world



Core Values



Curiosity

ASK MORE

We wonder about our world and pioneer new possibilities



Inclusion

INVITE IN

We champion belongingness and care for others within our community and beyond



Kindness

BUILD UP

We use kind words and actions to support each other and ourselves



Perseverance

KEEP TRYING

We push ourselves and stick with it when things get tough



Courage

BE BRAVE

We take risks and responsibility, even when it is hard



History



1981

CAIS opens in the basement of a University of California Extension Building. Four of ten enrolled students show up for class. Undeterred, founder Carol Ruth Silver, and Principal Shirley Lee forge ahead.

1987

CAIS moves to a new campus on the Presidio, and the U.S. Department of Education designates the school as the “national prototype for Chinese language education in elementary schools.”

1997

CAIS moves into its main campus at 150 Oak Street, with just 200 students including 28 middle school students.

1992

Principal Shirley Lee orchestrates the first exchange trip with Shanghai No. 3 Girls' School.



2014

The CAIS middle school population grows to 120 students, prompting the search for a larger nearby space. This leads to the middle school moving to the 888 Campus, at the intersection of Gough and Turk Streets.

2021

CAIS purchases the 5.4 acre former campus of Mercy High School on 19th Avenue. The CAIS community tours the new campus at Open House in December 2021.

2023

CAIS educates nearly 500 children on three campuses and utilizes the 19th Avenue Campus for athletics, arts events, and community gatherings.

2025

CAIS educates more than 550 children at our best-in-class 5.4-acre campus on 19th Avenue, with enviable arts, athletics, and teaching and learning facilities, along with abundant outdoor space.



Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

CAIS envisions a school community rooted in kindness, where all members experience a sense of belonging. As a dual language immersion school, CAIS has distinctive opportunities to build upon its community's existing mix of languages, cultures, ideas, and identities to foster an intellectually challenging and socially meaningful education. The formidable and complex work of building diversity, equity, and inclusion is vital for realizing the school's potential.

When focusing its energy and resources to further this mission, CAIS must look at factors such as differences in how particular group identities thrive at CAIS and imbalances of privilege and opportunity both within and beyond the school.

EMBRACE CHINESE

Immersion in a new language and culture requires humility, curiosity, empathy, connection, and a true appreciation of difference. Fully embracing Chinese, in fact even defining "Chinese," is nuanced and multidimensional. The attitudes and aptitudes that are cultivated through Chinese immersion extend far beyond language and prepare students to engage respectfully with a diverse world.

BECOME YOUR BEST SELF

Research supports the school's understanding that diversity strengthens the learning process; when ideas and assumptions are challenged by those with different perspectives, it pushes the school to expand its thinking and approach problems in new ways. Excellence comes with, not at the expense of, diversity.

CONTRIBUTE TO A BETTER WORLD

CAIS is committed to supporting children in understanding their world and becoming advocates for the change they wish to see in it. This requires compassion, tenacity, and a deep understanding of social justice.

Five Commitments to DEI

CAIS is committed to improvement through ongoing, intentional focus in the five areas below.

LEARNING AND TEACHING

CAIS fosters a professional learning community committed to the work of diversity, equity, and inclusion. CAIS integrates relevant content and skills into the curriculum and includes visible reflection of many identities in the learning environment.

HOME/SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

CAIS seeks opportunities for family participation and education, recognizing that true engagement extends beyond the classroom and that family partnership is essential to success.

COMMUNITY DIVERSITY

CAIS dedicates energy and resources to attracting and retaining a measurably diverse community of families, faculty, and staff.

POLICIES AND PRACTICES

CAIS crafts and communicates guidelines that clearly define and reinforce the school's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

MEASURING PROGRESS

CAIS is committed to developing methods and accountability measures to assess progress in promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion at the school.



