Hong Kong International School

Tai Tam/Repulse Bay, Hong Kong
Middle School Principal
Start Date: August 2019
www.hkis.edu.hk

Carney Sandoe & Associates
The Hong Kong International School (HKIS) seeks an experienced and engaging new leader for its Middle School. Located in one of Asia’s most vibrant and cosmopolitan cities, Hong Kong International School has two idyllic campuses on the quieter south side of Hong Kong Island. HKIS is a private, coeducational day school offering a challenging American-style curriculum with both international and multi-cultural elements. HKIS is proud of its strong sense of community and its students’ excellent achievements.

Reporting to the Associate Head of School, the Middle School Principal (MSP) will provide overall leadership for the Middle School, ensuring the highest quality of education is delivered and the HKIS Mission and Student Learning Results are achieved. The Mission and Student Learning Results embody and recognize the school’s Christian grounding, the cultural and religious diversity of the student body, as well as a focus on whole child development.

The ideal candidate in this role will be someone who leads and enables faculty and staff to achieve the school’s vision of successfully providing high-quality education for students in Grades 6-8. To realize the vision, the MSP works collaboratively with faculty and parents to meet student needs, monitor progress toward school goals, and foster a sense of community.

The next Middle School Principal of HKIS will be expected to recruit and develop outstanding faculty in the Middle School and ensure they are enabled to perform effectively; to coordinate and support curriculum development and monitor the achievement of curriculum goals; to review, update, and revise programs and schedules to ensure they are in the best interest of students, and to foster a strong sense of community within the Middle School and the HKIS community at large, connecting
and engaging meaningfully with parents. The MSP must also possess sound financial management and budgeting skills; be willing to contribute to, support, and advocate for schoolwide decisions; and readily engage with others to support change in a positive manner.

**SCHOOL HISTORY**

Hong Kong International School was founded in 1966 through a partnership between the American community and the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS). After a successful first year serving 120 students on a provisional campus in Chung Hum Kok, HKIS opened the doors of its new campus in Repulse Bay, designed to serve 630 students from around the world. Over the next couple of decades, HKIS continued to grow and expand its existing campus and later, in 1988, opened a second campus in Tai Tam to serve their high school students. Ten years later, HKIS adopted a new mission and six Student Learning Results (SLRs) that continue to be the cornerstones of HKIS’ culture, curricula, and community.

HKIS celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2016 with a series of events and activities. Currently, HKIS alumni groups are actively operating in Vancouver, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Toronto, London, and Singapore.
THE SCHOOL

In the years since its founding, HKIS has emerged as one of the top international schools in the world. A school of choice in Hong Kong, HKIS has waiting lists at virtually every level and is accredited by the United States-based Western Association of Schools and Colleges.

Everything at HKIS is grounded in its Mission and Student Learning Results of academic excellence, spirituality, character development, self-motivated learning, contributing to society, and Chinese culture. A sense of spirituality and faith adds context to everyday living and learning at the school which is dynamic, global, and service-oriented; HKIS is a Christian school with a fundamental acceptance of others.

HKIS’ Strategic Plan articulates the school’s vision to be a leading place of learning and to inspire a socially engaged community of collaborative, creative, and resilient learners dedicated to realizing their full potential. They are well on their way to ensuring their students are:

• Imaginative thinkers, exploring passions and challenges using novel and innovative strategies;
• Demonstrating courage and confidence in response to challenges and showing the ability to adapt and thrive; and
• Using a variety of methods within diverse environments to communicate and respectfully work together to support individual learning and contribute to the learning of others.
The school places its students at the heart of everything it does, holding robust and passionate student learning as its highest priority. HKIS ensures that students learn what the community values, beginning with the six Student Learning Results, and aligns the educational program and all of its resources in support of what and how it wants students to learn. Importantly:

• The school’s excellent faculty and staff—the key to effective student learning—are strongly supported by professional development and a professional learning community.
• Their strategic Master Facilities Plan ensures building decisions are driven by clearly identified educational priorities and ensures up-to-date facilities.
• The organization’s primary function is to support student learning and colleagues, with an emphasis on being one school aligned across all grade levels.

**MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM**

The Middle School program at HKIS delivers challenging academics in a warm and nurturing environment to students in Grades 6-8. Class sizes range from 18 to 21 students. Teachers apply principles of Understanding by Design (UbD) and foster hands-on, practical learning experiences to ensure that students build deep and enduring understandings in their core curricular studies in math, social studies, science, and language arts. A rotating six-day schedule allows time for students to also learn Mandarin or another modern language (French or Spanish), and to take electives in drama, robotics, culinary arts, and other specialist subjects. These enable Middle School students to expand their comfort zones as they engage in exciting, unique, and practical learning opportunities in service learning, performing arts, and athletics. Each year, students also pursue personal interests and passions through a Student-Motivated Learning project. Rounding out the curriculum are student-centered programs such as the
Pastoral Care Group and House System, which enable faculty to connect with students holistically and in areas outside the classroom while nurturing social emotional growth and building community.

Another defining feature of the Middle School program is PEAK—Programs of Extended Activities for Kids. Each year—in alignment with the SLRs of Chinese Culture, Character Development, and Contributing to Society—students spend one week engaging in unique and exciting experiential learning activities outside of campus. Sixth graders spend their week exploring Beijing, where they learn Chinese culture and history, try authentic Chinese foods, and learn to be independent travelers. In seventh grade, students choose from five different adventure-based trips in Hong Kong focused on character development, where they face fun new challenges such as kayaking, rock climbing, trekking, zip-lining, sailing, and camping. In eighth grade, students turn their energies outward in a service-oriented adventure in either Cambodia, China, Hong Kong, or Taiwan. PEAK not only enriches the classroom curriculum but also builds students’ global and cultural awareness and builds interpersonal and leadership skills.

The goal of the Middle School is to provide every student with the opportunity for personal success through exploration and self-reflection.

**Chinese Studies**

The Chinese Studies program at HKIS is impressive, offering 14 years of Chinese language and cultural learning opportunities across the school. Designed as a second language learning program, the Chinese Studies program fully embraces the individual needs of a diverse range of students and their linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Students are assigned to one of two learning streams—Near
Native (MNN) or Mandarin as a Second Language (MSL)—based upon a variety of factors including a student’s and family’s desired learning outcome and interest level, level of language exposure at home, student’s demonstrated motivation to learn the language, and the student’s own abilities. Each track follows a distinct curriculum with separate assessments, standards, and benchmarks to achieve oral fluency and literacy.

As students progress through the grade levels at HKIS, they gain a comprehensive understanding of China—its language, history, geography, philosophy, and customs through classroom study, school exchange programs with Mandarin-speaking students, and visits to places of interest in China.

**CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Athletics represent one facet of a robust co-curricular program at HKIS. All teams compete in local sports leagues and tournaments through the Hong Kong School Sports Federation (HKSSF) and the International Schools Sports Federation of Hong Kong (ISSFHK). Students in the Middle School have the opportunity to participate in a range of interscholastic athletics over the school’s four seasons, including: basketball, cross country, track and field, rugby, tennis, hockey, sailing, badminton, soccer, volleyball, and fitness (sports conditioning). In addition, eighth graders have the opportunity to play on the High School’s golf, baseball, or softball teams depending upon their age.

The Middle School also offers students ample opportunity to develop new passions and make new friends in a variety of after-school clubs. Ranging from the academic, artistic, and technical to the kinesthetic and community-oriented, these activities include Model UN, Speech Club, G8 Problem-Solving, Yearbook, Jazz Band, Photography Club, Ultimate Frisbee, and Adventure Club, among others.
Treated as an essential component of the overall educational experience at HKIS, all sports and activities are in alignment with the school’s Mission and Student Learning Results and designed to provide opportunities for students to explore and pursue areas of interest in diverse environments, advancing the development of both collaborative and individual knowledge and skills. These experiences not only promote a healthy and balanced lifestyle but also help students to develop a positive attitude through participation; students can have fun, learn, and develop life skills in a supportive environment.

**SERVICE LEARNING**

In alignment with the school’s Student Learning Result, “Contributing to Society,” every HKIS student has the opportunity to engage in service activities, many of which focus on global issues, humanitarian affairs, and environmental awareness.

As a part of their religious studies classes, students in Grades 7 and 8 complete what the curriculum refers to as a compassion project—selecting, organizing, and executing a service-oriented project in their community. Recent examples include environmental initiatives and elder care services. Middle School students may also participate in service clubs after school—Green Dragons, focused on sustainability and the environment, and the Matrix Club, which hosts Saturday school for refugees in Hong Kong.
STUDENT BODY

HKIS serves a diverse body of over 2,600 students, drawn from more than 40 nationalities. A little more than half the student body are American citizens, with many other nationalities represented, including Canada (8%), Hong Kong (6%), and UK (6%). While HKIS follows an inspiring Christian mission, about half of all students are not Christian. HKIS sees itself as an accepting school with many different faiths and non-practitioners represented. The students are bright, engaged, and inquisitive with a belief in and respect for others.

