



# INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS SERVICES

Making a world of difference



Director

**International Community School of Abidjan**

*Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire*

Effective: August 2019

Deadline: May 31, 2018

International Community School of Abidjan is searching for an outstanding Director who will lead our truly unique school into a new era and inspire our community of learners to embrace our vision. This is a career opportunity at a “destination school” and should command the attention of international school leaders around the world. We encourage candidates to explore this document and to visit the school's website to grasp our Learning and Community spirit.

## History of School

Several diplomatic families associated with the US Embassy in Cote d'Ivoire founded the International Community School of Abidjan (ICSA) in 1972. Growing from humble beginnings, ICSA was located in villas for several years in Cocody and Deux Plateaux, residential communities in Abidjan. It was not until 1989, when ICSA moved to Riviera III, that it developed “purpose-built facilities”, which permitted a larger enrollment and the development of a comprehensive PreK-12 program. During the 2002 – 2003 school year, ICSA experienced the largest enrollment in its history only to downsize to less than 100 students by February of 2003, due to civil conflict.



Between 2003 and 2007, ICSA's enrollment declined to less than 20 students, which prompted the need to relocate its facility to a temporary location. The school faced some unexpected financial challenges associated with maintaining its 5.3 hectare campus. In 2005, in order to address rising operating costs, ICSA moved to a residential location in Riviera III, near the village of M'Pouto and rented its facility to the United Nations. Between 2007 and 2010, the

school experienced increased enrollment due to the stable political conditions in the country. However, in November 2010, as a result of post-election violence, enrollment once again declined to less than 30 students by the end of the 2010-2011 school year. Since 2010, ICSA has experienced a steady increase in enrollment.

In the 2013-2014 school year ICSA returned to its 5.3 hectare purpose-built facility and began with an enrollment of over 180 students. The school has steadily grown ever since; we began the 2017-18 school year with 424 students.

## Mission and Vision

### MISSION

Learning and Leading in a Collaborative Culture

### VISION

**We Learn**, so we develop confident, inquiring learners, who are experts in working with important concepts and critical competencies and equipped with a personal moral compass.

**We Lead**, so we teach our students to lead and manage their own learning and we build the leadership capacity of our learning stakeholders and of our school.

**We Collaborate**, so we share information, co-create innovative ideas and build relationships by reaching across traditional boundaries to involve people in all parts of our school community.

**We Share a Culture** within which we are appreciative of the benefits we enjoy, openly welcoming a range of perspectives, embracing our differences and building a community that is diverse in essence, united in direction.



## Key Features

### ACCREDITATION

As part of continuous school improvement, ICSA follows an accreditation process with the Middle States Association of Schools and Colleges (MSA), based in the United States. MSA was



established in 1887 and is one of six regional accrediting organizations that together serve institutions in the United States and many international schools around the world. After an intensive two-year self-study process and a reaccreditation team visit, ICSA received re-accredited status in December 2013. ICSA will remain fully accredited until 2023.



ICSA is a fully-recognized International Baccalaureate World School and is authorised to deliver the rigorous and world-known Diploma Program. The IB program was established at ICSA in 2016.

It is through these two organizations that ICSA is able to award a US-based and the IB diploma high school diplomas. For our graduating students, then, the world's universities are at their fingertips.



### ICSA BOARD AND GOVERNANCE

The school is sponsored by the American Embassy in Cote d'Ivoire and is operated by the International Community School of Abidjan Association. Membership in the Association is automatically conferred on the parents or guardians of children enrolled in the school. Special membership is conferred on members of the Faculty and the Administration. The Association holds two semi-annual meetings each year.

The Board of Directors is composed of nine members – the Association elects seven members one of whom should be a US citizen and the U.S. Ambassador to Cote d'Ivoire appoints two members and one alternate. The Board oversees the governance and direction of the school by holding regular meetings, retreats, and being actively involved in committee work.

ICSA is organized and operated on a non-profit basis. Virtually all operating revenues are generated from the student fees. The school receives limited assistance from the United States government in the form of an annual grant.

### CURRICULUM

ICSA follows the AERO Common Core Plus through to Grade 10 in all the major subject areas. We have been an IB World School since 2015 and are authorized to offer the Diploma Programme. Our curriculum, textbooks, instructional materials, and teaching methods are among those found in the top international



and independent schools worldwide. As is in most international schools, ICSA is focused on the child's "whole development". So, while we offer a rigorous college preparatory curriculum, we also make sure we prepare the child's softer skills needed to be successful in life. The language of instruction is English.



## STUDENTS

ICSA has around 420 students (197 Lower School students & 228 Upper School students) from more than 55 different nationalities. Many of these students come from the USA (20 percent) while students from our host country, Cote d'Ivoire, represent 13 percent. The remaining 67 percent are from other countries.

