

# CANDIDATE INFORMATION PACK



## EXECUTIVE ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL (BEIGAO) - BEIJING, CHINA

START DATE: AUGUST 2026



## WELCOME MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE HEAD OF SCHOOLS

Dear Prospective Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in the position of Executive Elementary Principal at Daystar Academy's Beigao campus, Beijing. As we approach our 25th anniversary, we find ourselves at an exciting juncture in our school's journey, and this leadership opportunity represents a chance to make a lasting impact on international education in China.

Ever since I joined the school community in 2019, I quickly understood that what makes Daystar truly unique is our unwavering commitment to developing social innovators who can bridge cultures and inspire positive change. Our Social Innovation Program, the first of its kind in China, empowers students to move beyond traditional academic excellence to become active agents of change in their communities. This commitment, combined with our strong bilingual and bicultural approach, has established Daystar as a pioneer in international education.



I am particularly proud of our stable and collaborative leadership team, who have worked together to create a supportive, values-driven environment where both students and educators thrive. Our recent CIS/WASC accreditation success, alongside our consistently outstanding IB results, reflects the dedication of our community to educational excellence. Yet, what truly sets us apart is how we achieve these results while maintaining our focus on character development and social responsibility.

The incoming Elementary Principal will join a collegial team during a pivotal time of growth and innovation. We seek a leader who shares our vision of education as a transformative force - someone who can build upon our strong foundations while bringing fresh perspectives to our unique educational model.

Our core values of Respect, Unity, Caring, Excellence, and Service aren't just words on a wall - they guide every decision we make and shape the experiences of our students daily. As we continue to establish ourselves at the forefront of educational excellence in Beijing and beyond, we need a leader who can embrace these values while driving innovation and maintaining our high standards of academic achievement.

This role offers an extraordinary opportunity to make a real difference in international education. You'll be working with a supportive community of educators, engaged parents, and motivated students who are all committed to our mission of creating a more equitable, sustainable, and united world.

As you review this information pack, I encourage you to consider how your experience and vision align with our unique approach to education. We look forward to engaging with candidates who are excited about joining our journey of inspiring the best in humanity through education.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Daniel Williams', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dr. Daniel Williams

Executive Head of Schools

Daystar Academy





## INTRODUCTION

Founded in 2002, Daystar is a not-for-profit pre-K-12 internationally oriented private day school in Beijing. It provides a first-class internationalized curriculum and a balanced Chinese-English bilingual and bicultural education. The school continues to develop and expand, and now has three campuses in Beijing; Beigao (K-12), Sanlitun (pre-K -5) and Quanfa (Early Learning Center) with over 1,000 students. As a bilingual school integrating the Chinese national curriculum system, International Baccalaureate (IB) and Daystar's Social Innovation Program, Daystar pays special attention to character education and cultivates students with a socially innovative mindset, giving them the courage to explore their own path, power to change the world, and confidence to inspire others.

Daystar Academy is fully accredited by the Council of International Schools (CIS) and the

Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). It is also a member of the East Asian Regional Council of Schools (EARCOS) and a founding member of the Network for Enriching Schools and Students in China (NESSIC). The school is a fully authorized International Baccalaureate (IB) continuum school offering the Primary Years Programme (PYP), Middle Years Programme (MYP) and Diploma Programme (DP).

Attainment data on Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), along with a wide range of external measures, consistently show that students at Daystar Academy make remarkable growth through each year of schooling. In addition, IB Diploma results place Daystar amongst the top schools globally and among the top five schools in Beijing. These sound academic and holistic foundations allow students to pursue further education at the world's most prestigious universities.

## OUR STORY

Daystar Academy was founded when Cai Jin-Yong and Dawn Vermilya moved to Beijing from the USA. Chinese-born Jin-Yong, previously CEO of IFC (a member of the World Bank Group and the largest global development institution focused on private sector development and the fight against poverty), and Dawn, his American wife, who also worked for the World Bank, sought a bilingual and bicultural school for their three children. Unable to find a suitable local option to match their vision, the couple launched Daystar Academy in 2002, a school intentionally blending Western and Chinese cultural and educational traditions with a strong focus on character education.

