

Certification Inspection Report

BRITISH COLUMBIA PROGRAM

at

BUNKA SUGINAMI CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

TOKYO

JAPAN

NOVEMBER 17-18, 2022

INTRODUCTION

On November 17 and 18, 2022, an in-person certification inspection was completed on Bunka Suginami Canadian International School in Tokyo, Japan, 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 Alan Schroeder and Dr. David Loewen, who served as Chair for this inspection.

The School's BC program has an enrolment of 195 students, in grades 7 and grades 9-12. The BC program is housed within a larger host school, Bunka Suginami Junior and Senior High School. The host school enrolls over 1200 students and was established in 1974.

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, Principal and Vice-Principals of the host school, Offshore School Representative (OSR), BC Principal, BC teachers, and a sampling of BC students.

The Owner/Operator, Bunka Suginami Educational Foundation, is responsible for the BC program. The representative of the Foundation, Ms. Aizawa, the Chair of the board, also oversees the host school. The BC program is in its eighth year of operation and the Owner/Operator has expressed continued support for the program and its ongoing growth.

The BC program's philosophy, objectives and special features include the mission "to provide a dual Japanese and BC high school graduation program. Opening as many doors as possible for



our students to actively and meaningfully participate as global citizens. We empower student learning through a Know-Do-Understand model”.

The Team would like to thank Bunka Suginami Canadian International School for its hospitality, cooperation, and preparedness for the inspection visit.

The School has satisfactorily addressed requirements contained in the previous inspection report.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Not Met	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
<p>Comment:</p> <p>There were no requirements in the previous report from 2021 while the School positively responded to suggestions made by the previous inspection team.</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 developed a business plan that confirms the sustainability of the program. This year the School has added grade 7 and will add grade 8 for next year. As the BC program grows the host school has provided instructional space for the increase in students. The School's stated capacity is 288 students.</p> <p>The School has a detailed plan to market itself that starts with “ensuring current students and parents are happy/satisfied” and includes a wide variety of in-person, print and digital strategies to draw attention to the BC program.</p> <p>The School has set a significant number of goals for the 2022/23 school year including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consistently use Assessment for Learning practices to inform and direct teaching. • embed First Peoples Principles of Learning in each lesson. • promote inquiry based learning in all classes. • actively support grade 12 students for successful admission to universities. • continue to nurture students' social-emotional wellbeing. • improve student achievement and participation in class. • improve literacy development across the curriculum. 		



Commendation:

The School is commended for creating a five-year plan that is adjusted annually and for setting clear annual goals and for providing regular support, strategies, and direction to facilitate teachers' success in achieving these goals.

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 is meeting all items as set forth in the Agreement. The Team met with the representative of the Owner/Operator, the Chair of the foundation. The Owner/Operator has demonstrated strong support for the BC program since its founding 8 years ago and continues to show that same support moving forward. This is clearly evidenced in the Owner/Operator's support for the addition of a junior high program (grades 7-9).

The Owner/Operator often hosts schools curious about the BC program and spends significant time promoting the BC program.

Commendation:

The School is commended for the Owner/Operator's strong support of the BC program and for the positive working relationship between the host school and the BC program.

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 confirmed that the Owner/Operator has a letter on file dated May 15, 2015 confirming approval for ongoing operations of the BC program. The Team also reviewed a business license certified by the Tokyo government dated March 4, 2020, and a "Letter of No Objection" dated September 19, 2020. All translations of these letters were verified.



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 exists in two large, four storey buildings on 21,903 square meters. There are 38 classrooms, three home economics rooms, two science labs, two art rooms, a calligraphy room, two computer labs, a tea ceremony room, a library, a cafeteria, four music rooms, four gymnasiums, four soft tennis courts, a multi-surface playing field, two staff rooms, a roof top driving range, administrative offices, break out rooms, and various specialty rooms (Kendo, Kyudo, and Naginata). The buildings meet the strict Japanese building, earthquake and fire code requirements.

