

# Certification Inspection Report

## BRITISH COLUMBIA PROGRAM

at

CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL - ASTANA

ASTANA

KAZAKHSTAN

OCTOBER 31 - NOVEMBER 1, 2022

## INTRODUCTION

On October 31 and November 1, 2022, a certification inspection was completed on Canadian International School - Astana, 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 Inspector, 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, was Harry Moes.

The School's BC program has an enrolment of 49 students, in grade 10.

During the visit to the School, the Inspector reviewed all standards required in the Agreement and *Operating Manual* and met with the School's Owner/Operator, School Board, Offshore School Representative (OSR), BC Principal, BC teachers and administrative staff.

The Owner/Operator, Ulytau Charitable Foundation, is responsible for the grade 10 BC program. A director of the Ulytau Charitable Foundation was present during the inspection.

The BC program's philosophy, objectives and special features include the objective to provide:

- the best and most current educational practices and methodologies by offering the Canadian (British Columbia) and Kazakhstan education systems.
- a dual track system of education that will prepare students for future studies and careers, whether in Canada, or at home in Kazakhstan.

The Inspector would like to thank Canadian International School - Astana for its hospitality, cooperation, preparedness, and transparency during the inspection visit.



**The School has satisfactorily addressed requirements contained in the previous inspection report.**

☐ Requirement Met
 ☐ Requirement Partially Met
 ☐ Requirement Not Met
 ☒ Not Applicable

**Comment:**

The 2022/23 academic year is the School's first year of operation.

**BUSINESS PLAN 1.0**

**The Owner/Operator has submitted a business plan to the BC Ministry of Education, confirming the sustainability of the program.**

☒ Requirement Met
 ☐ Requirement Partially Met
 ☐ Requirement Not Met

**Comment:**

The capacity of the School's current facility – Canada House, was established by the local education bureau at 50 students. The Ulytau Charitable Foundation and the School's administration remain in discussion on a comprehensive plan to increase student enrollment for 2023/24 in conjunction with a relocation to a new and larger facility.

The School's marketing and student recruitment initiative utilizes multiple social media platforms and onsite opportunities. Canada House serves as the information hub in raising the profile of the School, hosting special events and teacher professional development events.

The Ulytau Foundation website, the landing page which coordinates application materials, as well as ongoing media posts, continues to result in positive responses of interest. At the time of the inspection, 21 students received conditional acceptance offers for the 2023/24 school year.

It is anticipated that the soon to be launched user friendly school website will greatly assist in ongoing recruitment initiatives.

**Commendation:**

The School is commended for the quality of the Annual Report that was submitted to the Ministry. It was detailed and comprehensive and a demonstration of the School's commitment to excellence and accountability.

The School is commended for its immediate response to the suggestions made in the April 2022 Pre-Certification Report aimed at strengthening the School. This response is reflective of the School's desire to create a school culture of continuous improvement.



## 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:**

The Inspector confirmed that the Owner/Operator, the Ulytau Charitable Foundation (the Foundation), meets all the requirements as set forth in the Agreement.

The Foundation is highly supportive of and committed to the success of the School. The Foundation has developed strong relationships with the BC program administration and teachers in tandem with the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The Principal, Offshore School Representative (OSR) and the Director of the Ulytau Charitable Foundation collaboratively participated and supported the October 31 and November 1, 2022, certification inspection.

**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 Inspector confirmed that the School has written approval from the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan, dated June 6, 2022, to operate the School.

The correspondence reviewed details no expiration date.

**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 is housed in a facility known as Canada House, located on the ground floor of the Grand Opera complex. Canada House offers 5,000 sq. ft. of floor space, on two floors for instructional and administrative purposes.



The School utilizes three classrooms including a science classroom, all employing smartboard technology and inclusive of air purification systems. A conference room is available for extra curricular activities, and a staff room affords space for both the BC certified teachers and local teachers.

The capacity of the Canada House facility was established by the local education bureau at 50 students. Since the School plans to have an intake of 75 students for the 2023/24 academic year, the School continues to research and explore larger facility possibilities.

During the inspection, the School secured a space that will allow for all Physical Health and Education classes to be offered in the second semester.

The School has a written emergency plan for natural disasters (i.e., fire, earthquake) with documentation on file which includes a protocol for unplanned temporary or permanent closure of the School. All staff and students take part in emergency drills.

The School's emergency plan was vetted for accuracy and functionality by the Offshore School Representative (OSR) and detailed in the 2022 Annual Report.

**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 appointed Offshore School Representative (OSR) serves as the primary liaison between the Owner/Operator and the Ministry of Education and Child Care. He works closely with the School's administrative team and teachers to address Ministry recommendations and requirements and provides and arranges ongoing professional development.

The OSR, also a director of the School Board, is knowledgeable about all aspects of the School's operations and all related aspects of the Owner/Operator's business operations, governance, and administrative functions of the school, and his obligation to report critical information relating to changes in the operation of the School or ownership structure that could significantly impact school operation.