Key Stats

FOUNDED

1981

GRADES

Preschool (2-year-old)
through **8th Grade**

CAMPUS

5.4 acres at **3250 19th Avenue**
including Arts Center, Ang
Athletics Center, and Teaching
and Learning Center



SCHOOL SIZE 2025-2026

TEACHERS

83

STAFF

54

TOTAL SCHOOL

571

EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

Preschool – Kindergarten

176

LOWER SCHOOL

1st-5th grade

266

MIDDLE SCHOOL

6th-8th grade

129

ACCREDITATION

Chinese American International School is fully accredited by the **Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC)** and **California Association of Independent Schools (CAIS)**

www.cais.org

MEMBERSHIPS

- California Association of Independent Schools
- California Teacher Development Collaborative
- Independent Schools of the San Francisco Bay Area
- National Association of Independent Schools
- People of Color in Independent Schools
- Western Association of Schools and Colleges



Reimagining Immersion

In our Chinese language classrooms, students learn simplified Chinese through an immersive approach designed to build both solid foundations and real-world confidence. We follow proficiency guidelines set by the American Council on Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL). As part of the Strategic Vision 2020–2025, we have placed increasing importance on Mandarin engagement, not just proficiency.

LONG TERM GOAL

CAIS students engage with confidence and purpose in both classroom inquiry and real-life situations through meaningful applications of Mandarin. Students appreciate and are aware of their own developing bilingualism and their ability to navigate varied cultural contexts. Through immersion they develop competencies that extend far beyond language learning.

KEY STRATEGY

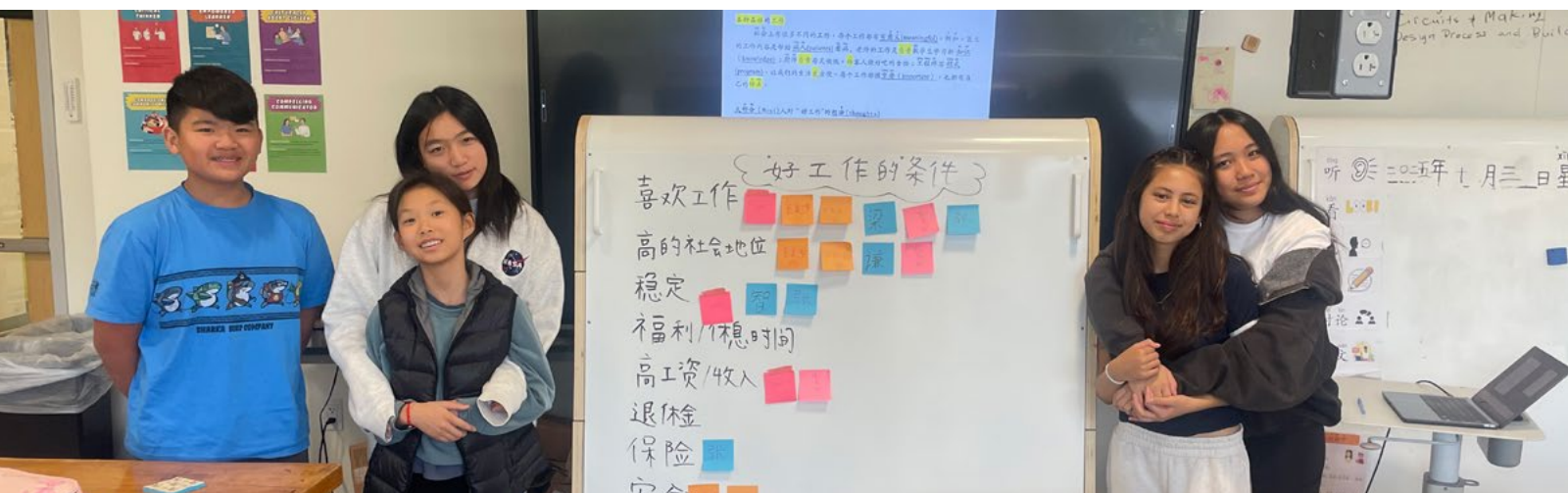
We will leverage time, staffing, and impactful pedagogy to enhance students' engagement, enjoyment, enthusiasm, and language proficiency as they learn a variety of skills and disciplines in Mandarin.

KEY STRATEGY

We will focus on innovative approaches to immersion aimed at intentionally cultivating cognitive, character, and cultural competencies—this is the “CAIS Immersion Bonus.”

