

Certification Inspection Report

BRITISH COLUMBIA PROGRAM

at

MAPLE LEAF FOREIGN NATIONALS SCHOOL

DALIAN, LIAONING PROVINCE

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

NOVEMBER 7 – 8, 2022

INTRODUCTION

On November 7 and 8, 2022, a virtual certification inspection was completed on Maple Leaf Foreign Nationals School - Dalian (MLFNS – Dalian) in Dalian, Liaoning province, People's Republic of China, referred to as the School in this report. The purpose of this inspection was to determine if the requirements for the British Columbia (BC) education program have been met, according to the *BC Offshore School Program Certification Agreement* (the Agreement). The inspection team (the Team), appointed by the Executive Director of the Independent Schools and International Education Branch, British Columbia Ministry of Education and Child Care (the Ministry) in accordance with the Agreement, consisted of Greg Corry and Terence Sullivan, who served as Chair for this virtual inspection.

The School's BC program enrolls students in grades kindergarten to grade 9. The School is housed on two campuses which consist of a downtown campus and a campus at Kaifu. The downtown campus was originally a K to 4 program while the Kaifu campus is K to 9. The downtown campus has been experiencing a decline in enrolment and presently enrolls nine students in a pre-K program and four students in a K/1 program. The downtown campus will close on January 13, 2023 and some of those students will move to the Kaifu campus. Both schools are stand alone programs and are not part of a host school. The entire school, which houses the BC program on both campuses, enrolls a total of 95 students.

During the visit to the School, the Team reviewed all standards required in the Agreement and *Operating Manual* and met with the Assistant Superintendent of China Maple Leaf Educational System, the Offshore School Representative (OSR), the BC Principal, BC teachers, the Director of Marketing and Administration and 10 students from different grades.

The Owner/Operator, China Maple Leaf Educational Systems (CMLES) is responsible for the BC program. Maple Leaf Educational Systems (MLES) has opened a number of schools globally and has more than 46,000 students and over 7,000 Chinese and foreign staff, forming a multi-level,



high-quality international education system integrating foreign nationals schools, preschools, elementary schools, middle schools and high schools.

Over the past year China Maple Leaf Educational Systems has moved its head office from Dalian to Shenzhen.

The BC program's philosophy, objectives and special features include:

the belief that through blending the best of the innovations and higher level thinking western educational model with the cultural richness and discipline of the traditional Chinese educational model, students will be best prepared to meet the challenges of living and working in a more internationalized society.

The Team would like to thank Maple Leaf Foreign Nationals School - Dalian for its cooperation and preparedness for the virtual inspection visit.

The School has satisfactorily addressed requirements contained in the previous inspection report.			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requirement Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Not Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
Comment: There were no requirements from the previous inspection			

BUSINESS PLAN 1.0

The Owner/Operator has submitted a business plan to the BC Ministry of Education, confirming the sustainability of the program.		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requirement Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Not Met
Comment: The School has submitted a comprehensive business plan as part of its Annual Report. The plan includes an objective of reaching an enrolment of 305 students by the 2027/28 school year. Because the School is a foreign nationals school it must draw its enrolment from the children of foreign national workers employed by local international companies. The border closures due to COVID-19, the zero cases rule and the rule that foreign workers could not bring their dependents into the country has created some severe challenges for increasing enrolment. The recent change that will allow foreign workers to bring dependents into China should provide some opportunity for enrolment increases. The Principal and the Director of Marketing and Office Administration are working constantly to contact local companies, as well as chambers of commerce from the United States, Korea,		



Japan, the Netherlands, and Hong Kong to have local foreign nationals learn about the School. These initiatives will continue in an attempt to increase enrolment.

Commendation:

The Principal and the Director of Marketing and Office Administration are to be commended for their efforts to increase enrolment in very challenging circumstances due to COVID-19 restrictions.

INSPECTION CATALOGUE 2.0

2.02 The Owner/Operator meets all requirements as set forth in the Agreement.

☒ Requirement Met ☐ Requirement Partially Met ☐ Requirement Not Met

Comment:

China Maple Leaf Educational Systems was the first organization to open a British Columbia curriculum school in China. The Owner/Operator has met the requirements of section 5.00 of the Agreement, ensuring that all public announcements regarding the School meet the criteria outlined in section 8.00 of the Agreement. The Owner/Operator is aware of their responsibility to report the dismissal, suspension or discipline of a BC certified teacher as outlined in section 17.00 of the Agreement.

