

LEADERSHIP SEARCH

Making A World of Difference



High School Principal

Canadian Academy Japan

Application Deadline: September 19, 2025

Kobe | Start Date: August 1, 2026

CANADIAN 神戸
ACADEMY



**Canadian Academy in Kobe, Japan,
seeks a High School Principal
to start August 2026**

About Canadian Academy

Founded in 1913, Canadian Academy has long been recognized as a leading international school in Japan. CA is a not-for-profit, secular, gender-inclusive international school located in Kobe, Japan's seventh largest city. Current enrollment is about 690 from PreK-12, with a student body representing 45 nationalities. Our high school boarding program is home to 40 students from over 20 countries. CA is accredited by CIS (Council of International Schools) and WASC (Western Association of Schools and Colleges), is an authorized three-programme International Baccalaureate World School, and is a member of TABS (The Association of Boarding Schools).



Despite the name, CA is not a 'Canadian' school, and does not offer a Canadian curriculum (the name is the legacy of the school's founding by Canadian missionaries). CA offers the IB Continuum from Pre-K to Grade 12: the Primary Years Programme in Pre-K to Grade 5, the Middle Years Programme in Grades 6-10, and the Diploma Programme in Grades 11 & 12.

CA offers students many opportunities for exploration in the arts, athletics, outdoor education, service, and more. In particular, CA's vibrant athletics and performing arts programs are enriched by our participation in APAC, the Asia-Pacific Activities Conference, through which we partner and exchange with 11 other schools in the region. CA is the only APAC member school in Japan.

Our Location



Kobe is a scenic city of about 1.5 million people, nestled between the mountains and the sea. It is part of the larger Keihanshin metropolitan area, which with over 19 million inhabitants is Japan's second-largest population center. Excellent high-speed rail connections make it easy to travel to nearby cities like Osaka (less than 30 minutes by commuter train), Kyoto, and Nara, as well as other destinations throughout Japan.

Kobe is known in Japan as a center for excellent dining, design and fashion, traditional festivals, and outdoor pursuits. It was one of the first cities in Japan to open to foreign trade in the late 19th century, and has continued to be one of the most internationally-minded, foreigner-friendly, cosmopolitan cities in the country. The nearby Rokko Mountain range offers endless opportunities for hiking, biking, and other outdoor activities, most easily accessible by public transportation.

CA's spacious and newly renovated campus is located in a leafy, convenient, and family-friendly neighborhood on Rokko Island, a man-made island about 20 minutes by public transport from downtown Kobe. Rokko Island has a large expat community, and boasts excellent supermarkets and shops that cater to international residents, a wide range of restaurants, a 5-km greenbelt for exercise and leisure, and a pleasant waterfront promenade.

Our Community

Kobe is the Japanese headquarters of a number of multinational corporations, including Nestlé, Eli Lilly, Caterpillar, and more. Many CA students are the children of expat employees of these companies. CA also is the school of choice for many families associated with consular and foreign service activities in the Kansai region.

Another major demographic group at the school is 'long-term foreigners': families that are not ethnically Japanese but have lived in Kobe for multiple generations. This includes a sizable South Asian population. Unusually for an international school, many of our students are the children and even grandchildren of CA alumni.

Finally, about 35% of our students are Japanese nationals with at least one Japanese parent. Many of these Japanese families have returned to Japan after living overseas, and seek an international education for their children. Others are internationally-minded and understand the opportunities that pursuing an IB education in English can create for their children.

Overall, our families are exceptionally supportive, and our students are motivated and engaged and come to school eager to learn.

The teaching staff reflects the diversity of our student body, with over 20 nationalities represented. The majority of the support staff are Japanese, as are many of our teachers, particularly in our extensive Japanese language department. The next most commonly represented nationalities among the faculty and staff are the US, Canada, and the UK, but we have teachers from every continent except Antarctica.



Position Summary

Position: High School Principal

Reports to: Head of School

Canadian Academy seeks an experienced, inspirational and collaborative Principal to provide dynamic, forward-looking leadership for our High School (Grades 9-12), promote curricular innovation and excellence in teaching and learning, guide student development, and shape school culture.

Reporting to the Head of School, the Principal will lead the High School Leadership Team (consisting of a Vice Principal, a DP Coordinator / Learning Leader, a Head of Residential Life, and two Counselors) and a faculty and staff of approximately 40, and work closely with the Middle School Principal and other members of the School Leadership Team.

This is a new position that reflects the [evolution of our school and its needs](#). Due to enrollment growth and the increasing complexity of our program offerings, we have outgrown our current 6-12 Secondary model. By creating separate Middle School and High School divisions, we can better meet the needs of our students and teachers in both divisions.

Over the next few years, the High School will focus on further developing our successful and growing residential life program; creating and refining individualized graduation pathways that are attractive and viable alternatives to the IB DP, enabling CA to meet the evolving needs of diverse learners; and leveraging new technologies to enhance learning and expand opportunities for personalization and choice.