## FACULTY

Fifty-seven of the world's strongest educators from United States, United Kingdom, Canada, France, Belgium, Cote d'Ivoire, and 15 other countries comprise ICSA's faculty and make it the best international school in Abidjan. More than 50 percent of our faculty are trained overseas and bring a plethora of teaching experience to our school. Our local staff are trained and kept up to date through professional development on a continuous basis. Together, their experiences in numerous countries, gives them the skills and ability to work with our diverse student population.

## COMMUNITY LIFE

Warm and welcoming, we are more than just a set of buildings; we are a school that is bustling with activity throughout the year.

In ICSA, parents play an integral role in the school and their participation is greatly encouraged. Parents are members of the ICSA Association (the organization that oversees the management of the school), the Board of Directors (parents are elected to the Board to govern the school), various committees of the Board, and the Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO). Parents volunteer in various capacities at the school.



Social events are held throughout the year. We celebrate the UN, our diverse international community, women, Africa and its diaspora, the arts, Dr. Seuss and more!

## Learning Culture



Traditional learning styles are a thing of the past. Our children will be positioned to change as our global world and communities change. They will live in a different world with a new set of challenges. We know that learning is a process in which the student becomes engaged, actively makes connections to prior knowledge, practice new skills, and reflect on his or her learning in a continuous cycle. Our school will position our students to be change agents for the future through experiential learning.

### What is special about ICOSA? Our Learning Culture

At ICOSA we are committed to continuing our evolution towards a Learning Culture, focused on the continuous improvement of learning for our students and for ourselves. We believe that learning leads to demonstrable conceptual understanding, competencies, and character. We share this vision with all other members of our partnership with the Common Ground Collaborative (CGC).

We believe that learning leads to demonstrable conceptual understanding, competencies, and character:

#### 1. **Conceptual Learning** is happening when students are:

Connecting new knowledge to prior understanding and to important concepts.

Constructing and re-constructing theories of how things work and why things are the way they are.

Testing their evolving theories in different contexts to refine them so they have increased explanatory power and to see when, where and how they apply.

**Students answer: "As a result of this learning, I now understand that..."**



**2. Competency Learning** is happening when students are:

Deconstructing expert performance and comparing it with their own.

Identifying the adjustments they need to make.

Practicing a skill in order to refine it and make it increasingly automatic.

**Students answer: “As a result of this learning, I now am able to...”**

**3. Character Learning** is happening when students are:

Considering what particular dispositions and values would ‘look like’ when applied in specific authentic contexts.

Acting as a result of these considerations.

Reflecting on the effects of these actions.

**Students answer: “As a result of this learning, I now value/feel...”**

## Lower School



The Lower School program at ICSA serves students in grades Pre-K to Grade 5.

One of ICSA’s intellectual objectives is to promote the desire to learn, the awareness that learning is a lifelong process, and the recognition that there are a wide variety of resources for learning. Therefore, the lower school focuses on the total development of each child and provides many opportunities for

personal and academic growth in a nurturing, structured environment.

The philosophy of the Lower School program is to provide the best strategies to the individual student through programs that are flexible and challenging. The students have time each day for enrichment via classes in Music, PE, Art and IT. French is the language of the host country and all students in the Lower School receive French instruction during their week.

Our program is experiential. Children learn new concepts and skills through their class work, through interactions with texts and materials and through interactions with classmates and the world around them. Projects, long-term assignments, and group work often require students to

work together through a process that eventually results in a final product. A very important part of this experiential process is the time provided by teachers for students to edit and reflect upon their work. The goal is continual student learning, not simply a high grade or a product at the end of a unit.

## Upper School

The Upper School consists of students in grades 6 – 12. Students in the middle school (grades 6-8) are acquiring important transitional skills in preparation for high school. Our middle school teachers take advantage of the natural curiosity, energy, and enthusiasm of the students while providing a supportive and nurturing learning environment. The curriculum focuses on basic skills, inquiry, individual creativity, and the development of good study skills and work habits. Students are encouraged to cooperate rather than to compete, and to share their special gifts and talents.



The High school program culminates with the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Program for junior and seniors. ICOSA's program is focused on university/college preparation and it encourages students to strive toward excellence and to acquire sensitivity toward the local and wider community. Offering a full range of courses that lead to the attainment of an American high school diploma, ICOSA's high school program provides a solid educational foundation, which encourages students to become critical thinkers, problem-solvers, intellectually curious, and good communicators. In order to qualify for the ICOSA high school diploma, students must complete a minimum of 24 credits. Our graduates gain admission to universities and colleges worldwide.

## Côte d'Ivoire - Abidjan

Identified as a family post by the UN, Abidjan is filled with museums, cultural centers and a multitude of cultural events that take place throughout the year. Abidjan has a vibrant and internationally known music scene along with an important fashion industry. Numerous shopping



complexes and amazing restaurants throughout the city ensure you won't go without your favourite foods and commodities.

