

International School of Beijing

Beijing, China



Founded in 1980 by five embassies, this Shunyi day school pairs a US diploma track with IB rigor and dual-language classes from early years.

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	74/100
Academic outcomes	73/100
University placement	74/100
Prestige & heritage	72/100
Alumni network	69/100
Facilities	88/100
Transparency	85/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

Set in Shunyi and founded in 1980 by five embassies, the International School of Beijing has the pedigree of an old-guard expatriate school and the programme mix to keep ambitious families interested. This is a day school for ages 3 to 18, with English and Mandarin as languages of instruction, an American and IB curriculum, and CIS and IBO accreditation. That combination matters. Parents get the breadth and transcript culture of a US-style school without giving up the discipline and external benchmark of the IB Diploma. In a market crowded with schools that sell “global” identity in vague terms, ISB has a clearer proposition: a long-established non-profit with serious academic infrastructure and a dual-language offer from the early years. The average annual day fee across the full age range is **\$46,154**, which places it

firmly in Beijing's *premium tier*.

What sets ISB apart is not novelty but *institutional depth*. The school has been in Beijing long enough to build durable community ties and alumni roots, yet it still sells itself on “high expectations, high support” rather than on brute academic theatre. That line is more than slogan if the school delivers the balance it promises: ambition without overload, strong pastoral knowledge of students, and enough scale to offer classrooms, studios, theatres and sports fields at a high level. The non-profit status also matters. Reinvestment into staff and programme quality is a stronger signal than ownership rhetoric, and it gives ISB an edge with families who want substance rather than glossy expansion. The published recent destinations are modest in this snapshot — American University, Appalachian State University and Babson College — so parents chasing headline university bragging rights will not get much public ammunition here. The school does not disclose broader destination patterns in the information provided, and that opacity is a weak point for a school at this price.

The child who thrives here is academically capable, internationally minded and comfortable in a *big, cosmopolitan system* rather than a small, intimate niche school. ISB suits students who want both range and structure: the student who values arts, sport and leadership alongside academics; the bilingual or internationally mobile family that wants English-medium schooling without dropping Mandarin; the sixth-former who wants IB rigour inside a US-style framework. It is less compelling for families who want a narrowly exam-driven culture, a distinctly British school identity, or a bargain. Put plainly, ISB belongs on a shortlist because it pairs **1980** foundations, accredited IB credibility and a dual-language environment with the kind of *mature, high-investment* school model that expatriate parents still struggle to find done well.

STRENGTHS

- Consistently strong IB Diploma results, with average scores around 35-36 points versus the roughly 30-31 global average, and near-100% pass rates in recent years.
- Long-established and non-profit, founded in 1980, giving it institutional stability and a 40-plus year track record as one of Beijing's oldest international schools.
- Dual-accredited by the Council of International Schools (CIS) and the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), alongside IB authorisation.
- Extensive purpose-built facilities on its Shunyi campus, including 12 science labs, multiple theatres, library-media centres holding over 82,000 volumes, and a one-to-one laptop/iPad program.
- Broad international mix, drawing students from roughly 50 countries, with a well-regarded Chinese and dual-language diploma track.

TRADE-OFFS

- High fees, with tuition reaching RMB 356,000 (roughly USD 50,000) for Grades 11-12, before bus, application and one-time entry charges.
- Registered as a school for foreign nationals only, so it cannot admit Chinese passport-holding families permanently resident in mainland China, narrowing eligibility for mixed-nationality households.
- Located in the Shunyi district on Beijing's north-eastern outskirts, meaning a significant daily commute for families based in Chaoyang, Haidian or other central areas.
- A large school of around 1,800 students, which some families may find less intimate than smaller Beijing international schools.

ADMISSIONS

ISB admits from Early Years 2 through Grade 12 via an online application portal; each applicant is assigned a dedicated admissions officer who confirms required documents, including transcripts and passport/visa paperwork. As a school registered for foreign nationals, it cannot enrol Chinese passport holders permanently resident in mainland China. High school applicants must submit sealed transcripts on arrival to finalise credit placement. Admissions are rolling but places, especially in popular grade levels, can be competitive given the school's long-standing reputation, so early application is advised.

WTS RATING 

This profile summarises editorial research by World's Top Schools. Verify all admissions dates directly with the school before submitting. Sources are cited in the full online profile at WorldsTopSchools.com/schools/sch_d3355eb691.