RATIONALE

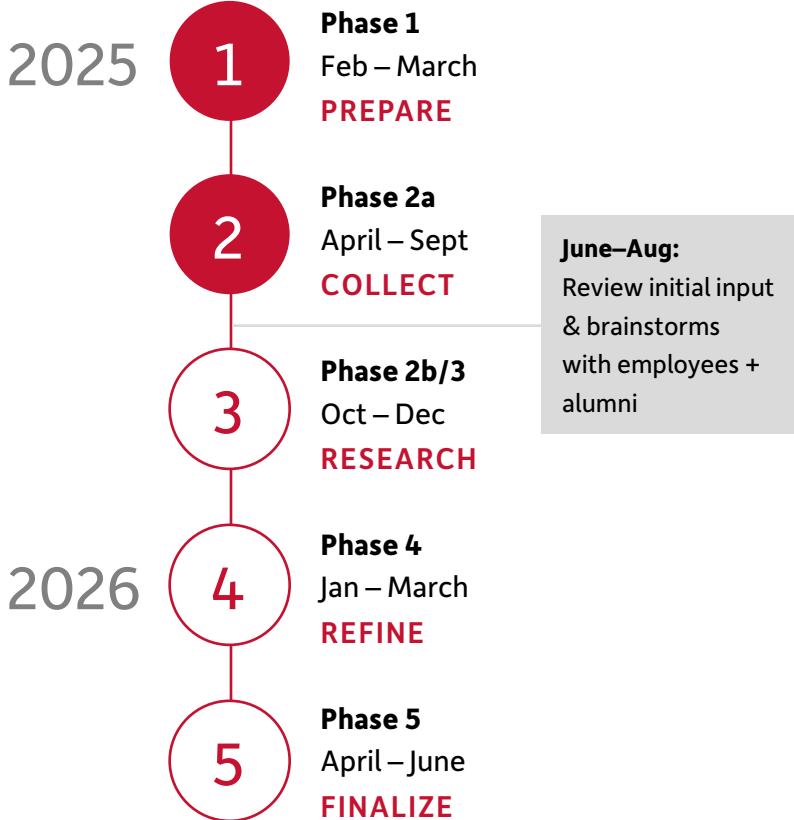
In order for students to engage in interesting and meaningful work in another language, they must develop requisite levels of proficiency and experience feelings of success. Likewise, in order for them to sustain their motivation and achieve high levels of proficiency, the work they do must be joyful and relevant to them in authentic, experiential contexts. Providing students a rich immersion environment with direct and comprehensible language input enables their Chinese proficiency to continually grow. Beyond language achievement, immersion in Chinese language and culture should be a vehicle to develop students' problem solving and meaning-making skills as well as foster perseverance, humility, curiosity, empathy, connection to others, and a true appreciation of difference.



Strategic Vision 2026 Planning

Having successfully completed our [Strategic Vision 2020-2025](#), work is well underway on the planning process for the future. CAIS has engaged a firm to create the inclusive and comprehensive process for this vision planning cycle. This process will balance the opportunities of our new campus with the cultural, economic, and demographic realities of today.

CAIS Strategic Planning Process & Progress



The CAIS community is excited to leverage this next strategic vision planning process to help the school fully activate and utilize its new campus, which offers many new opportunities for community development and interconnected programming.



CAIS Campus

Our best-in-class 5.4 acre campus features a total of 120,000 sq. ft. of indoor facilities, along with an abundance of outdoor spaces for learning and play. It is a testament to the ambitious and expansive decades-long dreams of our families and faculty, as well as an exemplar of the incredible power of the CAIS community's dedication and philanthropy.



TEACHING AND LEARNING CENTER

Our newly renovated Teaching and Learning Center includes 78,000 sq. ft. of academic program space and significantly expands classroom space from our previous campuses in Hayes Valley. Its four floors gather all our students, faculty, and staff together in one building, allowing fantastic cross-grade collaborations and unprecedented opportunities to bring our tight-knit community even closer together.