Key Responsibilities

Key responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following:

Academic Leadership

- Lead a strong academic program that includes the IB Middle Years Programme in Grades 9 & 10 and Diploma Programme and other pathways to graduation in Grades 11 & 12.
- Oversee curriculum development, implementation, and enhancement, ensuring alignment with international standards and school goals.
- Foster a culture of inquiry and intellectual curiosity.
- Promote interdisciplinary, experiential learning that connects to real-world contexts.
- Lead the development and promotion of personalized graduation pathways beyond the IB DP, including the CA Diploma, that align with individual interests, goals, and strengths.
- Ensure high academic standards that prepare students for success beyond CA.
- Use data and evidence-based practices to monitor student learning and drive improvement.

Faculty & Staff Development

- Develop and supervise high school faculty and staff, fostering professional growth to ensure excellence in teaching and learning.
- Cultivate collaborative, high-performing teams and foster a culture of trust, innovation, and continuous learning.
- Collaborate with the HR team and other school leaders to identify, recruit and retain the very best international teachers.

Student Experience & Wellbeing

- Champion a balanced student experience integrating academics, SEL, athletics, arts, service, and leadership opportunities.
- Set and uphold expectations for student behavior and responsible digital citizenship.
- Promote student voice, agency, and leadership across the division.
- Oversee comprehensive student support systems addressing academic, social-emotional, and personal needs.
- Ensure inclusive practices and policies that promote a strong sense of community and belonging.

Residential Life

- Provide oversight and vision for a growing residential life program, ensuring alignment with the school's strategic direction and student well-being goals.
- Oversee and guide the development of policies, staffing, and programming for boarding students, working collaboratively with residential life leadership and staff.
- Foster a vibrant, inclusive boarding community that promotes character, independence, belonging, and balance for students living on campus.
- Champion the integration of residential and academic life, helping boarding students thrive holistically.

Community Building and Engagement

- Actively build relationships and foster a welcoming, inclusive High School community.
- Communicate proactively and clearly with students, parents, and faculty.
- Strengthen partnerships with parents, alumni, and external stakeholders to build community engagement and support student success.
- Represent the High School in communications and interactions with the broader community.

Operations & Organizational Leadership

- Oversee the daily operations of the High School including scheduling, staffing, calendar planning, and policy development.
- Collaborate on school-wide initiatives such as strategic planning, accreditation, and cross-divisional alignment.
- Contribute to budget planning and resource allocation to support instructional and programmatic priorities.
- Support admissions, on-boarding, and student retention strategies specific to the High School and participate in decision-making about enrollment.
- Utilize data-informed practices for ongoing assessment and continuous improvement of all High School programs.



The Ideal Candidate

The ideal candidate will be an experienced international school leader with excellent knowledge of the IB MYP and/or DP and a successful track record as a high school teacher or counselor.

They will have most or all of the following:

- Master's Degree in Education, Educational Leadership, or related field
- Strong operational and strategic thinking capabilities, including demonstrated success in managing complex change
- Experience with:
 - Curriculum and pathway innovation
 - SEL curriculum & program implementation
 - Residential life or boarding administration
- Demonstrated success in:
 - Leading faculty growth and development
 - Using educational technology to enhance student learning outcomes

And will be:

- A student-centered decision maker
- Skilled at fostering a collaborative faculty and staff culture
- Committed to distributed leadership
- Able to inspire, empower and support faculty and staff
- Internationally-minded and committed to the ideals of international education
- A person of integrity who leads by example
- Able to demonstrate emotional intelligence and a sense of humor
- An excellent communicator who can build strong relationships with students, parents, and colleagues
- A creative thinker who is always looking for ways to improve the student experience
- An open-minded collaborator and team player

The CA community is currently reviewing our guiding statements as the initial stage in our strategic planning process. We hope to adopt refreshed Mission and Values statements in late 2025, and look forward to sharing them then.

While the wording may change, what will remain constant is our commitment to developing international mindedness through our International Baccalaureate programs, and offering a balanced, inclusive education focused on [inspiring minds and nurturing compassion](#).

Application Process

Interested candidates should prepare and submit:

- Cover letter (maximum two pages)
- Updated résumé
- A list of at least four references, including phone and email contact information
- Video introduction (landscape, maximum 4 minutes), articulating:
 - Why you are interested in working at CA
 - Why CA is a good fit based on your experience
 - Your leadership style

Please share the video as an **unlisted Youtube link, included in your cover letter**.

All written materials should be sent as **PDF** files.

The application deadline is **September 19, 2025**; we hope to invite finalists to visit our campus in early- to mid-October. We reserve the right to accelerate this timeline if an exceptional candidate is identified earlier in the process.

The start date for the position is **August 1, 2026**.

Candidates are asked to submit these materials online [here](#), as soon as possible.