And there is so much more to Cote d'Ivoire outside of Abidjan. Paradise beaches, amazing wildlife and national parks, ethnic traditions and celebrations. Cote d'Ivoire has so much to offer! See the links and be inspired: [here](#) and [here](#)

## Position Overview

The Director is the Chief Executive Officer of the school who is directly responsible to the Board of Directors. The Director is aided by the Lower School and Upper School Principals, the Human Resources Director, the Business Manager, the General Services Officer, and the Technology Manager. This group forms the leadership team at ICSA. The Director is responsible for the organization, operation and administration of the total school program. At ICSA, all decisions are made within the limits of an established policy.



It is likely that successful candidates for this position will have all or most of the following aspects expected of an experienced administrator of an international school:

- A leader committed to learning
- Driven by ICSA mission, vision and values
- An authentic communicator
- A collaborative relationship builder
- An effective recruiter of teachers and staff
- Able to work with sensitivity in complex, changing environments
- Hold a MA or PhD in Education or related field
- Have a minimum of six years of experience managing an international school
- Experience and success in promoting professional development for teachers and support staff
- Community outreach experience working with local business and community organizations

The Director who lead ICSA from 2019 onwards will certainly be:

- an excellent human relations individual, a leader and a mentor
- able to use creativity when faced with problem-solving situations
- humble and empathic
- assertive and able to effectively convey messages to the community
- an optimist
- a positive individual
- fluent in English (required) and proficient in French (preferred)

The ICSA Board is particularly interested in candidates with solid experience in administration (particularly supervision and evaluation, and operational responsibilities of managing a school, in particular overseeing budgets and financial issues), a keen interest in staff development and a sound knowledge of curriculum development and implementation.

Candidates should possess a advanced graduate degree and have a proven track record as a school administrator in an international school. Candidates with a minimum of six years or more of recent teaching/administrative international experience are preferred. A working knowledge of French is highly preferred.

Challenges for the next Director will include:

- updating an aging campus that needs renovation to support 21st-century approaches to education, and for which a Masterplan exists;
- finding creative approaches to engage more parents in the life of the school;
- identifying alternative revenue sources to supplement a tuition fee-dependent budget;
- continuing to develop the school's identity as an English-language international school in a French-speaking environment.

### **SALARY & BENEFITS**

The salary will be competitive and will be commensurate with the qualifications and experience of the successful candidate.

## Application Instructions

**Effective:** August 2019

**Application Deadline:** May 31, 2018

ISS Vice President Administrative Searches & Governance Services, Dr. Beth Pfannl, will serve as the lead consultant for the International Community School of Abidjan Director search. She will be assisted by Mr. David Randall, Ms. Ashley Wotowey and other members of the ISS staff. The tentative deadline for applications is May 31, 2018. However, the ICSA Search Committee reserves the right to conclude the search at any point in the process when a successful candidate is identified.

Semifinalist candidates will be identified by ISS and their dossiers will be forwarded to the search committee. The ICSA Search Committee plans to complete the search process by the end of June. Short listed candidates will be interviewed in early-mid June.

All candidates for this position must have a current ISS profile to ensure that credentials are provided in a uniform and consistent manner. **There is no fee associated with this application.**

**Steps to apply:** Follow the instructions below to create your quick ISS administrative profile

### Current ISS candidates:

- 1) Draft a formal letter of interest (cover letter) specific to this position no longer than two pages, explaining your strengths as a candidate and why you are interested in this particular position.
- 2) Attach your updated CV
- 3) Save your letter and CV in **PDF format**
- 4) Submit via email to Dr. Beth Pfannl ([bpfannl@iss.edu](mailto:bpfannl@iss.edu)) and copy Ashley Wotowey ([awotowey@iss.edu](mailto:awotowey@iss.edu)). \*\*\*Please **only** submit the required letter, all supplementary materials should be uploaded to your online documents portfolio via your ISS dashboard
- 5) Upon receipt of your letter, you will be recorded as a candidate and your ISS file will be sent to Dr. Pfannl

### New & Returning ISS candidates:

- 1) Complete the steps above to submit your formal letter of interest and CV



- 2) Create or update your ISS file by completing the online ISS application. When you reach the Payment Page, find the field labeled "Coupon Code" and type in **ICSA2018** to waive your membership fee. Your application will be reviewed by the ISS team to make sure all the necessary information is present. This process can take several days, depending on the time of year. \*\*Please email Ashely Wotowey, Administrative Search Coordinator, if you need assistance: [awotowey@iss.edu](mailto:awotowey@iss.edu).
- 3) Begin to build your professional dossier. Upload supporting documents (certifications, educational philosophy, current resume, and open letters of reference) through your ISS candidate dashboard.
- 4) File Activation. Once your confidential reference forms have been received and your file is "active" your file will be made available to Dr. Pfannl and the search committee.

#### **ALL Candidates:**

This search requires that (at minimum) the following materials be uploaded to your ISS online portfolio: Educational Philosophy/Leadership Style and Current CV/Resume (under 2 pages).

***\*\*Applicants are asked to submit their letter of interest and complete all necessary application steps as early as possible, as ISS and ICSA reserve the right to close the selection process at any time if an ideal candidate is found.***

