



Life changing. World changing.



Chinese American International School (San Francisco, CA) seeks a

Early Childhood Center Director (Preschool-Kindergarten)

This position requires fluency in both English and Mandarin
Exempt, full-time position

WELCOME!

Join the vibrant community at the Chinese American International School as Director of the Early Childhood Center, responsible for leading and coordinating the [Early Childhood Center Team](#), which includes preschool (full Mandarin immersion) and kindergarten (50/50 Mandarin/English) faculty. The Director oversees faculty and staff supervision, family communication, and daily program operations to ensure a safe, nurturing, and developmentally responsive environment for young learners. While CAIS has dedicated Mandarin and English curriculum leaders, the ECC Director plays a key role in supporting the organization, alignment, and implementation of curriculum and assessment systems within the early childhood division. Working closely with school leadership, the Director helps advance a cohesive vision for early childhood education and strengthens strong partnerships among teachers, families, and the broader school community.



OUR IDEAL CANDIDATE

The ideal candidate aligns strongly with our Dual Language Early Childhood Center philosophy and has a deep understanding of child development for children ages 2-6. This leader brings knowledge and practical experience in Mandarin immersion early childhood education, where young children learn through meaningful, play-based experiences primarily in Mandarin during the preschool years, and then gradually develop bilingual skills in kindergarten through developmentally appropriate dual-language practices. This leader supports teachers and families in navigating the unique opportunities and challenges of a dual-language environment, communicates with clarity and empathy, and consistently centers young children in decision-making. We seek someone who embraces CAIS's mission and contributes to an equitable, inclusive community for all children, families, and educators.



ESSENTIAL DUTIES

Position responsibilities include (*but are not limited to*):

- Design ECC systems and lead preschool and kindergarten programs (ages 2-6), ensuring a safe, developmentally appropriate, and mission-aligned early childhood environment.
- Take a strong role in leading preschool instruction and curriculum while collaborating with curriculum leaders to design, implement, and refine high-quality curriculum, developmental assessments, and Chinese immersion bilingual early childhood education.
- Supervise and support the Associate Preschool Director, who manages safety, licensing compliance, after-school programs, and the preschool summer program.
- Oversee daily program operations, staffing, schedules, and classroom support to ensure smooth and consistent routines.
- Coach and support teaching staff through feedback, professional development, and team culture-building.
- Serve as the primary leader for family communication and partner with teachers in conversations related to individual children's needs and development.
- Work closely with the Student Services Director and Student Services Team (SST) and support early intervention processes to assist families and guide staff when additional services are needed.
- Partner with the School's Educational Leadership Team to align ECC goals with the broader P-8 direction and to represent ECC within the school community.
- Lead and grow programs that advance Chinese immersion early childhood education, sharing effective practices and collaborating with the wider educational community, including the coordination of the [Early Childhood Chinese Immersion Forum](#), an online forum and annual conference founded by CAIS in 2018.
- Work closely with the School's Admissions team to introduce the School to prospective families.



ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS

- Bachelor's degree or higher in Early Childhood Education, Child Development, Educational Leadership, or a related field.
- Extensive knowledge of child development for children ages 2-6.
- Experience in early childhood program leadership, school administration, or comparable supervisory roles.
- Understanding of Chinese immersion and bilingual early childhood education, including developmentally appropriate practices for dual-language learners.
- Demonstrated ability to lead, coach, and collaborate with diverse teaching teams.
- Strong communication skills in both Mandarin and English, with the ability to partner effectively with families and navigate sensitive conversations.
- Commitment to the school's [mission](#), [core values](#), and [strategic vision](#).
- Commitment to the school's approach to [diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging](#).
- Excellent work ethic.
- Flexibility, patience, compassion, resilience, and good humor.
- Technical/computer skills as required for the job.



ABOUT CAIS

As the nation's first dual language Chinese and English immersion preschool through 8th grade school, CAIS embodies our [mission](#) by working continuously to maintain our role as a leader in immersion education. We've begun planning our [Strategic Vision for 2026](#) and beyond, having successfully completed our most recent multi-year vision to reimagine immersion, reimagine our culture of learning, reimagine our community connectedness, and reimagine our learning spaces (our entire community has settled into our newly renovated [campus on 19th Avenue](#)).

COMPENSATION

CAIS has an established salary scale that recognizes experience and other qualifications including (but not limited to) education and training, leadership, and bilinguality. The salary range for this position is: \$140,000 - 170,000.

BENEFITS

CAIS is dedicated to attracting, developing, rewarding and retaining world-class employees and ensuring that this is a great place to work. We put a high priority on advances in compensation, benefits, and work climate with a 2026-2027 benefits package and perks including:



Distinctively CAIS Benefits

- Commuter benefits (up to \$340/month)
- Chaperone student trips to Taiwan (Taipei) and China (Guilin)
- Dynamic, dual culture setting valuing honest self assessment, thoughtful self reflection, intentional planning, and focused implementation

Financial Benefits

- CAIS contributes 5% of your earnings immediately in a 403(B) retirement plan (no contribution required on your part)
- Transparent salary benchmarked to the Bay Area's competitive standards, including annual cost-of-living adjustments
- Consideration for relocation costs
- Approximately 90% adjustment to tuition for exempt employees

Professional Development

- Robust opportunities for conferences, workshops, and courses
- Membership in California Teacher Development Collaborative – <https://catdc.org/>

Health Benefits

- CAIS pays 100% of the premium for medical, dental, vision, acupuncture, chiropractic, short-term disability and long-term disability, and life insurance for you (along with competitive rates for spouse and family coverage)
- Employer-funded Health Savings Account (HSA) and Pre-tax HSA employee contribution
- Pre-tax Flexible Spending Account (FSA) for medical and dependent care

Vacation / Holiday / Paid Time Off

- Thanksgiving Break - 1 week
- Winter Break (December/January) - 2 weeks
- Spring Break (April) - 1 week
- Summer Break - month of July
- Paid school holidays according to the school calendar
- Up to 2 additional days off for religious holidays
- Accrue 11.5 days of Sick Time annually
- Accrue 3 days of Personal Time annually

Quality of Life and Appreciation

- Monthly appreciation lunches
- Twice-yearly Faculty/Staff Appreciation Events
- Annual milestones luncheon
- Free tickets to annual dinner/dance gala
- Lunar New Year luncheon
- Birthday gift card

TO APPLY

CAIS's commitment to [diversity, equity and inclusion](#) is central to our mission. People of color and LGBTQIA candidates are strongly encouraged to apply. Email cover letter, resume, and list of references to admin_jobs@cais.org, attention: Head of School. In the subject line please indicate "Director of Early Childhood Center." In your cover letter, please reference how you learned of this opening. Please no calls.