The Middle School currently enrolls 630 students. Last year, the school received 1,400 applications for approximately 500 available places. HKIS has emerged as the school of choice in Hong Kong and its resources are considerable, including an extremely talented and giving parent body. (A Parent Advisory Group works in conjunction with every school division.) Parents are well-educated, interested, and deeply involved in the education of their children.

HKIS students receive nurturing and guidance within a caring, engaging environment at all levels of the school. HKIS students enjoy a multi-cultural community, which contributes greatly to their personal growth and character. The students work together and form many different friendships, both within the student body and the faculty. They make full use of the excellent facilities available, developing intellect, imagination, independence, and responsibility, and bring family values into daily school life. They actively pursue the school’s six Student Learning Results of academic excellence, spirituality, character development, self-motivated learning, contributing to society, and Chinese culture. After graduation, nearly all of HKIS students matriculate to colleges and universities in the United States, Canada, Asia, Europe, and Australia—some of them among the world’s finest.
FACULTY AND STAFF

HKIS faculty and staff are amongst the best in the world: highly qualified and experienced, providing unparalleled qualities in teaching, guidance, and care for their students. Over 70% of the 265 faculty at HKIS hold graduate degrees. It is noteworthy that half of the teachers at HKIS have worked at the school for six years or longer, indicating a high level of satisfaction professionally and personally with the school and with Hong Kong. Parents see teachers as one of the major strengths of the school.

As one might expect, the faculty and staff are an international group as well, representing 23 different nationalities, and HKIS strives to maintain an ethnically and culturally diverse staff. Faculty at the school could be characterized as high achievers, and they thrive at HKIS and appreciate the opportunity to work in a learning community where they are educating the whole child. Professional development is an essential part of the faculty experience; the school supports many such opportunities each year. As one administrator expressed it, “You can’t help but grow here.”

HKIS also has a very strong administrative team with a number of core administrators at each division level.
**Physical Campus**

Hong Kong International School has two campuses spectacularly set on the south side of Hong Kong Island. The Lower Primary (Reception 1 through Grade 2) and Upper Primary (Grades 3-5) are located in Repulse Bay.

The Middle School (Grades 6-8) and High School (Grades 9-12) are located 10 minutes away in Tai Tam. New Middle School classrooms were added to the Tai Tam campus in 2010 to complement its existing facilities, which include an amphitheater, black box theatre, gymnasium, and library. They will also be expanding their learning areas this summer with the addition of classrooms and student spaces. High School facilities also include an extensive library as well as a gymnasium, swimming pool, auditorium, and music rooms. Improvements and additions to the High School over the years have included a music center with practice rooms, refurbishments to the auditorium and cafeteria, and a new floor of classrooms and faculty work spaces.

The Lower Primary facilities underwent a complete redevelopment and opened a state-of-the-art educational facility for the school's youngest learners in August 2017. Throughout the 2017-18 school year, the Upper Primary has been renovated to improve and expand learning spaces and upgrade the playgrounds and will re-open in August 2018. Following completion of renovations to the primary schools, HKIS has plans to construct two new sites adjacent to the Tai Tam campus to serve the Middle and High Schools. One site is planned as a student activities center that would include gyms, a swimming pool and other community facilities, opening up space on the current campus for a dedicated performing arts wing. The second site is intended to become a center for excellence in teaching and learning with professional development resources and programming for HKIS educators.
ABOUT HONG KONG

Hong Kong is located south of Guangdong and faces the South China Sea to the east, west, and south. Hong Kong is one of the most densely populated areas in the world, with a population of seven million people inhabiting only 1,108 sq. km. (428 sq. mi.) of land. Known as a global hub where East meets West, Hong Kong is Asia’s “world city”—an autonomous melting pot of cultures. In spite of its size and visibility, Hong Kong’s neighborhoods possess an authentic sense of community and security that is unlike other large metropolises.

Hong Kong began as a trading port and became a dependent territory of the United Kingdom in 1842 and remained so until the transfer of sovereignty to the People’s Republic of China in 1997. Along with Macau, Hong Kong is one of the two Special Administrative Regions (SAR) of China, operating under the “one country, two systems” policy. As a result, Hong Kong is largely self-governing, has its own currency, legal and political systems, and a high degree of autonomy in many administrative areas.

