



AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF ZAGREB UPPER SCHOOL PRINCIPAL SEARCH

START DATE: AUGUST 1, 2026



American
International
School of Zagreb



Our Vision

Experiencing the Future, Today.

Our Mission

We develop skills and character for futures rich with promise.

Introduction

The American International School of Zagreb (AISZ) is an award-winning institution dedicated to creating a supportive and inspiring learning environment for nearly sixty years. As an independent, coeducational, non-profit school, AISZ offers students the opportunity to pursue the International Baccalaureate Diploma (IBDP), the AISZ Honors Diploma, or the American High School Diploma in their final years. From Early Childhood through Grade 12, our standards-based, inquiry-driven programs spark curiosity and help more than 350 students grow as confident, capable learners. With a community that brings together over 40 nationalities, AISZ is a place where children ages 3 to 18 are encouraged to explore, connect, and develop a truly global perspective.



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As Zagreb has grown over the past 60 years, so has the American International School of Zagreb. In 2018, AISZ opened an award-winning, environmentally sustainable campus situated in the picturesque Bundek Parkland area, just five kilometers from central Zagreb. As the oldest and largest international school in Zagreb, our excellent facilities contribute to the rich tradition and ethos of excellence that AISZ represents in our community.



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A Tradition of Excellence

In August 2025, AISZ received the Professional Learning Community Model School Award from Solution Tree International in the United States, becoming the first school in Europe to earn this honor. This prestigious award is presented to schools that demonstrate outstanding systems supporting learning and have achieved at least three consecutive years of improved academic performance. AISZ also boasts prestigious accreditation from the Middle States Association Commission on Elementary and Secondary Schools (MSA), a testament to its unwavering commitment to academic excellence and institutional integrity. In 2023, MSA recognized AISZ as a Program of Distinction for World Languages. In Spring 2024, AISZ undertook IBDP re-authorization, and by December 2024, AISZ successfully completed its most recent mid-term accreditation, reaffirming its adherence to rigorous standards of quality and continuous improvement.

Additionally, AISZ is an active member of the Central & Eastern European Schools Association (CEESA), a dynamic network that fosters collaboration and synergy among its member schools. AISZ also holds a special distinction as a U.S. Department of State Assisted School. More information can be found on the school [website](#).

The AISZ Professional Learning Community Ecosystem

The American International School of Zagreb is a mission and vision-driven school. We are a Professional Learning Community (PLC), where our success is achieved through collaboration and interdependence. We work together as a community to achieve the best possible results for all our students. The AISZ Learning Ecosystem describes a commitment to academic excellence, social-emotional well-being and adoption of strong systems to ensure every student meets with success. At AISZ, our goals matter, and we adhere to our systems to ensure the success of every student in our school.

Our AISZ Culture

At the heart of AISZ is our focus on creating a positive school culture for our students, our staff, and our families. We believe this approach is foundational to the success of our organization. Our desired culture is not something that happens randomly; we are thoughtful and deliberate about building the culture that we seek. The key tenets of the AISZ culture are:



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A Culture of Extraordinary Care

1. Celebrations and Traditions - We practice gratitude, celebrate accomplishments and invest in both school spirit and our traditions to ensure student belonging.
2. Values: Respect, Responsibility, Kindness, Resilience - Our character values guide how we interact with one another at AISZ.
3. Learning: Positive Growth Mindsets and Relationships - We believe all students can learn at high levels and in our ability as educators to build relationships and help students reach excellence.

A Culture of Excellence

1. Collaboration and Collective Responsibility - We believe that we are stronger when we collaborate and we take responsibility for the learning of every child.
2. Academic Excellence: Results - AISZ is rooted in a philosophy of academic excellence for every student and our success is measured by our results not our intentions.

The Imagined

1. Innovation - Our vision of “Experiencing the Future Today,” inspires us to continue to thoughtfully innovate and teach relevant skills students need for the future.

Faculty and Staff

Overall, AISZ is led by the School Leadership Team, which consists of the Director, Upper and Lower School Principals, Upper School Associate Principal, Business and Operations Manager, Human Resources Manager, Admissions and Alumni Transition Manager, Communications Manager, and IT Manager.

Academic Leadership and Strategic Development is led and overseen by the Director, the Principals, the IBDP Coordinator and the Curriculum leads from Lower School and Upper School Curriculum. Middle-Level leadership differs in design in Upper School and Lower School, but is based upon distributed leadership models.

