

Certification Inspection Report

BRITISH COLUMBIA PROGRAM

at

CANADA SHANDONG SECONDARY SCHOOL

TAI'AN, SHANDONG PROVINCE

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

NOVEMBER 8-9, 2022

INTRODUCTION

On November 8 and 9, 2022, an online certification inspection was completed on Canada Shandong Secondary School (CSSS) in Tai'an, Shandong Province referred to as the School in this report. The School was closed during the inspection due to a COVID-19 outbreak but the online inspection continued with the necessary contingencies. 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 Bob Eslinger and Cathy Lowenstein who served as Chair for this inspection.

The School's BC program has an enrolment of 64 students, in grades 10-12. The BC program is housed within a larger school, Taishin High School of Shandong Province (THSSP), a grades 9-12 Chinese high school with approximately 3000 students. The entire campus houses several different educational programs on their site. The BC program operates out of the international building on campus.

The entire school, which houses the BC program, enrolls approximately 3500 students.

During the visit to the School, the Team reviewed all standards required in the Agreement and *Operating Manual* and met with the School's Owner/Operator, Offshore School Representative (OSR), BC Principal, BC teachers, Acting Director of International Programs and the Administrator of Student Records.



The Owner/Operator, Canadian-Sino Education Exchange Centre (CSEEC), is responsible for the BC program. CSEEC operates three other BC offshore schools in China. The Owner/Operator has an additional company based out of Vancouver, BC that operates a Group 4 independent school.

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

Mission Statement:

"We are dedicated to preparing our students for success in a rapidly changing world by providing a supportive English learning environment that recognizes and respects individual differences, encourages students to challenge personal limits and promotes excellence."

Philosophy, Objectives and Special Features include:

- provide a safe and comfortable learning environment – clear expectations with natural consequences,
- encourage tolerance and diversity by respecting individual differences,
- model good citizenship and leadership,
- help students set and achieve attainable goals, along with systems to achieve those goals, and
- teach knowledge and skills that can be used in both real world and classroom settings.

The special features of the School as identified by the Owner/Operator, OSR, Principal, and International Director is the small, cohesive staff and the strength of the BC program as an international option in the community.

The Team would like to thank Canada Shandong Secondary School for its cooperation and preparedness for the 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
<p>Comment:</p> <p>The School had one requirement in the 2021 inspection report: Course planning documents for Mandarin 10, 11 and 12 and Physical Health Education 10 require updating to comply with the current BC Curriculum Framework.</p>			
<p>CSSS is commended for updating the course planning documents to comply with the current BC framework.</p>			



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
<p>Comment:</p> <p>The School has been in operation since 2010, but enrolment has been declining each year since 2018. Although the School has submitted a plan for conservative school growth, all plans are made knowing the current realities of a global pandemic which is not yet over. Until the effects of the COVID-19 global pandemic are greatly diminished over time, the planning for enrolment growth may be difficult.</p> <p>As one can imagine, almost all critical elements contributing to the operation of a successful international school depend to some extent on domestic and global travel, which is still restricted coming into China and going out of China. Furthermore, parent concerns for their children studying abroad at this time were identified as factors impacting enrolment.</p> <p>The enrolment forecast for the next five years remains constant at 60-70 students. This is far below the optimal number that the school would hope for, yet they are trying their best to continue to recruit students who desire an excellent BC education. One advantage is that there is little competition in the area and all students graduate with both a Chinese and BC graduation diploma.</p> <p>The goals of the program for 2022/23 include the successful implementation of a literacy and numeracy enhancement program which integrate the goals and values of the BC language courses. The final objective is to provide new students with additional language training. The course itself is an intense English language learning (ELL) session and its success will be measured in the competency levels and grades of the students.</p> <p>Another goal is the continued improvement of standards related to grading and competencies. This is a cultural and social challenge that requires care and a communicative approach with parents and Chinese staff. There is no yardstick that can be used yet to measure progress. However, there is a degree of acceptance and understanding that can be seen in the realistic grades and understanding over the past two years.</p> <p>There have been various recruitment strategies to increase enrolment in the BC graduation program. The marketing plan has centered around initiatives that would attract more families and students to consider a BC education for their children. Various strategies include attendance at school recruitment fairs, open houses, host school website advertising and recruitment visits to nearby middle schools.</p>		



Last year, the BC staff participated in the distribution of recruitment flyers outside of other middle schools during the tenth grade entrance examinations for high schools. Many short advertisements were also sent out on social media. The comprehensive marketing strategy, while important, continues to be just one piece of the complicated scenario present in China.