## OUR MISSION

We cultivate social innovators to inspire the best in humanity and create a world that is more equitable, sustainable and united.

We nurture students' character, curiosity, and motivation to positively impact their communities, demonstrating the courage to change and inspire.

## OUR CORE VALUES

**RESPECT:** We respect different ideas and show empathy and appreciation towards others' thoughts and feelings.

**UNITY:** Celebrating unity in diversity and creating a compassionate community that is accepting of everyone.

**CARING:** We are caring towards each other and our environment.

**EXCELLENCE:** When we challenge ourselves and strive to the best of our ability, we bring excellence to our community.

**SERVICE:** We learn, grow, and develop our gifts to serve others.

## SOCIAL INNOVATION



## COMPETENCIES

Daystar is the first school in China to create a K-12 Social Innovation (SI) Program to cultivate students into social innovators - able to deeply care, connect and take practical actions to solve social and environmental problems in communities. Daystar has created a unique educational model through the holistic SI curriculum, SI program resources and SI events, where students feel empowered with a purpose to apply their learning to create a better world.

Our unique approach to education is structured around three key competencies:

**BEING:** Cultivating the values, mindsets, and interests that inspire action

**CONNECTING:** Asking students to inquire and deeply connect to the community through authentic exploration

**INNOVATING:** Challenging students to create innovative solutions to affect positive change and inspire others

## OUR BILINGUAL / DUAL LANGUAGE APPROACH

Daystar Academy stands apart in its commitment to true bilingual and bicultural education. Our program is not simply about teaching two languages; it's about teaching through two languages and cultures. The elementary division operates on a carefully structured 40/60 model that engages students in core content subjects through both English and Chinese.

## ELEMENTARY PROGRAM COMPONENTS:

### LANGUAGE ARTS

- Comprehensive English Language Arts following U.S. Common Core Standards
- Chinese Language Arts aligned with Chinese National Curriculum standards
- Integrated reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills in both languages

### CONTENT AREAS

- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies, History & Geography
- Visual and Performing Arts
- Music
- Information Communications Technology
- Library Studies

### BILINGUAL EXCELLENCE

- Dual-language immersion in authentic contexts
- Integration of Chinese and Western pedagogical approaches
- Cross-cultural perspectives in curriculum delivery
- Emphasis on metalinguistic awareness
- Regular assessment of bilingual development

### CULTURAL INTEGRATION

- Fusion of Eastern and Western educational traditions
- Integration of Chinese virtues with IB Learner Profile attributes
- Celebration of both Chinese and international festivals and traditions

- Cross-cultural project-based learning
- Community engagement in both Chinese and international contexts

## A SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE

### RECENT RECOGNITION AND ACHIEVEMENT

We are proud that Daystar Academy was granted full accreditation status by both the Council of International Schools (CIS) and the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) in 2024. This recognition places us among only 36 schools in China and 1,500 institutions worldwide to meet these rigorous international standards.

### HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR 2024 CIS/WASC EVALUATION

The evaluation team noted exceptional achievements across multiple domains:

### EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

- Received an impressive 34 commendations, with 9 of major significance
- Rated "Exceeds Expectations" in 21% of evaluated domains
- Achieved 77% "Meets Expectations" across all domains

### LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

- Recognized for "exemplary" governance and leadership structures
- Commended for a clear, mission-driven approach to decision-making
- Highlighted for effective strategic planning and implementation
- Praised for strong collaborative leadership culture

### TEACHING AND LEARNING

- Acknowledged for innovative curriculum development
- Recognized for successful integration of Social Innovation competencies
- Commended for systematic use of assessment data
- Praised for effective professional development programs



## COMMUNITY AND CULTURE

The evaluation team specifically noted:

"The consistent nature in which each group of stakeholders spoke about the school's strategic priorities and shared mission and vision with not only a keen understanding but also passion and enthusiasm."