The Team reviewed the following documents that serve to fulfill the building inspection/safety, fire safety codes and regulations and deems the buildings ideal to support the BC program:

- Report of Fire Safety Inspection
- Cafeteria Operating License
- Evacuation Drills

The Team also observed detailed evacuation plans that have been vetted by the Offshore School Representative (OSR). The Team also observed that the School has a standing "School Closure Committee" that is responsible for ensuring contingency plans are in place in any event that would cause an unplanned temporary or permanent closure of the School. The plans have been vetted by the OSR for accuracy and functionality. The Team reviewed the committee's plans and confirmed they fulfill the expectations of the Ministry of Education and Child Care.

The Team also noted that the School continues to follow all local COVID-19 safety protocols and has navigated COVID-19 well.



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 Team observed that the Owner/Operator has appointed an individual to act as the Offshore School Representative (OSR) who meets all the requirements set out in section 14 of the Agreement and has been confirmed by the Ministry as suitable for this position.

The OSR has been with the School since its inception and is committed to its success. She is intimately aware of the challenges and celebrations of the School and communicates weekly with the leadership team to help them succeed. The OSR is highly knowledgeable about all aspects of the School and is fully aware of her responsibility to report any critical information relating to changes in the operation of the School or ownership structure that could significantly impact the School's operation.

Commendation:

The School is commended for contracting with a highly competent and committed OSR who is fully engaging in the supporting the success of the School.

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 is in his second year at the School and has served as an administrator in both onshore and offshore BC Schools prior to this engagement. The Principal meets all the requirements as outlined in section 2.07 of the Annual Plan for offshore schools. The Principal's previous work as an administrator alongside his previous work in an offshore school with the Offshore School Representative (OSR) is evident in his understanding of the BC program and in his knowledge of, and preparation for, the inspection process.

The Principal holds a valid teaching certification from the BC Teacher Regulation Branch.

The Principal's job description is thorough and clearly notes all of the required components in the Agreement.

The Principal is supported by a highly competent BC program administrative assistant along with the OSR and the host school Vice-Principal.



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 BC program is supported by an experienced and competent BC program Executive Assistant. Her main responsibilities include maintaining student and staff records, managing the student information system, assisting new staff with transitioning to Japan, providing translation service, and inspection preparation. The Vice-Principal of the host school supports the BC program in the area of marketing for enrolment and also plays a significant part in supporting the study abroad experience in BC. The BC program also has a formal liaison between the Japanese teachers and the BC teachers who coordinates entrance exams and facilitates communication across the two schools.

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 confirmed that the student records are well organized and stored in a secure location and updated and monitored by a competent Administrative Assistant. The files observed during the inspection contained all required elements. The School has recently transitioned to the Harts Windsor student information system and will need to update its reporting of attendance on Permanent Student Record (PSR) cards in that transition. Student and parent consent forms have been updated for the 2022/23 school year. Student files also contain computer and computer network usage agreement documents signed by both students and parents.

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 observed that all teachers of the BC program hold valid teaching certificates according to the most recent Teacher Regulation Branch (TRB) information.



The Team observed that all locally certified teachers have local certification which integrated a criminal record check within its certification process. All certifications were translated into English for inspection purposes.

It was noted by the Team that staff turnover at the School is minimal. Staff comment on the welcoming atmosphere of the School, the high caliber of students, the small class sizes, and the ability to try innovative strategies in their classroom with support for the School.

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

Commendation:

The School is commended for creating a staff culture that has led to minimal turnover, high engagement with the future of the School, and creative pedagogy.

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 verified through the review of planning materials and interviews with teachers that teachers are fully implementing BC's curriculum. Teachers personalize their unit and lesson plans to suit the particular needs of their students. Templates include elements such as Big Ideas, Core and Curricular Competencies, English language strategies, First Peoples Principles of Learning (FPPL) and assessment strategies.