HONG YEN CHANG LEARNING CENTER

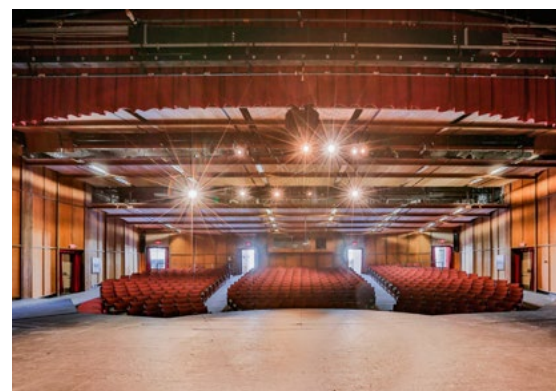
The heart of the Middle School floor is the Hong Yen Chang Learning Center, a hub that houses the middle school's print, media and digital collections and supports library research, presentations, class gatherings and breakout groups for project work.

This vibrant space also serves as one of several community gathering spots around campus, hosting events ranging from our monthly Family School Alliance meetings to information sessions for our Strategic Vision, Global Programs, and more!



ANG ATHLETICS CENTER

The Ang Athletics Center houses multipurpose athletic facilities including full-size gymnasium/indoor basketball court, and locker rooms along with a U8 soccer pitch. During the school day, it provides flexible space for PE classes across the grades. After school, this spectacular space not only provides practice and game facilities for our Firedragons volleyball, basketball and futsal teams, it is also used around the calendar by our after school programs, Summer Camp, and nonprofit community organizations.



ARTS CENTER

The Arts Center features a 455-seat theater, the spacious Chan-Okelola Performing Arts Studio, and two arts studios with two kilns.



Community Profiles



WEI QIAN

Lower School
Director

Wei joined CAIS from the BASIS Independent School in Fremont, California, where she served as Early Years Dean of Students. There she continued to build on her strength from Yuming Charter School in Oakland, developing and implementing multi-tiered academic and behavioral support systems for all students. Wei holds a bachelor of arts degree in Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language from Shanghai University and a master's of education in Foreign Language Curriculum and Teaching from DePaul University.

Excited to begin at CAIS this coming school year, she shares, "It is an honor to join this extraordinary school community with such persevering students, an extremely dedicated staff, and a supportive school community! I am committed to uniting my experience, my openness to learn, and my student-centered approach to support every student at CAIS and to build strong relationships with students, staff, and parents. Together we will empower our Firedragons to shape their future and the future of our community and our nation!"



SEAN MOSCONI

Sixth Grade English,
Social Studies Teacher,
and High School
Placement Counselor

Mr. Mosconi has always had a passion for working with and educating children, beginning with summer camps and afterschool programs as a teenager. After six years working as a teaching assistant in Kindergarten, third, and fourth grades, he returned to school to earn his California Multiple Subject Teaching Credential at Notre Dame de Namur University. Mr. Mosconi has been a lead teacher at CAIS since 2013 and has coached Boys JV Basketball and Boys JV Futsal. He attended the Reading Institute at Columbia Teachers College in 2015 and brings enthusiasm for teaching social studies and critical thinking. His students note that he has a calming, even-keeled presence in the classroom and he brings enthusiasm for teaching English and social studies content. Mr. Mosconi serves as High School Placement Counselor, building on his deep knowledge of our middle schoolers and the array of best fit secondary education options around the Bay and beyond.



JULIE FARRELL

Global Learning
Coordinator

Ms. Julie Farrell fell in love with China on her first trip as a high school student and enrolled in Mandarin classes immediately upon return. Her passion for Chinese language continued well into college and beyond, amplified by language intensives with Middlebury College and the US Department of State. Ms. Farrell holds a B.A. in East Asian Studies from New York University and an M.Sc. in Agroecology from the Norwegian University of Life Sciences. She spent several years working with NGOs across southwest China, supporting farmers in rebuilding robust sustainable food systems. She also served young learners as an experiential educator, developing school garden curriculums in Chinese public schools and designing courses in China and Taiwan for American high school, middle school, and college students. Ms. Farrell oversees all aspects of CAIS's curriculum-aligned Global Programs, which send 140 students in grades 5, 7, and 8 to Taiwan and China for extended stays.



Middle School

Based on a foundation of best practices in education, the newest brain research, and various national standards, the middle school curriculum is a dynamic, growing and changing force. Mastery of essential concepts and skills combined with support of individual strengths helps students become dedicated and reflective learners.