The School's target market is primarily local students in the city of Tai'an. Most families in this region speak very little English. Most have traditional Chinese values of hard work, high achievements, respect for elders and respect for each other. The attitude of the families towards education and their child is that they want the very best in education.

The yearly budget is created by the Owner/Operator with input from the Offshore School Representative (OSR) and Principal. Human resources at the School is handled by the OSR with input from the Owner/Operator and Principal. The administration is led by the BC Principal with guidance from the OSR and the Owner/Operator. The educational program is developed in consultation with the OSR but the final decision rests with the BC Principal.

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 Team confirmed that the Owner/Operator meets all requirements as set forth in the Agreement. The Owner/Operator is highly supportive of and committed to the success of the School. He has developed strong relationships with BC program administrators and teachers as well as the host school administration.

Even with difficulties with travel to China, the Owner/Operator was able to participate virtually for the inspection while he completed his quarantine in China. His plan is to stay in China for two months to support his system of schools as a follow up to the 2022 inspection.

Commendation:

The Team commends the Owner/Operator for being highly supportive of and committed to the success of the School.



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 Team reviewed the documentation provided for the virtual inspection that confirmed support to operate the BC program, including:

- a letter from the Shandong Province Education Bureau providing the initial approval for Taishin High School of Shandong Province (THSSP) to hold a foreign high school curriculum (May 10, 2010).
- a letter from the Shandong Province Education Bureau providing ongoing approval to enroll 60 new students each year (June 2, 2021).
- a People's Republic of China Certificate of Public Institution with Legal Person Status certificate (valid from March 8, 2021, to March 31, 2026).

The above three approvals were locally translated.

The current/ongoing approval document, a dual Chinese/English certified letter from the Shandong Tai'an Bureau of Education, states there is no objection to the Owner/Operator, CSEEC, operating CSSS within THSSP (valid November 20, 2017, to December 2022). The letter references no objections to the three items noted in 5.03 of the Agreement.

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 CSSS facility is housed on the third and forth floors of the four-story "Yi Zhi" building on the Taishan High School campus.

The Team viewed translated documents regarding local and provincial building, safety and cafeteria codes in addition to translated documents that demonstrated evidence that the School is in compliance with local Chinese regulations in terms of building inspections, approvals, and cafeteria licensing.

The Team reviewed a comprehensive school emergency plan and protocols that describe actions that are to be taken in the event an emergency should occur that would cause an unplanned temporary or permanent closure of the School mainly due to natural disasters



(fire, flood, earthquake, etc.) The plan includes health and safety protocols implemented due to the COVID-19 pandemic which has been reviewed by the staff and vetted by the Offshore School Representative (OSR) for accuracy and functionality.

The Contingency Plan Committee will direct the School's response to a temporary school closure due to a pandemic or BC teachers being off site due to pandemic travel restrictions. The committee will include a representative from the host Chinese school in decision making. The Team verifies that facilities at this time are deemed suitable to support the BC program.

Commendation:

The Team commends the School for having a comprehensive school emergency plan that is communicated to the staff and school community.

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 Offshore School Representative (OSR) is an experienced leader in BC offshore school programs. He is the approved OSR for other CSEEC schools as well and has had many years of significant experience to guide and support the School. His vast experience, knowledge and leadership were invaluable to CSSS under trying conditions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The longstanding and successful partnership of the OSR and the Owner/Operator and has enabled the School to weather some difficult enrolment trends over the past several years. The OSR was present during the recent inspection and provided background and context to school matters where needed.