The Owner/Operator meets all requirements as set forth in the Agreement.

2.03 The Owner/Operator has written approval from the appropriate government entity to operate the School, as outlined in section 5.03 of the Agreement.

☒ Requirement Met ☐ Requirement Partially Met ☐ Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The School has submitted a Registration Certificate for Non-Enterprise Private Organization approved by the Dalian Civil Affairs Bureau dated July 28, 2022 and a School License Certificate for Maple Leaf Foreign National Schools - Dalian approved by the Dalian Education Bureau on June 8, 2022.

The School has written approvals from local government authorities to operate the School.



2.04-2.05 The School meets building inspection/safety, food preparation/cafeteria and fire safety codes and regulations. The facilities are deemed to be suitable to support the BC program.

☒ Requirement Met ☐ Requirement Partially Met ☐ Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The School has submitted a building safety inspection certificate effective December 15, 2015 with no expiry date, a fire safety certificate dated April 13, 2017 with no expiry date, a cafeteria food service operation certificate dated November 1, 2021 which expires on November 1, 2026, and a building compliance document and rental agreement effective December 15, 2015 which expires on December 15, 2034.

The School has submitted comprehensive emergencies plans for classroom safety/injuries as well as school evacuation plans, which are practiced several times during each school year. The School has only commenced for 20 days in-person since the start of the school year due to lockdowns as a result of the zero COVID-19 case rules and staff have been teaching remotely from home and from school when the lockdowns occur. In the event of a longer-term closure the head office at Maple Leaf Educational Systems will arrange to move the students and staff to another Maple Leaf building. All the plans have been vetted by the Offshore School Representative (OSR) for accuracy and functionality.

The School must comply with all the restrictions established by the Chinese government with respect to COVID-19. That means that all staff and students must be tested every two days and there is a zero-case policy in place which would require the School to go into lockdown should any cases of COVID-19 be discovered. Anyone entering the School must have a mask. The wearing of masks is mandatory for students and staff once they are inside the School.

2.06 Offshore School Representative (OSR) - The Owner/Operator must appoint an individual to act as an OSR. This individual must be confirmed by the Province and must meet all the requirements set out in section 14 of the Agreement.

☒ Requirement Met ☐ Requirement Partially Met ☐ Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The School has appointed an Offshore School Representative (OSR) who has many years of service in the public education system in British Columbia as well as the independent school system in British Columbia. More recently he served for three years as Superintendent of schools for China Maple Leaf Educational Systems. The OSR is very well qualified to be the Offshore School Representative for the School. He has been confirmed by the Ministry and meets all the requirements of section 14 of the Agreement.



He is aware of his obligation to report critical information relating to changes in the operation of the School or ownership structure that could significantly impact the School's operations.

Commendation:

The Team was pleased to have the OSR present throughout the inspection as he used his knowledge and expertise to assist with the inspection.

2.07 The Principal meets the requirements as outlined in section 2.07 of the Annual Report for offshore schools.

☒ Requirement Met ☐ Requirement Partially Met ☐ Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Principal has extensive experience in two public school districts in British Columbia and has also served a number of years in administration in BC offshore schools. He has served as a department head and vice-principal of the senior secondary school in Dalian before being appointed as the principal of Maple Leaf Foreign Nationals School in Dalian. The Principal obtained his teaching certificate through the Northern Lights Program of Simon Fraser University, holds a degree in Organization Management from Brown University and a Master of Arts in Teaching from Sacred Heart University in Connecticut.

The Principal meets all the requirements outlined in section 2.07 of the Annual Report.

Commendation:

The Principal is to be commended for the outstanding work on the organization of the inspection documentation and his overall support for the inspection process.

2.08 The School meets the administrative support requirements as outlined in section 2.08 of the Annual Report for offshore schools.

☒ Requirement Met ☐ Requirement Partially Met ☐ Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The School presently has two head teachers, one for each campus with 50% of time being devoted to administration and 50% of time devoted to teaching. The School has four secretarial positions and a Director of Marketing and Administration. The School also receives administrative support from China Maple Leaf Educational Systems Head Office including support in human resources, finance and teacher recruitment.

The School meets the administrative support requirements



Commendation:

The Team was pleased to have the Assistant Superintendent available throughout the inspection.