A hands-on, minds-on, interdisciplinary curriculum guides students to apply concepts to the issues in their community and world as well as in their own lives.



SIXTH GRADE

At this time in their lives, students undergo cognitive, social and emotional and physical transitions. They learn and practice the habits of mind essential to succeeding in middle school and outside of the classroom. Students are invited to learn responsibility and organization, master specific study skills and make healthy choices. The daily schedule, classroom environment and behavioral expectations are geared to the needs of early adolescents.

Highlights of the sixth grade include

- Interdisciplinary, dual language approach to learning.
- Community building-focused three-day outdoor education experience that includes ropes course and ocean ecology.
- Daily advisory sessions focusing on transition to middle school, building respect, community and self-esteem.
- Integrated, project-based approach across the curriculum.
- Writing and Reading Workshop approach with an emphasis on writing and reading strategies, building a writing and reading life, volume of writing and reading, and student choice.
- After school sports and athletic teams.
- Integrated science and math curriculum surveys the scientific method, measurement, data use and analysis, geometry, density, and astronomy and simple machines.
- Offering an online place every day for students to learn if there are factors that prevent a child from being able to attend school on campus on a given day.
- Study of ancient civilizations around the world.
- 1:1 Chromebook program.
- Design Technology program introduces students to a variety of digital and analog technologies, along with the Design Thinking framework.
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion skills integrated across the curriculum.



SEVENTH GRADE

Students journey from concrete thinking to more abstract, conceptual understanding. An interdisciplinary approach guides students through problem solving and critical thinking processes to find meaningful relationships between what they learn and their everyday lives.

Highlights of the seventh grade include

- Interdisciplinary, dual language approach to learning.
- Community oriented one-day outdoor education experience involving rock climbing, hiking and exploring caves, with an additional focus on astronomy.
- Daily advisory sessions on identity development and building community.
- Reading and Writing Workshop approach with an emphasis on reading and writing strategies, deep study of a variety of genres, book clubs, and voracious independent reading.
- Study of Middle Ages cultures around the world.
- Scientific study of bacteria and viruses.
- Three-week learning experience in Guilin, China.
- 1:1 Chromebook program.
- Design Technology program that focuses on application of tools and skills to develop student inventions.
- A focus on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion skills across the curriculum.

EIGHTH GRADE

Students engage in an increasingly collaborative and democratic learning environment emphasizing choice, independence and intellectual self-reflection. They enjoy opportunities for self-directed inquiry based on their emerging status as bilingual, multicultural individuals.

Highlights of the eighth grade include

- Interdisciplinary, dual language approach to learning.
- Daily advisory sessions based on developing leadership and skills for balancing a healthy lifestyle and the demands of an interconnected world.
- Community oriented one-day outdoor education experience involving activities such as rock climbing, hiking, exploring caves and astronomy.
- Integrated units across subjects, including Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion skills.
- Service learning within San Francisco's Chinese community.
- Reading and Writing Workshop approach with an emphasis on student agency, reading and writing strategies, deep study of a variety of genres, book clubs, and voracious independent reading.
- Study of US Government and History culminating in a social justice capstone project
- Opportunity to participate in a two-week service learning trip to Sichuan, China.
- 1:1 Chromebook program
- Design Technology program that offers opportunities for longer student projects and community showcases.

COMPETENCY-BASED LEARNING

The middle school follows a Competency-Based Learning (CBL) approach. We invite you to [watch this presentation](#) to learn more about how CBL shapes students' experience.

CURRICULUM LEADERSHIP

CAIS has two full-time curriculum and instruction directors—one for English and one for Mandarin—who support the faculty and division directors. Both will be collaborative partners to the incoming middle school director.



Mandarin World Language Pathway



No Mandarin (Yet)? No Problem!

We offer a limited number of openings for qualified rising Middle School students for the 2026-2027 school year through our Mandarin World Language Pathway. Our Middle School's 35% immersion model means that a significant portion of our highly regarded 6th-8th program is conducted in English and represents a special window for students to participate in the CAIS mission to Embrace Chinese through a new, highly individualized world language pathway.