## GLOBAL IMPACT

Our commitment to developing thoughtful, engaged global citizens was particularly celebrated:

*"Daystar Academy stands out, offering a rich, varied educational experience that is both globally minded and deeply rooted in the school's core values. The school's commitment to integrating Social Innovation competencies across the curriculum, alongside its emphasis on global citizenship, sets Daystar apart as an institution that not only values academic excellence but also the development of thoughtful, engaged global citizens."*

## FUTURE TRAJECTORY

In the evaluators' words: *"With its clear understanding of both its achievements and challenges, Daystar Academy is well-positioned to continue its journey of growth and excellence, making a profound impact on the lives of its students and the broader global community."*

## GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE

Daystar Academy is a not-for-profit school. It is governed by a parent advisory board on which the Executive Head of Schools sits as an ex officio member.

The Executive Head of Schools has overall responsibility for the day-to-day running of the school across multiple campuses in accordance with the strategic direction of the advisory board. The Executive Principals, in turn, are responsible for the day-to-day running of their respective school divisions.

The Executive Elementary Principal (Beigao) will serve on the senior leadership team alongside:

- Executive Head of Schools
- Executive Secondary School Principal
- Executive Elementary School Principal-Sanlitun
- Executive Early Learning Center Principal (Quanfa)

- Director of Social Innovation
- Heads of Non-Academic Departments

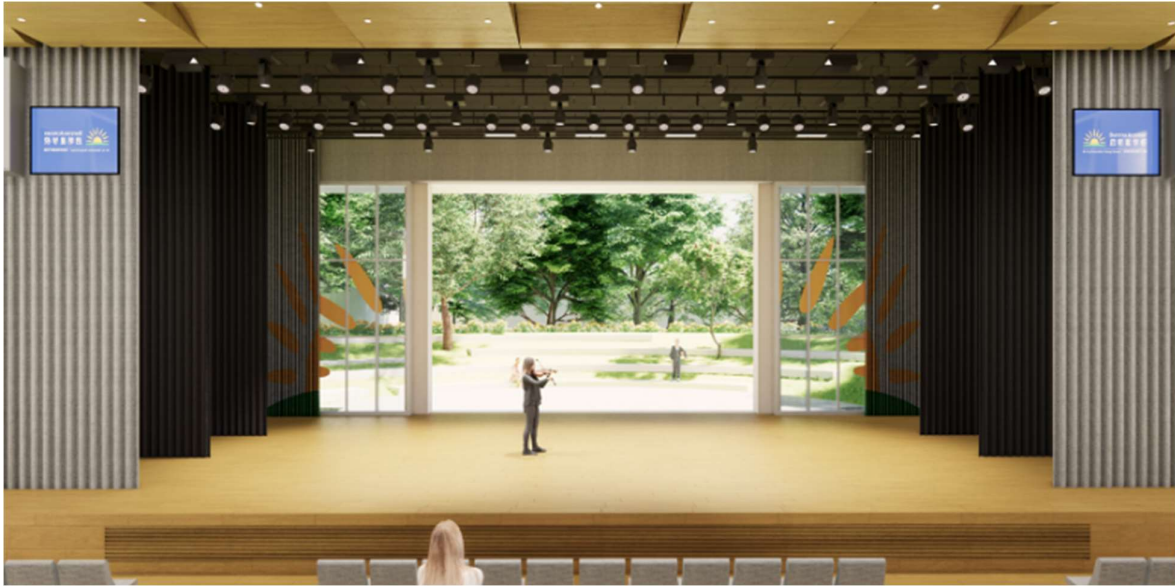
The Executive Elementary Principal (Beigao) will directly manage the Elementary Leadership Team (ELT) and with them manage all academic staff within their division:

- Elementary Vice Principals
- IB PYP Coordinator
- Instructional Coach(s)
- Social Emotional Counselor(s)
- Learning Support Teacher (s)

## A COMMUNITY SCHOOL

The engagement of families with Daystar Academy is a vital part of the school's character. Parents buy into the distinctive education that Daystar provides, and this sits at the heart of a constructive and positive relationship between the school and families, which is unusual in China. Many parents are active volunteers in the school. They volunteer in the classrooms and library and at events. There is a parent-run coffee shop on site, the proceeds from which go to charitable causes.