2.09 The School meets the Student Record requirements as outlined in section 2.09 of the Annual Report for offshore schools.

☒ Requirement Met ☐ Requirement Partially Met ☐ Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Team reviewed 19 student records selected at random. Every student record examined contained all the required information listed in section 2.09 of the Annual Report. All student and parent consent forms have been updated for the 2022/23 school year.

Commendation:

The administrative assistants are to be commended for the comprehensive and organized student records which helped to facilitate the work of the inspection.

2.10-2.18 The School meets the teacher certification requirements as outlined in sections 2.10-2.18 of the Annual Report for offshore schools.

☒ Requirement Met ☐ Requirement Partially Met ☐ Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Team examined all teacher files at the School. Two teachers have Letters of Exemption (LOE) and all other teachers have their teaching certificates. The teachers with LOEs are being assisted by MLES head office and the Offshore School Representative (OSR) to help obtain their certification by the expiry date included in their LOE.

The School has five locally certified teachers who all teach Mandarin. All locally certified teachers hold university degrees and have criminal record checks. The school has provided documentation to support this requirement. All employees of the School must have a criminal record check and the School has also provided evidence to that effect.

Commendation:

The administrative assistants are to be commended for the comprehensive and organized teacher files which helped to facilitate the work of the inspection.



2.19 The School meets the requirements for curriculum implementation outlined in section 2.19 of the Annual Report for offshore schools.

☒ Requirement Met

☐ Requirement Partially Met

☐ Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Team reviewed curriculum planning documents and interviewed teachers to confirm that BC's curriculum has been implemented from kindergarten to grade 9.

Maple Leaf curriculum teams created course overviews and unit plans that are used throughout the system. Teachers not familiar with BC's curriculum shared their appreciation for having these documents. Teachers at the School use the Maple Leaf lesson planning template which identifies how Big Ideas, First Peoples Principles of Learning (FPPL), and Core and Curricular Competencies are integrated into the lesson. It was noted that teachers personalize the planning documents to meet the specific learning needs of their students.

A review of curriculum planning documents, formative and summative assessments and learning activities confirmed the fundamental principles undergirding BC's curriculum are being integrated into student learning experiences.

There is a strong sense of collaboration and support amongst the teachers. Teachers often mentioned during interviews that one of the best forms of professional development at the School is teachers working together exploring instructional strategies and teaching resources. Their professional discussions have included initiating student centered/student directed learning and student self-assessment. MLES central coordinators are also working with teachers across the curriculum to integrate numeracy and literacy strategies that will prepare students for the BC Graduation Literacy and Numeracy Assessments.

MLES provides professional development opportunities centrally, but it was pointed out by teachers that foreign nationals schools are unique because their student population is very multicultural. Staff also noted that having the opportunity to network and share best practices with other foreign nationals schools in the system in a "teacher as researcher" model would be welcomed.

Commendation:

The staff is commended for the support and professional learning community they have created to support each other.

The staff is commended for its efforts to create student centered, flexible learning classrooms.



2.20 The School meets the requirements for English language assessment and acquisition as outlined in section 2.20 of the Annual Report for offshore schools.

☒ Requirement Met ☐ Requirement Partially Met ☐ Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The team confirmed that incoming students are assessed by the Principal for program eligibility and placement. At the K-3 level, an interview process with the Principal, student and parent is used for suitability and placement. At the grade 4-9 level, a proficiency test (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) is administered which places the student in the correct classroom for success.

On-going monitoring of language development in students happens through school wide reading and writing assessments, Foundations Skills Assessment testing, and other teacher diagnostic assessments. This assessment data helps teachers provide differentiated instruction to students needing extra support in different areas of language development. Specific English language learning (ELL) support is provided by a trained ELL teacher using a push-in or pull-out model, where the ELL teacher works with groups of language learners outside the regular classroom. The ELL teacher works closely with each teacher to examine the best strategies to use with each student.

2.21(a-e) The School meets the course credit requirements (equivalency, challenge, exemptions and BAA courses) as outlined in section 2.21 (a-e) of the Annual Report for offshore schools.

☒ Requirement Met ☐ Requirement Partially Met ☐ Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Team confirms that academic Chinese and Chinese as a second language (CSL) is scheduled for all students, K-9. These courses are taught by locally certified teachers. No Board/Authority Authorized (BAA) courses or equivalencies are offered at this time.

All Physical Health Education (PHE) courses are taught by BC certified teachers.



