

Certification Inspection Report

BRITISH COLUMBIA PROGRAM

at

CANADA BRITISH COLUMBIA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS - HEFEI

HEFEI, ANHUI PROVINCE

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

NOVEMBER 21-22, 2022

INTRODUCTION

On November 21 and 22, 2022, a virtual certification inspection was completed on Canada British Columbia International Schools-Hefei (CBCIS-Hefei) in Hefei, Anhui 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 Bob Esliger and Dan Miles, who served as Chair for this virtual inspection.

The School's BC program has an enrolment of 215 students, in grades 10, 11 and 12. CBCIS-Hefei is located on the campus of Hefei No. 1 Middle School, a large Chinese public school enrolling grades 10-12, that has been in operation since 1902. The BC program has its own designated two floors within the international building on the host school's campus. CBCIS-Hefei also can reserve the use of shared facility spaces within Hefei No. 1 Middle School such as a theatre, the gym, and labs. The entire school, which houses the BC program, along with two other international programs including an International Baccalaureate, enrolls 6,000 students.

During the virtual inspection of the School, the Team, to the best of their ability, reviewed all standards required in the Agreement and *Operating Manual*. They met with the CBCIS Superintendent, the Offshore School Representative (OSR), the host school Principal, the International Program Director, the BC Principal and Vice-Principal, the BC teachers, the homeroom teachers, support staff and students.

The Owner/Operator, Mr. Sunny Bai, CEO of Beijing Kezhi Times International Consulting Ltd., (Kezhi) is responsible for the BC program. Sunny Bai owns four other BC offshore schools in China, along with other educational institutions. The parent company is responsible for the BC program schools which are called Canada British Columbia International Schools or CBCIS.



CBCIS-Hefei is also affiliated with Lowell High School in Vancouver, where BC program students can participate in either short-term camps, or longer periods of study once concerns regarding COVID-19 and travel restrictions have eased. CBCIS-Hefei and Lowell High School are both now offering the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program, which also presents other possibilities for the sharing of expertise, resources and students in the future.

The Owner/Operator was not present for the virtual inspection but was represented by the OSR and the Superintendent in charge of the educational program for all schools in the CBCIS organization.

The BC program's philosophy, objectives and special features include the following mission statement that was revised to align more closely with the BC Core Competencies: "We are dedicated to preparing our students for success in a rapidly changing world by providing a supportive learning environment that promotes inquiry and collaboration within the classroom, recognizes and respects individual differences within the school community, celebrates community involvement, and allows students to position themselves as individuals in a global world".

The new administrative team plans to continue the work of the previous administration to inspire students to have a stronger sense of empathy and awareness of the impact that they have on their community. They added stronger components to the careers program to promote ongoing student self-reflection of the Core Competencies to allow for them to engage with this important part of BC's curriculum.

The School has identified academic integrity as an area in need of focus and will work to improve student awareness by publishing an Academic Honesty Policy and by teaching proper citation skills in a class on academic dishonesty.

Another goal shared with the Team is to promote student self-assessment across the curriculum to empower students as active agents in the learning process.

The Team would like to thank Canada British Columbia International Schools – Hefei for its cooperation and preparedness for the virtual inspection despite the many challenges faced by COVID-19 restrictions, new staff and a new principal who has only been on site for three weeks.

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
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Comment:

The requirement listed in the previous inspection report from 2021/22 was:



- The Principal must ensure that, for the teacher who does not currently have a Letter of Exemption (LOE) in place, that a BC certified educator is responsible for the planning, delivery and assessment of the classes.

The above issue was immediately addressed and corrected by the previous administration. The current administration has made every effort to ensure that all staff members have a valid BC teaching certificate or LOE in place for the 2022/23 school year.

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 Team reviewed the business plan that was filed with the BC Ministry of Education and Child Care (the Ministry) and confirmed that the prospects for the sustainability of the program at CBCIS-Hefei continue to be good. Despite ongoing challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and the competition from a variety of other international programs including the new International Baccalaureate (IB) diploma program in the host school, the BC curriculum program continues to be respected around the world.

Recruitment efforts resulted in an intake of 63 students at the grade 10 level. This helped the School to maintain an overall enrolment of well over 200 students for each of the past five years. The introduction of the IB program at the grade 11 level also provided a unique opportunity for students and parents who are investigating different program options.