Many teachers spoke fluently about incorporating Core Competencies in their lessons while several discussed techniques and opportunities for integrating FPPL in their lessons. The School has prioritized a focus on integrating Core Competencies in the learning environment this year; it has implemented a "Core Competency of the term" with term one having a focus on Personal and Social Responsibility and term two on Communication. The Team enjoyed hearing about a student vision project that has deep connections to the Core Competencies.

The Team was pleased to hear from many teachers how student self assessment and reflection are integral parts of their lessons. Some teachers referred to "Feedback Fridays", or weekly opportunities for classes to reflect on the week's activities. The Team enjoyed seeing examples of teachers having students reflect using Google forms, which then generates aggregated results that allows the class to analyze the results, discuss them as a group and make adjustments to future planning and learning.



The Team was pleased to hear of extensive collaboration taking place between the School's teachers in which they share ideas, do joint marking, create shared unit and lesson plans, and conduct joint lessons and projects, not just within one grade level but across multiple grade levels.

As part of their professional development, the Team heard from some teachers that requested additional opportunities to observe other teachers' classes to learn about their teaching and classroom management techniques and engagement with their students.

Commendation:

The Team commends the collaborative and positive relationships that the School's teachers have developed between themselves.

The Team commends the School's deliberative focus on integrating Core Competencies in the learning environment.

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 confirms that the School meets the requirements for English language assessment and acquisition.

The Principal administers an English language assessment to all students who apply to enter BC program and makes the final decision on admission. There are two different versions: one for students entering the BC program in grade 10 and another with similar elements but adapted for younger students entering in grade 7.

During interviews, teachers described strategies for supporting the development of students' English language proficiency including highlighting key vocabulary needed for lessons, encouraging students to use English only in class and many assignments, projects and presentations that require the use of English to complete.

The School provides professional development to teachers aimed at enhancing students' English language proficiency.



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:

There are three students that are taking Social Studies 10 by way of Online Learning through School District 73—Global Education Business Company, the approved Online Learning service provider. The students are supported at the School by the Principal. The Team confirmed that the School has an equivalency policy and that an equivalency review must be conducted prior to students receiving credit for the course.

The School does not offer any Board/Authority Authorized (BAA) courses.

The School offers five courses that are exempted by the Ministry for delivery by locally-certified teachers: Instrumental Music: Choral Music 10, Family and Society 10, Physical and Health Education 10, and Fitness and Conditioning 11-12.

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:

Through a review of course overview and planning documents and in interviews with teachers, the Team verified that the School meets the course overview and planning requirements.

Each course has a detailed overview that reflects BC's curriculum framework. Planning materials include elements such as Big Ideas, Core Competencies, Curricular Competencies, English language learning strategies, First Peoples Principles of Learning (FPPL) and assessment strategies.

Commendation:

The teachers are commended for the quality of their curricular planning documents which contain all essential elements in BC's curriculum and whose thoroughness demonstrate teachers' diligence and care for their students.



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 School exceeds the instructional time allotment requirements. There are 175 instructional days in the 2022/23 school year with six instructional hours per day for a total of 1050 hours of instruction for the year.

The School worked diligently to provide continuity of learning through COVID-19.

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:

In reviewing planning materials and in interviews with teachers, the Team confirmed that both formative and summative assessment methods are employed by teachers at the School. The School and system provide professional development in support of developing techniques. This is evident through the variety of techniques listed in planning materials and the rubrics that teachers described that they employ.

Students demonstrate their learning in a wide variety of ways including PowerPoint presentations, diary writing, video productions, visual representations, collages, 3D models, cross-curricular group work, oral quizzes and tests, and a number of activities aimed at connecting classroom theories to real world applications.

The School's security and invigilation procedures for BC provincial graduation assessments meet Ministry requirements.

Commendation:

The Team commends the School's 100% graduation rate and all but one graduate receiving honour roll status in the 2021/22 school year.

The Team commends the wide variety of ways by which teachers have students demonstrate 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:

In interviews with teachers, teachers indicated that the School's learning resources appear to suitably meet requirements to effectively deliver BC's curriculum.