The Team examined the OSR's job description and confirms that he has the right to legally represent the Owner/Operator in dealings with the Ministry. The job description outlines the responsibility of the OSR to the Owner/Operator and to the School and teachers. These responsibilities are in conformity with section 14 of the Agreement.

The OSR 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 commends the longstanding, sustainable and successful partnership of the OSR and the Owner/Operator has enabled the School to remain a viable BC offshore school.



2.07 The Principal meets the requirements as outlined in section 2.07 of the Inspection Catalogue for offshore schools.

☒ Requirement Met ☐ Requirement Partially Met ☐ Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Principal has had significant experience working in China, becoming the Principal of CSSS in this current school year. Prior to that, he was a teacher at CSSS for three years.

The Team noted the diligence and resiliency of the Principal in leading a BC offshore school during a turbulent start to the school year due to COVID-19 lock-downs. Furthermore, the Team appreciated the Principal's candor and honesty which proved to be helpful in enabling a fulsome and updated understanding of the enrolment and marketing challenges that are present at the School.

The Principal is responsible for all duties laid out in section 2.07 of the Annual Report and he fulfills all areas competently.

Commendation:

The Team commends the diligence and resiliency of the Principal in leading a BC offshore school during a turbulent start to the school year due to COVID-19 lock-downs.

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

☒ Requirement Met ☐ Requirement Partially Met ☐ Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The School meets the administrative support requirements as outlined in section 2.08 of the Annual Report. The Administrative Assistant with support from the Director of the International Department manages the administration of the School. They both have excellent engagement with the BC program, manage all student records and offer full student support with university applications. Most notably, they look after the data submission to the Ministry, admission requirements, student records as well as general support for the BC teachers. This also encompasses banking, work visas and permits and translations.

Furthermore, the administrative support team takes a lead role in recruitment activities for the BC program. Both roles are integral to the management of this department.



Commendation:

The support staff is to be commended for their excellent engagement with the BC program, organization of all student records and full student support with university applications.

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

☒ Requirement Met ☐ Requirement Partially Met ☐ Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Team met with the Administrative Assistant who is responsible for the administration of all documentation and who assists the Principal in the day-to-day administration duties. The School is using WebTESS student information system and it was reported that the Permanent Student Records are stored appropriately, with hard copies being placed in the student files and securely backed up on hard drives.

Despite the limitations of a virtual inspection, the Team was able to verify that student records were well organized and up to date including updated consent forms.

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

☒ Requirement Met ☐ Requirement Partially Met ☐ Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The School has four staff members in total. One of the positions is held by the Principal who has a Professional Certificate of Qualification.

One teacher has a valid Letter of Exemption (LOE) in place while his application is under review by the Teacher Regulation Branch (TRB). The OSR confirmed that he is following up on the status of this application on a regular basis, as the LOE will expire on January 20, 2023.

The Principal provides support and mentorship where possible to the teacher who is on an LOE. Due to the small size of the School, there is a strong collaborative relationship between the Principal and all staff.

The Team confirms that all locally certified teachers who are teaching the exempted courses, as well as the Chinese support staff, have current criminal record checks in place.



The Team confirms that all Authorized Persons under the Agreement possess valid and current certification under the Ministry of Education and Child Care.

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

☒ Requirement Met ☐ Requirement Partially Met ☐ Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Team examined course planning documents, and engaged in online interviews with teachers, the Principal and a selection of students. The Team can confirm that all requirements have been met for the implementation of BC's curriculum. The Team was also able to determine that staff were genuinely eager to further the implementation of BC's curriculum through professional development that is focused on assessment practices and the application of First Peoples Principles of Learning (FPPL) across the curriculum.

Annual course plans are constructed using a common planning template and all highlight the many necessary components. It was also determined that the First Peoples Principles of Learning are clearly incorporated as this was evidenced in the course planning documents, as well as through interviews with the teaching staff.

Commendation:

The Team commends the staff on the utilization of a common course planning template that meets all components of BC's curriculum.