2.21(f-g) The School meets the course overview/course planning requirements as outlined in Schedule B Part I, 2. € of the Agreement; namely, that all BC program courses offered in the School meet or exceed Ministry learning outcomes/learning standards identified in the educational program guides for each course.

☒ Requirement Met

☐ Requirement Partially Met

☐ Requirement Not Met

Comment:

A review of the MLFNS-Dalian curriculum planning documents confirmed the School is in compliance with Ministry curricular planning requirements. CMLES has centrally developed course overviews that have been created by curriculum teams comprised of teachers from throughout the CMLES system. These documents are designed to profile the Core, Curricular and content Competencies and First Peoples Principles of Learning (FPPL) at a glance, making prominent filters for unit and lesson planning.

The Team noted that assessments, projects, and teacher interviews clearly indicated the use of Core Competencies and FPPL are woven into every lesson. During the Team's meeting with students, they referenced the Core Competencies and various forms of self, formative and summative assessments as components of the BC program that they particularly appreciated. When we interviewed the students, unfortunately, none of them could articulate information about the FPPL.

The CMLES SharePoint also houses lesson plans, training videos, and other resources to assist with implementing the new frameworks of BC's curriculum. During teacher interviews the Team noted that first year teachers and teachers new to BC's curriculum found these resources very helpful. These curriculum overviews and accompanying lesson plan templates are a valuable instructional planning support for teachers new to BC's curriculum.



2.22 The School meets the instructional time allotment requirements as outlined in section 2.22 of the Annual Report for offshore schools, including the requirements set out in sections 1.1 to 6, with the exception of s. 4(5)(b), 4 (6), 5 (8)(a) and (d) and s. 5.3 of Ministerial Order 41/91, the Educational Standards Order, enacted under the Independent School Act.

☒ Requirement Met ☐ Requirement Partially Met ☐ Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Team confirms that the School meets the requirements for the instructional time allotments. The School operates six hours per instructional day, for a total of 1,092 instructional hours per year. This exceeds the minimum number of hours required for K-9 instruction.

2.23 The School meets the assessment methods requirements as outlined in section 2.23 of the Annual Report for offshore schools.

☒ Requirement Met ☐ Requirement Partially Met ☐ Requirement Not Met

Comment:

MLFNS-Dalian curriculum planning documents clearly identify formative, summative and student self-assessment activities. Interviews with teachers confirmed that summative assessments are common, and formative and student self-assessments play a major role in developing student learning profiles. It was also noted that teachers use a variety of marking rubrics and the BC performance standards when planning their lessons and assessing student learning. Teachers noted that because of the consistent school wide use of these tools they were seeing an improvement in students' ability to self-assess and think critically. Their observations were confirmed by students during the Team' meeting with students.

BC provincial assessments are invigilated and secure according to the Ministry requirements.

Commendation:

The staff is commended for the use of rubrics and performance standards to assess student learning, as well as their focus on student self-assessment of the Core Competencies.



2.24 The School meets the learning resources requirements as outlined in section 2.24 of the Annual Report for offshore schools.
☒ Requirement Met ☐ Requirement Partially Met ☐ Requirement Not Met

Comment:

MLFNS-Dalian has a library that gives students access to a leveled book collection. In addition, the School has access to the MLIS-Dalian library which is much larger and houses a more extensive collection of print and non-print resources. Teachers use Fountas and Pinnell as a language assessment tool and “Epic” digital library (an e-reader of books and videos) to assign books to individual students or class groups. Epic integrates well with Fountas and Pinnell and is a student friendly platform. Teachers also use Newsela, an instructional content platform which has topics in every subject area of interest to students and aligns with BC’s curriculum standards. The School also has subscriptions to Reading A-Z and IXL, a digital learning platform for kindergarten to grade 9 math support.

The MLIS-Dalian library also has ProQuest and Sora by Overdrive as part of its digital collection. ProQuest is a Canadian Curriculum Edition E-library with an online database that includes full-text magazines, newspapers and reference books. It also has an extensive collection of maps, photos, and TV and radio transcripts. Sora by Overdrive is an online database of eBooks that is best suited for middle and high school aged students where they can assign books, save notes and highlights, and track the number of books read and total reading time.

Commendation:

The staff is commended for its extensive use of digital platforms to differentiate their instruction and support student learning.