The School has a library that acts as a learning commons. All students are given orientation at the beginning of the school year and are encouraged to visit the library regularly throughout the year to access resources aimed at improving literacy.

Beginning with the 2022/23 school year, the School, together with a consortium of international schools in Japan, acquired access to a digital library of e-books and audio books.

Each student is provided a Microsoft Surface tablet device upon enrolment in the School that is used for classroom work, research, projects, group work and assignments. Technology is used extensively by teachers in support of learning and to communicate individually with students regarding assignments and to respond to questions.

The School has an annual budget for acquisition for additional learning resources. Budget allocations are made based on needs of students and classes with teachers' input.

The School reports having a maximum internet bandwidth of 20 Gbps.

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 student progress reports meet the Ministry of Education and Child Care requirements. The School provides three formal reports per school year (July, December, and March). There are also two informal reporting sessions and one set of student-led conferences (March) as well as two interim report periods per year (June and November).

The School tracks students who might be struggling with their learning and holds team meetings along with the students' Japanese teachers to ensure a consistent approach to facilitating student success.



Currently, parents have access to their student's progress, including attendance, via a web-based program.

The Team reviewed progress reports from a sampling of student files and noted the presence of teacher comments in English for courses taught in English and in Japanese for courses exempted for delivery in Japanese.

Beginning this school year, the School has transitioned to the TESS student information system to generate progress reports.

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 Team confirms that the parent/student handbook, offered in English and Japanese, has been updated in parts for the 2022/23 school year.

The handbook is detailed and contains a message from the principal; the school's motto and statement of purpose; an overview of BC's curriculum and assessment; admissions policies; progress reports; technology use policy; student code of conduct; dispute resolution and appeals policies; emergency evacuation procedures; graduation requirements; and information about post-secondary admissions.

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 School has a teacher handbook that includes a variety of contents in support of teachers' professional needs. The Team verified that the handbook contains guidelines for teacher evaluation as well as a teacher appeals.

While the handbook has been updated for the 2022/23 school year, the School is encouraged to conduct a thorough review to ensure that all content is relevant and up to date.



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.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requirement Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Not Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
---	--	--	---

Comment:

The School offers two Online Learning courses through School District 73—Global Education Business Company, the approved Online Learning service provider: Anatomy and Physiology 12 and Chemistry 12. The Principal provides students with onsite support and is in regular contact with the course instructors.

The Principal understands that an equivalency review must be conducted at the end of each course prior to awarding credit as part of the Ministry's requirement for courses offered by Distributed 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.

<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Not Met	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
--	--	--	--

Comment:

The School does not provide Remote Instruction.

CONCLUSION

Commendations

The Inspection Team wishes to recognize the Owner/Operator, Principal, staff and Offshore School Representative (OSR) of Bunka Suginami Canadian International School for:

- creating a five-year plan that is adjusted annually and for setting clear annual goals and for providing regular support, strategies, and direction to facilitate teachers' success in achieving these goals.
- the strong support of the Owner/Operator for the BC program and for the positive working relationship between the host school and the BC program.
- contracting with a highly competent and committed OSR who is fully engaged in supporting the success of the School.



- creating a staff culture that has led to minimal turnover, high engagement with the future of the School, and creative pedagogy.
- the collaborative and positive relationships that the School's teachers have developed between themselves.
- the deliberative focus on integrating Core Competencies in the learning environment.
- the quality of teacher curricular planning documents which contain all essential elements in BC's curriculum and whose thoroughness demonstrate teachers' diligence and care for their students.
- the wide variety of ways by which teachers have students demonstrate learning.
- the 100% graduation rate and all but one graduate receiving honour roll status in the 2021/22 school year.

SUMMATIVE RECOMMENDATION

The Offshore Inspection Team recommends to the Executive Director of the Independent Schools and International Education Branch that Bunka Suginami Canadian International School *continues* to be recognized as a British Columbia-certified school.