The Team commends the staff for their efforts in ensuring the implementation of BC's curriculum in all courses on a day-to day basis.

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

☒ Requirement Met ☐ Requirement Partially Met ☐ Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The School administers an English language assessment to all prospective grade 10 students. It is the role of the Principal to oversee the assessment process and selection of students for the BC program.

English language development receives a very high priority in the BC program. The School is implementing a robust English language learning (ELL) focus that includes a literacy and numeracy enhancement program with the goal of strengthening student's English language acquisition and proficiency. In this enhancement program grade 10 and 11 students take a



literacy based course offered by the School to close the gap that exists between student provincial literacy assessment results and the target ELL student levels. To this end, the School has created an ELL specialist position not only to provide ongoing English language assessment, but also to develop and implement interventions for students. This specialist teacher also provides support to teachers and is working to foster a school ethic that “all teachers are teachers of English”.

Through the interview process the Team learned that over the past few years the grade 10 cohort has been admitted with lower than typical English proficiency scores. The Team suggests that the School revisit the English language entrance criteria to address this concern.

Commendation:

The School is to be commended for its focus on English language skill acquisition featuring an ELL specialist teacher position, ongoing English language assessment, and expanding the library resources to be both relevant and appealing to students.

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 Inspection Catalogue for offshore schools.

☒ Requirement Met ☐ Requirement Partially Met ☐ Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Team confirms that the School meets the course credit requirements (equivalency, challenge, exemptions, and Board/Authority Authorized (BAA) courses) as outlined in section 2.21 of the Annual Report. Exempted courses offered by locally certified teachers include Physical Health Education 10, and Mandarin 10, 11 and 12. Letters granting permission for the exemptions are on file. The course planning documents for these courses align with the framework for BC’s curriculum and include all components including the First Peoples Principles of Learning.

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

☒ Requirement Met ☐ Requirement Partially Met ☐ Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Team reviewed all course planning documents, overviews, and sample assessment rubrics, and determined that all grade 10-12 course planning documents meet the



requirements of BC's curriculum. Through a review of documents, as well as through teacher and student interviews, it was confirmed that a wide range of instructional strategies and assessment practices are being used at the School. Students are given the opportunity to demonstrate their learning through the creation of posters, presentations, academic reports, essays, lab experiments, and projects.

In order to assist teachers in their professional growth, the Principal provides classroom teachers with the opportunity to take part in a personalized professional development plan that is based on in-class observations resulting in consistent support, opportunities for professional reflection, and colleague mentoring.

2.22 The School meets the instructional time allotment requirements as outlined in section 2.22 of the Inspection Catalogue 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 confirmed that BC teachers provide five hours of instruction per day for 185 days for a total of 925 hours of instruction annually. CSSS students also take additional Chinese classes outside the five hours per day necessary to complete the Chinese diploma requirements.

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

☒ Requirement Met ☐ Requirement Partially Met ☐ Requirement Not Met

Comment:

Through a review of course planning documents and interviews with staff, the Team confirmed that both formative and summative assessment practices are being utilized by teachers. Students demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways and receive regular and frequent feedback.

Teachers use WebTESS and Microsoft Teams in their teaching and assessment practices and it is believed that the grades reported accurately reflect student performance. The BC teaching staff are supported in further developing their assessment practices through ongoing professional development and collaborative sessions.



The Team confirmed that appropriate security and invigilation procedures are in place for BC provincial assessments. Planning is underway for grade 10 students to write the grade 10 BC Graduation Numeracy and Literacy Assessments. The Principal has confirmed that grade 12 students have written the grade 12 Graduation Literacy Assessment.

2.24 The School meets the learning resources requirements as outlined in section 2.24 of the Inspection Catalogue for offshore schools.

☒ Requirement Met ☐ Requirement Partially Met ☐ Requirement Not Met

Comment:

Given the limitations of a virtual inspection it was not possible to visit classrooms, computer labs, or the library to witness the range of teaching resources available. However, through teacher interviews it became apparent that many digital resources are available while expanding the fiction collection is an ongoing goal.