Over 60 faculty members and more than 40 support staff members support the learning of 350 students from nearly 40 nations. Currently, the faculty consists of personnel from 13 nations.



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About the Upper School at AISZ

The Upper School at AISZ is a vibrant international learning community where over 40 nationalities come together in an English-speaking environment. Diversity is at the heart of who we are, inspiring us to empower students to grow as confident, independent, and lifelong learners.

Our Middle School program (Grades 6–8) focuses on developing ownership of learning, resilience, and community engagement. Students explore an age-appropriate broad curriculum and co-curricular options while building the skills and mindset needed to thrive in high school and beyond.

In High School (Grades 9–12), students engage in structured and student-directed inquiries that build on the foundations of middle school. They develop independence, critical thinking, and self-management while choosing among four diploma pathways: the AISZ Diploma, AISZ Honors Diploma, IB Diploma Programme, or AISZ Diploma with IB certificates. Counselors provide personalized support as students navigate their academic options and prepare for university.



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The AISZ Curriculum

Our curriculum is built around U.S. based standards, including American Education Reaches Out (AERO), Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), Standards for Health and Physical Education (SHAPE), National Core Arts Standards (NCAS), and College, Career and the Civic Life (C3) framework. These standards are taught using an International Baccalaureate grading structure in grades 6-10 that ensures students are applying their learning in ways that prepare them for the IB Diploma program and 21st-century learning approaches. At AISZ, every student is known, supported, and challenged and we have adopted the CharacterStrong Curriculum to ensure student success and well-being.



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About Croatia

A small country with a rich history, Croatia awes visitors with its wide variety of culture, cuisine, and natural and architectural wonders. Croatia is both a Central European and Mediterranean country, bordering Slovenia in the west, Hungary in the north, Serbia in the east, and Bosnia and Herzegovina in the south. Part of the country lies on the coast, while the other rests in continental Europe, creating a dichotomous path of discovery that engages all the senses.

Travelers to Croatia can explore its 1,185 islands (only 48 of which are permanently inhabited), taste the freshness of locally grown organic produce, tour privately owned wineries, marvel at the breathtaking colors of its famous lakes, and succumb to the seductions of the region's converging cultures. Croatia unfolds a unique mix of Italian, Germanic, and Slavic influences, indulging visitors to discover a rare gem in the world of travel.



As the capital of Croatia, Zagreb has many historical sights, museums, and beautiful green oases that would delight any visitor. It is one of the oldest and safest Central European cities and a perfect combination of rich heritage, lively rhythm of street life, and a multitude of attractions that will awaken all your senses. There is much to see and do in Zagreb and its unique location also allows for easy access to a variety of other countries just a short drive away (Italy - 3 hrs, Slovenia - 2 hrs, Austria - 2.5 hrs). A host of additional activities can be easily accessed within Croatia with mountain and ocean activities found less than 2 hrs drive away.



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Position Overview

Position Description

The Upper School Principal is the learning leader of the school from Grade 6 to Grade 12, and a member of the school's Leadership Team, reporting directly to the School Director, Dr. Darin Fahrney. Collaborating with the Upper School Principal and Director on the leadership team are the Lower School Principal, Upper School Associate Principal, Business and Operations Manager, Human Resource Manager, Admissions and Alumni Manager, Communications Manager, and IT Manager.

The Upper School Principal is charged with managing the daily operations of the Upper School division, providing leadership in assessment and the development of the AISZ learning ecosystem. The Upper School Principal is responsible for developing a collaborative, innovative, and nurturing environment for staff and students; promoting respect among staff, students, and parents; assigning, scheduling, supervising, and evaluating school faculty and staff; and representing the school positively within the broader school community. The successful candidate must be energetic, well-versed in innovative educational pedagogy, experienced in teaching, and leading instruction in an accredited international school. Experience in leading a professional learning community approach and maintaining multi-tiered systems of support are an essential part of this position. The candidate must be able to inspire confidence in his or her faculty, and be fulfilled by working closely with students in their activities and day-to-day life at AISZ.

The successful candidate will personify and model the AISZ culture and have both the understanding of instructional pedagogy and the emotional intelligence needed to lead a school of excellence.