**Commendation:**

The School is commended for maintaining a relationship with a competent and knowledgeable OSR, allowing for current counsel and ongoing professional development.



### 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 teaching experience overseas, having served in seven different jurisdictions. He received his university training at the University of Ottawa and taught and administered both in Canada and the United States before embracing offshore opportunities.

The Principal is well versed in the latest trends of pedagogy excellence. He provides encouraging leadership and articulates a compelling educational vision. He is described as a caring and professional leader.

#### Commendation:

The School is commended for the Principal providing caring and dedicated leadership, cultivating, and modelling a collaborative teaching and administrative culture, allowing the school to be a safe place for young adults to learn.

### 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's administration team is comprised of the Principal, an Executive Assistant, Dean of Students, marketing/admissions/technology personnel, and a Canada House Director.

The School's administration requirements are shared by members of the administration team and are actively and enthusiastically supported by the Ulytau Charitable Foundation. They employ a collaborative leadership style, capably and effectively supporting the Principal, as they manage, supervise, and evaluate the educational programs at the School.

Collectively professional development activities are promoted and scheduled, and teacher visas and travel arrangements are finalized.

The experienced and bilingual Executive Assistant offers student support and provides a communication bridge between the School and parental community.



**Commendation:**

The School is commended for its governance structure that includes a leadership team that is passionate about the BC educational program and works collaboratively with each other to create the best possible educational environment for students and teachers.

The School is commended for modeling unity of purpose allowing education to take place in a caring respectful environment.

**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:**

A sampling review of student files revealed that the Principal and Administrative Assistant maintain and securely store all student records. Files contain current registration forms, English language assessments (verified by the Principal), the last two report cards and the BC Ministry of Education and Child Care personal (student/parent) information consent forms.

The student progress report cards verify (a) the number of days that students are absent during reporting periods, and (b) the number of days student are late during reporting periods.

The School utilizes QuickSchools as a school administration software application and TRAX to process and transmit student data to the Ministry. Student information is appropriately and safely backed up as required.

**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 Inspector reviewed a sampling of teacher files and confirmed that all Authorized Persons under the Agreement possess valid and current certification under the BC Ministry of Education and Child Care. The Inspector verified that teacher files contain current teacher contact information, a copy of the Authorized Person's work permit or visa, as well as copies of teacher evaluation and teacher growth plans.

Employment contracts between teachers and the Owner/Operator clearly outline the terms of employment. Employment contracts acknowledge that the Province of British Columbia is



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

The Inspector confirms that all Authorized Persons under the Agreement possess valid and current certification under the Ministry.

The Inspector verified that locally certified teachers have valid local certification and that criminal record checks were appropriately filed.

### **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:**

Aspects of the School's curriculum planning documentation were reviewed during the inspection and teachers were given the opportunity to offer perspective and context during interviews.

Teachers shared planning documentation and techniques which revealed a degree of flexibility to allow teachers to express their individual creativity in implementation.

The School has developed course planning documentation and implemented curriculum delivery to reflect all the required elements and provided evidence of curriculum documentation compliance.

The School's planning documentation template details the (a) integration of the Big Ideas, learning standards, Curricular Competencies, Core Competencies, First Peoples Principles of Learning (FPPL), and (b) ensures that assessment (self-Assessment and classroom assessment) supports student learning in each course.

A small staff has allowed for common planning consultations providing opportunity to plan instruction and create relevant activities linking the Core Competencies and First Peoples Principles of Learning.

#### **Commendation:**

The School is commended for the purposeful curriculum planning which revealed teachers as reflective practitioners as they manage ongoing curricular development.

The School is commended for the ongoing shift from teacher centered learning to inquiry based, collaborative, and Core Competency-based learning and assessment.



**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 Principal oversees the admissions process and is responsible for making final decisions with respect to student assessment and admission. During the School's start up, student assessments were completed under the supervision of the Acting Principal.

It is noteworthy that the School fielded nearly 700 expressions of interested families, which resulted in the need to fully process 140 completed applications. All students enrolled are on full scholarships.

The School's admission process is extensive and rigorous. In addition to completing language assessments, all applicants are interviewed and are required to present a portfolio. The School has partnered with Nelson Canada to provide English language proficiency assessment in each year of the School's program to provide data on the gains made by students and inform program delivery.

Strategies employed to improve student English language acquisition and proficiency include—multi modal presentation; using think-pair-share; pre-teaching subject-specific vocabulary; 'chunking' lessons into 5–15-minute intervals; speech modification when lecturing and giving instructions; and incorporating interactive and kinesthetic activities permitting students to move and take short, regular 'brain breaks' from the full-immersion environment.

All students are enrolled in four English 10 course offerings—Composition, Literary Studies, New Media, and Spoken Language.

**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 School does not offer Board/Authority Authorized Courses (BAA).





**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:

Curriculum planning documentation was reviewed by the Inspector, and classroom visitation and teacher interviews provided clarity and context. The usage of a common template provided school wide direction in ensuring that all required elements are incorporated when course planning.