2.25 The School meets the student progress report requirements as outlined in section 2.25 of the Annual Report for offshore schools.
☒ Requirement Met ☐ Requirement Partially Met ☐ Requirement Not Met

Comment:

Grades 1 to 5 students receive three formal report cards (December, April and July) and three informal reports (October, March and May) each year. Grades 6 to 9 students receive four formal report cards (November, January, April, July) and two interim reports (September, March) each year. Parent-teacher interviews are scheduled in the middle of each term and a student-led interview is scheduled mid-year. Parents can communicate with teachers at any time using email or Microsoft Teams, and when required, school secretaries are available as translators.



The School uses PowerSchool to collect marks for grades 5 to 9 and generate reports. Other forms of communication include a bi-monthly newsletter to profile school activities and monthly assemblies. Parents have an open invitation to attend school-wide assemblies at which students present their projects and share their talents and abilities.

Commendation:

The leadership and staff are commended for building a positive learning climate for both staff and students. There is a strong sense of purpose in creating a professional learning community that supports everyone (students, staff, and parents). All activities are developed with a clear focus on growth and making data-driven decisions in improving the implementation of curriculum and assessment practices.

2.26 The School meets the parent/student handbook requirements as outlined in section 2.26 of the Annual Report for offshore schools.

☒ Requirement Met

☐ Requirement Partially Met

☐ Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The parent/student handbook is current for the 2022/23 school year. The handbook contains a detailed policy for appeals and dispute resolution as required by section 9.14 of the Agreement. The handbook also contains policies on student assessment, admissions, and student conduct.

2.27 The School meets the teacher handbook requirements as outlined in section 2.27 of the Annual Report for offshore schools.

☒ Requirement Met

☐ Requirement Partially Met

☐ Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The teacher handbook has been updated as required for the 2022/23 school year and includes a table of contents. The handbook also contains policies for resolving student and parent conflicts as well as policies on teacher evaluations and administrator evaluations.

It is acknowledged in the teacher handbook that the Ministry is not a party to the contract of employment between the Owner/Operator and the teacher and that the Ministry is not liable in any event, instance, or circumstance.



2.28 The School meets the Online Learning requirements (formerly Distributed Learning) as outlined in section 18 of the Agreement and section 2.28 of the Annual Report for offshore schools.

☐ Requirement
Met

☐ Requirement
Partially Met

☐ Requirement
Not Met

☒ Not
Applicable

Comment:

The School does not have any students enrolled in Online Learning.

2.29 The School meets the requirements for offering Remote Instruction under the BC Offshore School Remote Instruction Policy and as outlined in section 2.29 of the Annual Report for offshore schools.

☐ Requirement
Met

☐ Requirement
Partially Met

☐ Requirement
Not Met

☒ Not
Applicable

Comment:

The School is not offering Remote Instruction at this time; however, during the considerable length of time the School was in lockdown this semester, teachers at the School had to instruct their students remotely either from home or at school. Only teachers employed by the school were involved in teaching their students remotely during the lockdown and this is captured under the Ministry's Continuity of Learning Policy.

CONCLUSION

Commendations

The Inspection Team wishes to recognize the Owner/Operator, Principal, staff and Offshore School Representative of Maple Leaf Foreign Nationals School – Dalian for:

- their efforts to increase enrolment in very challenging circumstances due to COVID-19 restrictions.
- the availability and assistance of the Offshore Shore Representative (OSR) and Assistant Superintendent throughout the inspection process.
- the outstanding work of the Principal on the organization of the inspection documentation and his overall support for the inspection process.
- the excellent work of the administrative assistants for the well organized and comprehensive student and teacher files.
- the support and professional learning community staff have created to support each other.
- their efforts to create student centered, flexible learning classrooms.



- the use of rubrics and performance standards to assess student learning, as well as their focus on student self-assessment of the Core Competencies.
- their extensive use of digital platforms to differentiate their instruction and support student learning.
- building a positive learning climate for both staff and students. There is a strong sense of purpose in creating a professional learning community that supports everyone (students, staff, and parents). All activities are developed with a clear focus on growth and making data-driven decisions in improving curriculum, and assessment practices.

SUMMATIVE RECOMMENDATION

The Offshore Inspection Team recommends to the Executive Director of the Independent Schools and International Education Branch that Maple Leaf Foreign Nationals School – Dalian *continues to* be recognized as a British Columbia-certified school.