Teachers reported having access to computer labs; however, they stated that many of the computers require maintenance, an updated operating system, and software updates. The Team learned that this has been brought forward to the Principal.

The school uses Microsoft Teams and WebTESS to support student learning and collaboration. The School also makes use of digital resources located on a SharePoint site designed for this purpose.

2.25 The School meets the student progress report requirements as outlined in section 2.25 of the Inspection Catalogue for offshore schools.

☒ Requirement Met ☐ Requirement Partially Met ☐ Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The School operates on a two semester and four term system. Formal reports are issued in October, December, February, March, May and June.

The School invites parents and students to three-way conferences twice per year, and issues interim reports as deemed necessary. Microsoft Teams is used by teachers as a gradebook system; students and parents can access marks-to-date at any time. The Team reviewed samples of the formal report cards for students in grades 10, 11 and 12 and can confirm they contain the required elements for compliance with the Ministry's Student Progress Report Order.



Teaching Assistants (TAs) are assigned to each grade who communicate regularly with parents to update them on their child's progress at school. Parents are encouraged to call the School anytime to ask questions or set up in person meetings to discuss their child's progress. Much of this work is done through Microsoft Teams.

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

☒ Requirement Met ☐ Requirement Partially Met ☐ Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Team reviewed the 2022/23 parent-student handbook which describes admissions, BC curriculum, timetable, assessment and reporting, as well as the School's rules of conduct. The policies for appeals and dispute resolution are also included.

The handbook covers all the essential information a family would need, including all course descriptions and emergency procedures. The handbook is also translated into Chinese.

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

☒ Requirement Met ☐ Requirement Partially Met ☐ Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Team reviewed the School's 2022/23 teacher handbook which contains detailed information to enable teachers to be successful in their roles within the BC program. The School's mission and philosophy, professional responsibilities, school organization, and school routines are included as well as general policies regarding student attendance, assessment, and parent appeals. Specific to teachers is information about their performance reviews, record keeping, the School's progressive discipline policy, and emergency procedures.

During the inspection the Team suggested the School develop a process for ensuring the documents and dates within the handbook are always current.



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 Inspection Catalogue for offshore schools.

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

Comment:
The School does not offer 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 any courses through Remote Instruction under the BC Offshore School Remote Instruction Policy; however, due to occasional closures due to COVID-19, it is sometimes necessary for courses to be taught remotely under the Continuity of Learning Policy.

CONCLUSION

Commendations

The Inspection Team wishes to recognize the Owner/Operator, Principal, staff and Offshore School Representative (OSR) of Canada Shandong Secondary School for:

- the diligence and resiliency of the Principal in leading a BC offshore school during a turbulent start to the school year due to COVID-19 lock-downs.
- a comprehensive emergency plan that is communicated to the staff and school community.
- the diligence of teachers to manage their teaching practice given the current reality of a lock-down and the difficult start to the school year.
- the utilization of a common course planning template that meets all components of BC's curriculum.
- the positive relationship with the host school, which bodes well for all students and faculty.
- the efforts of the staff to ensure the implementation of BC's curriculum in all courses on a day-to day basis.
- students being actively engaged in their learning and excited for the journey ahead including transitioning into university.



- the focus on English language skill acquisition featuring an English language learning (ELL) specialist teacher position, ongoing English language assessment, and expanding the library resources to be both relevant and appealing to students-
- the highly supportive and committed Owner/Operator which contributes to the success of the School.
- the longstanding, sustainable and successful partnership of the OSR and the Owner/Operator which has enabled the School to remain a viable BC offshore school.
- the excellent engagement of the support staff with the BC program, as well as their organization of all student records and student management with university applications.

SUMMATIVE RECOMMENDATION

The Offshore Inspection Team recommends to the Executive Director of the Independent Schools and International Education Branch that, the British Columbia education program offered at Canada Shandong Secondary School *continues* to be recognized as a British Columbia-certified school.