Duties and Responsibilities

Leadership for Learning

- Leads divisional efforts to establish an MTSS system and create a Professional Learning Community (PLC) at AISZ
- Champions the implementation of the strategic plan, the development of the AISZ Learning Ecosystem, and other Upper School initiatives
- Directs the Upper School curricular objectives and professional learning goals
- Establishes and assesses progress on yearly Upper School goals - our current goals are associated with math, literacy and student achievement
- Is a strong supporter and advocate for athletics, activities and clubs that build school spirit and provide protective factors for our students
- Manages change and encourages innovation, communication, and healthy risk-taking
- Embodies our AISZ character values of being respectful, responsible, resilient, and kind

Staff Development and Professional Learning

- Collaborates with teachers on implementing High Impact Instructional Strategies (HITS) in the classroom and provides timely feedback to teachers on their performance
- Recruits, hires, evaluates, and develops high-quality, committed faculty and staff
- Establishes Upper School professional development needs within the strategic plan and whole-school goals
- Willingness to present at professional conferences to contribute to professional discourse and share the AISZ story



Communication

- Communicates effectively with the divisional staff to ensure alignment and collaborative decision-making
- Liaises between the Director, Leadership Team, parents, staff, students, and School Board as appropriate
- Maintains regular written communication with faculty, parents, and students
- Articulates the Upper School program vision and initiatives through various venues across the community
- Understands and effectively articulates the school's values, strategic plan, board policy, and established procedures
- Oversees procedures for reporting student progress to students and parents on a regular basis

Management

- Plans and implements a master schedule that ensures that each student receives the full benefit of the program
- Responsible for the effective development and management of divisional budgets and procurement
- Plans, organizes, and oversees the development and implementation of Upper School emergency procedures in coordination with the other divisions, the School Director, and the Business and Operations Manager

Skills and Attributes Desired

- Background and conviction in establishing an MTSS and PLC culture (based on the PLC at Work framework) in schools
- A collaborative, dynamic, and self-motivated individual with a passion for providing the best possible educational experience to Upper School students
- Proven multicultural awareness and sensitivity in meeting the needs of a diverse student body



- Collegial, open, forward-looking, and proactive, and an advocate for Upper School students, faculty, staff, and families
- An individual who enjoys interacting with students and playing a vital part in their lives
- Communicates effectively in written and oral formats
- Well-versed in technology and its use within the classroom for effective student learning
- Exhibits a collaborative and supportive approach to problem-solving
- Innovative and creative, models the values and direction of the school
- Demonstrates success in people development, team-building, and leadership
- Unquestionable personal integrity and professional ethics
- Sense of humor

Desired Qualifications

- Successful experience as Principal or Associate Principal or academic leadership (experience in an international Upper School setting preferred)
- Minimum of MA or MEd or equivalent in Educational Administration / Policy, Educational Leadership, Certificate of International School Leadership (PTC) or similar field
- Demonstrated excellence in leading people, managing processes, and improving learning with high levels of emotional intelligence
- Exceptional knowledge of best practices in contemporary curriculum design, assessment, pedagogy, and data-driven decision-making (e.g., IB programs, AERO/Common Core standards)
- Five or more years of successful teaching at the Upper School level



Compensation

AISZ offers a competitive compensation package for this position in a country with no income tax for foreign hires.

The Upper School Principal's package includes:

- Housing allowance
- Comprehensive international medical coverage, including dental and vision
- Life insurance
- Long-term disability insurance
- Shipping allowance
- Annual home-leave flight allowance to home of record
- Tuition for up to 2 dependent children

Application Instructions

- Candidates should send the information listed below as a single PDF file of 5 MB or less in size attached to an email:
- A letter of application, explaining the strengths as a candidate and why the applicant is interested in the Upper School Principal position at the American International School of Zagreb
- A one-to-two-page statement of educational philosophy
- A current résumé not to exceed two pages, addressing the preferred qualifications
- A one-page list of at least four references with phone numbers and e-mail addresses. (At least three of the four references must have directly supervised the applicant, and one referee must be a current supervisor. The remaining referee may be a peer or educator that the applicant has supervised.)
- A maximum of three letters of reference (scanned at low resolution) that may already be in your possession is not a requirement, but may be included in the application.





Applications should be sent to the email address: **employment@aisz.hr**.

Please note again that applications must be sent as a single PDF file not to exceed 5 MB.

Candidates interested in learning more about the American International School of Zagreb are encouraged to visit the school's website at <https://www.aisz.hr/>.

The closing date for applications is **October 20, 2025**. Candidates are encouraged to apply early, as interviews will occur on a rolling basis. AISZ reserves the right to end the search when the ideal candidate has been found.



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