Renowned for its expansive skyline and natural setting, Hong Kong is one of the world’s leading financial capitals. A major business and cultural hub, it maintains a highly developed capitalist economy. Its identity as a cosmopolitan center where East meets West is reflected in its cuisine, cinema, music, and traditions. Although the population is predominantly Chinese, residents and expatriates of other ethnicities form a small but significant segment of society. It is a “westernized city next to the fastest growing economy in the world.”

While a world-class center for commerce and trade, it is also very much a family-friendly place. Hong Kong has that special energy that is a hallmark of big city living, but its hilly and mountainous terrain offers the charm of expansive countryside dotted with small villages as well as access to plentiful parks and reserves. Hong Kong’s Mass Transit Railway (MTR) is one of the best underground metro systems in the world—safe, clean, fast, and easy to navigate. Residents also use taxis, buses, and trams to navigate
the city. The heart of the city bustles with activity until late, as patrons enjoy the many boutiques and world class shopping, as well as an ample array of culinary options from fine dining to street stalls. From its vibrant cityscape to the ease of travel to other parts of Asia, Hong Kong has a great deal to offer its residents.

HKIS students benefit from exposure to the broad economic and ethnic diversity of the area. The school’s two campuses are located on the south side of Hong Kong Island, a more tranquil area featuring beaches and parks that is home to a large expat community. This area is about a 30-minute drive from Hong Kong’s more bustling north side.

**OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES**

The successful candidate will have proven administrative experience to demonstrate that he or she can meet the needs of the HKIS Middle School particularly to:

- Create a clear vision and direction for faculty and students by demonstrating forward thinking, stable, engaging, visible, and dependable leadership;
- Work collaboratively with colleagues on facility expansion plans;
- Work collaboratively with colleagues on programs and scheduling;
- Work collaboratively with a large administrative team of forward thinking professionals;
- Work collaboratively with the faculty, staff, parents, and students in leading the Middle School to the next level of excellence;
- Develop synergy, alignment, and sense of connection throughout the school;
- Ensure a consistent sense of firm yet patient discipline for students with a focus on growth;
- Facilitate teamwork among faculty with open, attentive communication;
- Connect meaningfully with parents.
**DESIRED QUALITIES AND QUALIFICATIONS**

The school prefers that the appointee possess the following specific qualifications and experience:

- Leadership ability to inspire faculty, parents, students, and colleagues;
- Management ability, including experience linking resources to mission and student learning results and managing change;
- Passion for the Middle School age group; Middle School experience highly desirable;
- An understanding, appreciation, and experience with other cultures; an open mind on working and living in a highly diverse environment;
- Support of the HKIS faculty performance appraisal system and linking demonstrated skills and knowledge to compensation;
- A strong drive for continued personal and professional growth;
- Identification with the HKIS Mission and its orientation towards student learning results;
- A solid grounding in the Christian faith, as well as a deep respect for the spiritual lives of all and an interest in the complex questions of faith and spirituality in a global world;
- Excellent verbal and written communication, presentation, and public speaking skills; ability to represent the school publicly; a clear and confident communication style that shows spirit, enthusiasm, and integrity;
- Interpersonal skills which include demonstrated relationship and community building and management, and negotiation skills with the ability to interact with individuals at all levels in a multicultural environment;
- Ability to prioritize and balance the Middle School’s identity and program within the context of a large school.

**STUDENT LEARNING RESULTS**

**Academic Excellence:** Students will achieve their highest intellectual potential by striving for and attaining the highest standards of academic excellence.

**Spirituality:** Students will understand or respect Christianity and other religions and will identify and develop their own spiritual identity.

**Character Development:** Students will demonstrate respectful and caring attitudes at school and in the community, as well as the courage to stand up for what is right.

**Self-Motivated Learning:** Students willingly apply a variety of learning and motivation strategies throughout their learning process.

**Contributing to Society:** Students will develop the skills they need to form genuine relationships in our diverse society and make contributions to our community.

**Chinese Culture:** Students will gain an understanding of China and an appreciation of the Chinese culture.
TO APPLY

Interested candidates should submit the following materials as separate PDF attachments in one email:

- Cover letter expressing interest in the HKIS position;
- Current résumé;
- Statement of educational philosophy and practice;
- List of five references with name, phone number, and email address of each (references will not be contacted without the candidate’s permission) to:

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