The Mandarin World Language Pathway program is a much more robust language instruction than students would get in a monolingual school setting. Pathway students enjoy:

- inclusion in everything from Advisory, English, Math, and Science to the Global Learning Program
- individualized and small-group Mandarin instruction (for which we have a dedicated teacher)
- 75-minute periods daily by outstanding instructors that reflect CAIS's mission, vision, and Core Values

Learning objectives depend on the Mandarin proficiency levels of the students entering the program and would also be differentiated. We set graduation goals and assess progress with ACTFL assessments.



Global Programs

One of the hallmark features of the CAIS curriculum is a robust series of Global Programs in Taiwan and mainland China. Far more than simple tourist trips, these programs offer remarkable immersion experiential learning opportunities, and enable students to engage with Chinese society, cultures, and communities in profound and meaningful ways.

This year students in 5th grade traveled to Taiwan and 7th and 8th graders traveled to Guilin, China for experiences that include homestays along with urban and outdoor learning opportunities. Through these programs, which have been developed specifically by and for CAIS, students apply their language proficiency to function in authentic contexts, develop cross-cultural understanding through active engagement with new people and environments, and build confidence, independence, and responsibility.



We invite you to [watch this fundraising video](#) to hear directly from students, alumni, and teachers in this fundraising video as they share how our Global Programs have shaped their learning and growth.



Athletics & Arts



Athletics

After school athletics offer students many opportunities to have fun, improve fitness, learn skills and teamwork and enrich friendships. Team sports are an integral part of the school experience, mentally, physically and socially. After school athletics is offered to third through eighth grade students and all participants are placed on a team regardless of previous experience or ability. Minimum requirements for participation are a great attitude, a willingness to work hard and the desire to improve one's performance for the good of the team. The Athletic Department believes the joy of participating in athletics occurs from the moment a student puts on his or her uniform to the last high five, and is not based entirely on the final score.

LEAGUE

CAIS competes in the SFAL league—comprised of independent schools around San Francisco—in cross country, volleyball, basketball and futsal. In recent years, CAIS has earned championship status in all the after school athletics it has participated in from cross country to volleyball, basketball, and futsal.



MIDDLE SCHOOL VISUAL ART

The Middle School Visual Art program centers around the student as a developing artist. Students are encouraged to explore traditional and contemporary art making techniques in two and three-dimensional media. With an emphasis on studio production, various contemporary art making methods are introduced to facilitate personal expression. Students are challenged and supported to think critically, to problem solve, and communicate effectively.



Background & Opportunity



Founded in 1981 as the first Mandarin immersion school in the United States, the Chinese American International School (CAIS) now educates 571 students in San Francisco from age two through eighth grade. Over the last four decades, CAIS has been recognized globally as a leader in bilingual education and an innovator for its commitment to immersive, cultural education through the study of language. CAIS is “a safe place to tinker and try,” with deep support for educators who lead with curiosity and vision and a culture that values creativity, risk-taking, and collaboration.

Recent years have brought exciting momentum and growth to the school’s campus and programs, and the next middle school director will be stepping into a period of vision and forward-looking leadership. The demand for Mandarin immersion programs in the Bay Area is high, and new independent and charter school programs make the market increasingly competitive. However, CAIS’s enrollment is steadily growing, in large part due to the excellent reputation of the middle school program, which offers an outstanding dual-language academic program to its 129 students in grades 6-8.

Formerly spread across three separate campuses, the CAIS Early Childhood Center, Lower School, and Middle School now live and learn on a single 5.4-acre campus with 120,000 square feet of program space, including separate buildings for teaching and learning, visual and performing arts, and athletics. While last year’s move into the new space brought some temporary transitional challenges, the school community has eagerly settled into the campus and the multitude of opportunities it provides for student learning.

As CAIS increasingly takes advantage of the opportunities offered by the new campus, the middle school director will serve as a partner in deepening connections between the middle school and the lower school, while balancing a distinctive middle school culture with cross-divisional integration. In an example of this kind of community-building, CAIS middle schoolers have begun

to serve as carpool “buddies” to the lower school students—fostering a sense of leadership and community on a day-to-day basis.