Teachers spoke knowledgeably about curriculum implementation and about their assessment practices. It was clear that teachers understood the intersections between the Big Ideas, learning standards, Curricular Competencies, Core Competencies, First Peoples Principles of Learning and teacher assessment and student self-assessment.

There was evidence of a wide range of learning activities, including inquiry-based questions, global citizenship connections and potential English Language Learning (ELL) teaching strategies. The teaching staff employs a variety of formative and summative assessment practices.

**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:

All students in grade 10 are in their first year of working towards dual graduation certification, earning both a BC Dogwood Diploma and a Kazakhstan High School Diploma.

The School provides 5.8 hours of BC program instruction per day over 181 days per year for a total of 1050 hours of instruction per school year; this exceeds the Ministry minimum requirement of instructional hours per year.



**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:**

The Inspector confirmed that teachers use multiple formative and summative assessment practices that align with BC's curriculum. Teachers provided examples of how they are using competency-based assessments to inform student learning. Formative assessment (for and as) strategies include use of descriptive feedback, in-class questioning, citation practise, peer assessment, and teacher observation.

Students interviewed confirmed they receive opportunities to demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways. The completion of a unit normally leads to a summative assessment. During labs, simulations, field studies, fairs and competitions students are provided experiential, holistic opportunities to demonstrate strengths, as well as make connections to real life applications, including societal impacts.

The BC Numeracy and Literacy Assessments have been scheduled for Spring 2023. The School is aware of the requirements that (a) all devices used for the assessments need to have installed the e-assessment Security control; (b) each workstation and device that will be used for Provincial Graduation Assessments meets the computer and browser requirements; and (c) and that only BC certified teachers invigilate the assessments.

**Commendation:**

The School is commended for utilizing student performance data to inform and support current and future strategic planning for continuous school improvement and enhanced student learning.

**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:**

Students are asked to bring their personal laptops or tablets to school. This allows students to work with word processors, spreadsheets, programming languages and electronic network systems.

The developing Learning Commons at the School has a digital emphasis. The school community has access to the EBSCO Explora online platform. Explora ensures that students and educators can quickly find the reliable information they need to complete homework



and research projects, deliver curriculum and achieve professional goals. The digital platform is intended to be supported by hard copy titles in fiction and non-fiction.

Each classroom is equipped with smartboards, allowing teachers and students to learn collaboratively, share files, access online resources, and use educational software.

As with all learning resources, computer technology used in the School is evaluated and approved with consideration given to curriculum fit, pedagogy, social considerations, age and developmental appropriateness.

**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:

The School reports to parents six times each school year with four formal reports per school year. Progress reports include attendance, work habits, letter grades, and teacher comments. Student self reflection of the Core Competencies are filed appropriately. Parent-teacher interviews are held twice each semester. Additional parent-teacher interviews are scheduled when necessary.

Parents and students have access to the QuickSchools Learning Management System, providing real-time information regarding attendance and progress.

**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, available in English, is descriptive, informative, and current. It includes a message from the Principal and details the School's vision/mission/philosophy; calendar; student behaviour and attendance expectations; parental appeal policy, attendance; curriculum (know-do-understand model and the Core Competencies); assessment; learning resources; extra curricular, uniform and technology policies; and emergency procedures.



**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 details the School's vision/mission philosophy; governance and administration, admissions, calendar, attendance expectations; student supervision; records management, student assessment and code of conduct; dispute resolution; contractual, certification and confidentiality expectations; health and safety and emergency procedures.

Teachers and administrators are evaluated as required and respective policies were reviewed.

**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 offer Online Learning courses.

**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 does not offer Remote Instruction courses.



## CONCLUSION

### Commendations

**The Inspector wishes to recognize the Owner/Operator, Principal, staff, and Offshore School Representative (OSR) of Canadian International School – Astana for:**

- the quality of the Annual Report that was submitted to the Ministry. It was detailed and comprehensive and a demonstration of the School's commitment to excellence and accountability.
- its immediate response to the suggestions made in the April 2022 Pre-Certification Report aimed at strengthening the School, reflective of the School's desire to create a culture of continuous improvement.
- maintaining a relationship with a competent and knowledgeable OSR, allowing for current counsel and ongoing professional development.
- employing a principal provides caring and dedicated leadership, while cultivating and modelling a collaborative teaching and administrative culture, allowing the School to be a safe place for young adults to learn.
- its governance structure that includes a leadership team that is passionate about the BC educational program and works collaboratively with each other to create the best possible educational environment for students and teachers.
- modeling unity of purpose allowing education to take place in a caring respectful environment.
- the purposeful curriculum planning which revealed teachers as reflective practitioners as they manage ongoing curricular development.
- the ongoing shift from teacher centered learning to inquiry based, collaborative, and Core Competency-based learning and assessment.
- utilizing student performance data to inform and support current and future strategic planning for continuous school improvement and enhanced student learning.

### SUMMATIVE RECOMMENDATION

**The Inspector recommends to the Executive Director of the Independent Schools and International Education Branch that, the British Columbia education program offered at Canadian International School–Astana be recognized as a British Columbia-certified school.**