## FACILITIES

In line with the not-for-profit nature of the school, significant investment has been made over the past number of years to ensure that the campus facilities are of the highest standards.

Classrooms are spacious and well equipped with touch screen televisions and are well resourced. The school has excellent sports facilities with a full-size artificial soccer pitch, sports dome, tennis courts and baseball batting cages.

The school has also recently completed its canteen renovation and added a new 300 seater multi-purpose performing arts theatre.







## LIVING IN BEIJING

Beijing is a dynamic city that has undergone rapid transformation in one generation. It is a modern, international city, a thriving “megacity” with one of the world’s busiest airports and a population in excess of 20 million people. There is a growing level of diversity in the city with over 100,000 expatriates calling Beijing home. Certain parts of the city are popular with expatriates – Sanlitun is one such example thanks to its collection of bars, restaurants, shopping and a vibrancy that could rival any international city. Life in the city is fast-paced, and there is little to want for.

Although a modern city, Beijing has a proud history spanning three millennia and is replete with World Heritage sites.

From the Great Wall of China to The Forbidden City and The Temple of Heaven, the city’s former – as well as current and future - importance as an economic and political powerhouse is self-evident. Beijing has one of the world’s most extensive subway networks, making transport across the city straightforward. The subway is extremely reasonably priced, efficient and constantly expanding.

Beijing’s air quality has improved significantly. In 2024, Beijing seldom experiences days that are not rated as ‘excellent’ or ‘good’ air quality and blue skies over the city are the norm. Daystar monitors the air quality regularly and its air filtration systems ensure that air quality across the school is clean and safe.

Many of China’s best international schools are located in Beijing, making it a stimulating place to develop as a school leader. Beijing is a dynamic city and an ideal location for the continued development of an excellent bilingual school with deep roots in the local community.





## DESCRIPTION OF THE ROLE

The Executive Elementary School Principal (Beigao Campus) will bring experienced administration, acting under the leadership of the Executive Head of Schools. The successful candidate will join an experienced team at a crucial point in the school's development. This new phase will be characterized by a focus on taking the already strong foundations in teaching, learning and other aspects and making them truly world-class.

It is important that the Executive Elementary School Principal is able to embed and further develop policies and practices to facilitate and provide a seamless transition into the middle school. The Executive Elementary School Principal will be a lead figure in terms of ensuring that the positive culture within the school supports the drive for high standards and excellent attainment.

This is a wide-ranging role that requires confident leadership of people, teaching and learning, knowledge of timetabling, curriculum development, finance and excellent stakeholder management. It is a highly visible position that will require a reassuring presence, a sense of self-efficacy and a proactive approach to school development.

The Executive Principal must also be able to lead and collaborate with a team of Chinese and Western educators within the elementary division and beyond, ensuring that teachers and staff have the support they need to implement Daystar's unique Elementary bilingual program.

Moreover, in the competitive Beijing market, this role will make an important contribution in terms of ensuring that the school's unique characteristics that differentiate Daystar from other private and

international schools are understood by the wider school, parental and prospective parental communities

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

### QUALIFICATIONS

- Bachelor Degree (Required)
- Masters Degree (Preferred)
- PhD or EdD in an Education related field (Desired)
- Recognized Principal Certification, NPQH or other (preferred)
- Ability to speak Chinese or willingness to learn Chinese (desirable)
- IB PYP training and experience (Desired)
- Evidence of continuous professional learning

### EXPERIENCE, ABILITY AND UNDERSTANDING OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

- Experience leading the elementary phase of a school, with PYP experience strongly preferable
- Ability to devise a clear strategy for the development of the Elementary School supported by annual attainment plans and accurate, evidence-based self-reflection
- Experience in leadership within a school system that operates in a climate of high accountability



- Experience in embedding robust quality assurance, professional development and a culture of continual improvement
- Experience in putting in place appropriate policies, procedures, guidelines and systems to deliver the educational vision of the school
- Ability to prepare the school for participation in re-accreditation, re-authorization and other relevant external quality assurance and school improvement processes
- Experience in keeping abreast of and judiciously implementing – research-informed best practice
- Ability to lead effective curriculum reviews and development
- Ability to ensure the Chinese National Curriculum is being implemented
- Ability to lead teachers in implementing instruction using inquiry-based learning and best practices

#### ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP

- Work with the Executive Head of Schools to ensure that both the strategy and strategic documentation is up to date
- Play a lead role in annual budgeting and monitoring expenditures against the agreed budget
- Manage the budget in line with the principles of best value and financial probity
- Assure the well-being of students through the appropriate implementation of health, safety, safeguarding and security measures
- Ensure that accountability is secured at all levels against expectations that are consistent as well as fair
- Play a lead role in recruiting, developing, inducting and utilizing faculty and staff to fulfil their potential and meet the needs of the school
- Ensure the timely production of a timetable that makes best use of the school's staff and facilities

- Work with the Executive Head of Schools to review performance indicators to help assess and increase quality throughout the school

#### COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

- Represent the school both internally and externally such that the school maintains a high profile in the community
- Work with parents, within appropriate boundaries, to secure their ongoing engagement with the school
- Ensure that the pupils and staff are well informed and understand the mechanisms by which their voices may be heard
- Make appropriate efforts to ensure that staff and pupils' well-being is safeguarded
- Work closely with the Admissions department to understand and determine what the benchmarks are and accept students with those benchmarks in mind



#### PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

- Model Daystar's Core Values and Leadership Behaviors
- Self-efficacy – a proactive approach to getting things done
- Reflective, willing to coach and be coached; keen to learn from colleagues as well as share the benefit of their experience
- Strong sense of personal commitment
- A lightness of touch, sense of perspective and sense of humor
- Able to combine kindness and empathy with having 'difficult' or robust conversations

关爱  
Caring



- Calm and strategic; able to evaluate options and pursue a course of action to completion
- Deep interest in inquiry-based learning and, preferably, bilingual education
- Excellent communication skills, both written and spoken
- Knowledge of or a background in second language acquisition strongly preferred
- Imaginative; someone who enjoys finding creative solutions
- Comfortable operating in an environment which feels like a flat hierarchy such that colleagues at all levels feel empowered to share their perspective
- Resilient and adaptable
- Optimistic, positive and forward-looking
- Cross-cultural understanding of not only Chinese, Western and other Asian cultures
- Keen to support the wider development of the school and, in time, the group of school





## REMUNERATION

A competitive salary will be offered which will reflect the importance of this appointment.

A generous wider remuneration package will include bonus provision, housing allowance, annual return flights for all dependents, free tuition for dependent children and international medical cover.

## APPLICATION PROCESS

The closing date for applications is the **15th March 2025 at 5 pm Beijing Standard Time.**

Application materials should be submitted to [recruiting@ivygroup.org](mailto:recruiting@ivygroup.org). Please also feel free to message this same address if you wish to know more or to have arrange a confidential conversation regarding the position.

### TO APPLY YOU SHOULD SUBMIT:

- A Resumé of no more than three pages with your entire work history and details on key responsibilities and achievements
- Contact details of three professional referees, with at least one from your current position provided by your direct line manager. Please note we will only reach out directly to referees of shortlisted candidates and we will obtain your permission separately before we do so.
- A cover letter of no more than two pages addressed to Dr. Daniel Williams, Executive Head of Schools, Daystar Academy.

### DECISION MAKING TIMELINE:

- Conduct initial shortlisting on-line interviews by the end of March
- Face-to-face interviews will take place at Daystar Academy in Beijing in the middle of April
- Final round interview will take place at Daystar Academy in Beijing at the end of April

- The decision-making committee reserves the right to make an appointment earlier than stated above



## FURTHER INFORMATION



[www.daystaracademy.cn](http://www.daystaracademy.cn)



<https://www.linkedin.com/school/daystarchina>



*1WeChat Page*

**Please note:** The school is aligned with the recommendations of the International Task Force on Child Protection; we hold ourselves to a high standard of effective recruiting practices with specific attention to child protection. We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Applicants will be expected to show evidence of their most up-to-date child protection screening details including checks with past employers and police checks from international school positions held.

Courage to  
Change and Inspire  
勇气 改变 激励