Likewise, now that the 5th grade shares the middle school building, the middle school director might consider ways for 5th grade to serve as a bridge program to the middle school, perhaps offering overlapping specialist classes (specials) or working with the lower school director to create intentional opportunities to expose 5th graders to changing classes. The lower school director will be an enthusiastic and eager partner in this work, and looks forward to continuing the collaboration efforts that have already begun in the school’s second year on its new campus.

The middle school director will also lead the division in developing new specials and expanding programs including theater and performing arts and athletics that utilize the school’s new spaces, including the arts building and design lab. Initial work on this front has necessitated some creative thinking around how to accommodate middle school student schedules, especially since elective spaces are shared with the whole community. The next director will have the chance to build on the current scheduling model, and collaborate with the early childhood and lower divisions to build sustainable and flexible schedules that maximize the use of all campus spaces for all students.

In addition to the space afforded by a larger campus, middle school enrollment at CAIS has been bolstered in recent years by the addition of the World Language Pathway (WLP) program, which has allowed students with little or no Mandarin to enter the middle school program and receive separate, intensive language instruction. While this program has a relatively small cohort of students, the middle school director will support the Chinese program director and Mandarin faculty in building this program, which is a compelling value-add for CAIS within a competitive market. As enrollment continues to grow, the middle school director will need to work closely with the director of admissions and enrollment to plan for appropriate scheduling, staffing,



and space needs for the division, which will likely include the expansion of the middle school to three sections per grade by fall of 2028. The middle school director will also serve as a partner to the high school placement counselor to assist in guiding 8th grade students and families through the high school placement and admissions process.

Last year, CAIS implemented a competency-based learning (CBL) system for reporting on student learning. Now in its second year of implementation, middle school faculty continue to deepen their understanding and practice with CBL. Students and families have become increasingly familiar and comfortable with CBL, especially since the impact on high school placement has been largely positive. The middle school director will ensure that fidelity to CBL is sustained while expanding understanding and buy-in among parents and new faculty, so previous expertise in leading similar curricular or assessment rollouts would be welcomed by the community.

The next middle school director will also have the opportunity to establish clear guidelines and accountability for classroom management and curriculum implementation expectations. The middle school director will work in tandem with both the English and Mandarin program directors, and early childhood and lower school directors, to ensure that the entire academic program at CAIS is scoped and sequenced to continue to provide top quality dual-language instruction, and that curriculum rollouts are implemented effectively with sufficient faculty support and training.

The middle school director will directly supervise middle school faculty, learning specialists, and the athletic director. The middle

school faculty are a close-knit and high-functioning team with a deep sense of ownership for their programs. The previous middle school director will be retiring in June after serving the community since 2014, and his legacy will include fostering a culture of approachability and empathetic leadership. Middle school faculty have enjoyed the support, trust, and warmth from the outgoing middle school director, and they look forward to someone who leads with comparable warmth and approachability, and who will serve as an advocate for division-specific needs.

The middle school director serves as a member of the educational leadership team (ELT) and reports directly to the head of school. Recently, Jeff Bissell, Head of School, announced his upcoming departure from CAIS, which will bring to a close a highly successful, long tenure that began in 2010. Under his leadership, the school has laid a solid foundation for not just stability and national reputation but also growth and innovation. The board is in the early stages of beginning its search for a new head, and the next middle school director will have the opportunity to be on the ground when that transition occurs.

This is an exciting opportunity to lead a robust and well-established middle school division, while engaging faculty voice and initiative. While Mandarin language proficiency is not required for the position, ideal candidates will embrace CAIS's multilingual and multicultural ethos and value Chinese language and culture as central to the school's mission and identity. The next middle school director will join a talented leadership team during a period of growth and transformation and will help define what it means to be a CAIS graduate in a global, multilingual world. CAIS looks forward to welcoming its next middle school director to begin July 1, 2026.

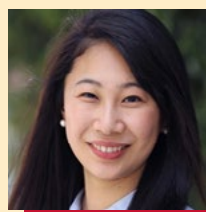
Community Interviews



**JEFFREY
BISSELL**

Head of School

We invite you to [watch our interview](#) with Jeff, in which he shares insights about the CAIS community and highlights the middle school director's vital role in supporting the middle school's academic program and school life.



WEI QIAN

Lower School
Director

We invite you to [watch our interview](#) with Wei, in which she discusses the collaborative partnership between the lower and middle school at CAIS, and her hopes for the next middle school director.



Duties

DIVISIONAL LEADERSHIP

- Serve as the intellectual leader of the middle school, overseeing all programmatic and academic operations for the division that provides a thoughtful and robust Mandarin immersion program.
- Nurture and maintain positive and collaborative faculty morale, encouraging professional development and growth opportunities aligned with the school's academic vision.
- Supervise and evaluate middle school faculty in the performance of their duties through classroom observation, training, and coaching.
- Partner with the high school placement counselor to support students and families through the high school application and admissions process.
- Establish and monitor shared expectations for student behavior and classroom management.

CURRICULUM, PEDAGOGY, & ENGAGEMENT

- Collaborate with teachers and administrators to promote continuity and curricular alignment of the academic program, including the fidelity and continued implementation of competency-based learning.
- Develop and expand specials programs in the arts and support the growth of athletics opportunities through partnership with the athletic director, to provide depth for student learning.
- Support the development and implementation of curriculum in partnership with the directors of English and Mandarin curriculum, which includes the World Languages Pathway for non-native Mandarin speakers.
- Partner with the admissions and enrollment department and other administrative leaders to anticipate and plan for scheduling and logistical needs as the middle school program expands.

SCHOOL CULTURE & COMMUNITY

- Partner with division directors to cultivate cross-divisional community-building initiatives that support community use of shared spaces and a shared sense of vision and identity.
- Foster inclusivity and belonging among the community of middle school faculty and the student body grounded in collaboration, kindness, and mutual respect for individual differences.
- Serve as a partner to parents, articulating the school's vision and programmatic changes warmly and proactively.
- Report directly to the head of school and perform other duties as assigned.



Qualifications & Qualities



QUALIFICATIONS

- Bachelor's degree required; graduate degree preferred
- 5+ years of experience in an educational institution, preferably as a classroom teacher and/or administrator
- Demonstrated understanding of current education pedagogy including competency-based learning or other non-traditional methods for assessing learning
- Familiarity with high school outplacement counseling and admissions processes
- Demonstrated success supporting teachers through a collaborative, trust-based leadership model that values faculty autonomy and professional expertise
- Experience guiding parents and guardians on sensitive student-related matters
- Successful track record leading academic initiatives and programs
- Proficiency in Mandarin is welcome, but not required

LEADERSHIP QUALITIES

- A trusted partner to faculty, respecting their expertise, advocating for their needs, and fostering an environment of professional safety and collaboration
- Commitment to cross-divisional collaboration, including supporting global programs and coordination with Chinese language and cultural studies
- A warm and empathetic approach to interacting with all school constituents including students, parents, faculty, staff and board members
- A personal and professional commitment to fostering diversity and equity, and the interest and skill set to partner with leadership around this work
- Exceptional written and oral communication skills
- Excellent organizational and presentation skills
- A genuine excitement for promoting and advancing Mandarin culture, language, education, and immersion
- An eagerness to participate in the life of the school, which may include attending occasional schoolwide special events in the evenings and/or weekends



How to Apply

12M & Ed Tech Recruiting is acting on behalf of Chinese American International School to identify exceptional academic leaders to fill this extraordinary opportunity. Direct inquiries to:

jobs@12MRecruiting.com



Applications submitted by **December 28, 2025** will receive priority review.

All applications must be submitted online:

www.12MRecruiting.com/jobs/CAIS/MSDirector

AN APPLICATION REQUIRES SUBMITTING FOUR PDFS:

1. Cover letter introducing yourself to the Chinese American International School search committee
2. CV or resume
3. A reference list of four or more individuals who could speak on your behalf if you were to progress further in this search (include each person's name, current organization, title, phone number, email, and past connection to you; we will not contact anyone on your reference list without obtaining your permission first)
4. A statement on your philosophy of and approach to middle school curriculum, pedagogy, and academic leadership

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