All indicators during the inspection confirmed that both the host school and the BC program enjoy a very good reputation in the community. Though the last year was a challenge for staff and students with COVID-19 lock downs, parent engagement, through parent committees at each grade level and multiple forms of communication between the School and individual parents, was seen as a strength of the School. This involvement resulted in the ongoing recruitment success of the School.

Commendation:

The Owner/Operator and leadership team are commended for the efforts that continue to be made to ensure the long-term sustainability of the BC program despite the challenges of COVID-19 and a large staff turnover this year.



INSPECTION CATALOGUE 2.0

2.02 The Owner/Operator meets all requirements as set forth in the Agreement.		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requirement Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Not Met
<p>Comment:</p> <p>The Team confirmed that the Owner/Operator meets all the requirements set forth in the Agreement with the Ministry, including such areas as school operations, policies and procedures and providing appropriate support to ensure the administrative team can fulfill their duties.</p> <p>The Owner/Operator and staff of the parent company, Beijing Kezhi Times International Consulting Company Ltd., work closely with the host school and the partnership was reported to be working well and provided good support to the BC program. Having access to the CBCIS network of schools and the support of the Superintendent proved invaluable during these challenging times.</p>		

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.		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requirement Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Not Met
<p>Comment:</p> <p>The Team reviewed certified translations of documentation confirming the local government approval to operate CBCIS-Hefei, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A 2011 letter of approval for Sino-Canada International Secondary School (the former name of CBCIS-Hefei) to operate on the campus of Hefei No. 1 Secondary School from the Anhui Province Education Department. • A December 2020 letter of approval/no objection for the School to operate from the Hefei Education Bureau, which is effective until December 2023. • A January 31, 2005 to January 30, 2030 Chinese Business License to operate issued to Beijing Kezhi Times International Ltd. 		



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 host school, Hefei No. 1 Middle School, is divided into two separate campuses that are connected to each other by a tunnel underneath a dividing roadway. CBCIS-Hefei is located on two floors of the international building. Over the last year a new computer lab, lighting upgrades and further enhancements to brighten and modernize the facility were implemented.

During the inspection, the School provided official translations of the following local approval/inspection documents:

- an Assessment of Building Safety of Hefei No. 1 High School that confirms the building is safe to occupy.
- a Fire Protection Standardization management system of Hefei No. 1 High School that outlines fire safety measures.
- a Food Business License approving the operation of the cafeteria facilities.

The Team also reviewed the International School Emergency Response Manual. This is an extensive document mainly developed by the CBCIS team that identifies protocols with appropriate response scenarios. The School also provided a separate contact list for CBCIS-Hefei personnel to be accessed in the event of an emergency. The Team further confirmed that the Kezhi organization has a fully developed contingency plan in place in the event of an unexpected temporary or permanent closure of the School, as well as a pandemic preparedness and response plan.

Commendation:

The School and the CBCIS organization are commended for the thorough and clear International School Emergency Response Manual for staff and students.

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 well qualified for the position, having extensive experience as an educator in BC offshore schools and as the OSR for the CBCIS group of



schools since 2015. He is also actively engaged in international education at the postsecondary level in BC and has an extensive network of contacts throughout the offshore education community.

The Team reviewed the OSR's job description and confirmed that it contains an appropriate list of duties as well as the authority to represent the Owner/Operator in dealings with the Ministry. The Superintendent also provides support to the CBCIS principals in providing educational leadership in their schools. The OSR and the Superintendent have developed a long-range leadership plan to ensure smooth transition and appropriate staffing throughout the CBCIS system.

The OSR is aware of their obligation to report critical information about changes in the organization of the School or ownership structure that could significantly impact the School's operation. The OSR and Superintendent actively participated in the inspection process and responded in a timely fashion to all communication pertaining to the inspection.

Commendations:

The Team commends the OSR and Superintendent for the work they have done throughout the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic to support CBCIS-Hefei and to keep it staffed with competent personnel.

The Team commends the OSR and Superintendent for developing a long-term staffing strategy to ensure appropriate staffing and a smooth transition for staff throughout the CBCIS system.

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 originally from BC and has university degrees from the University of British Columbia, Okanagan College and University College of the Fraser Valley. He has 18 years experience in education, including 14 years in BC offshore schools. He also has eight years experience as a school administrator and has been in his current position as Principal of CBCIS-Hefei for three months.

Feedback throughout the inspection process confirmed that the Principal, even though he has only been at the School for three weeks, is providing excellent leadership to the school community and is being well received by all partners in education. Despite facing COVID-19 lockdowns, and the departure of more than half of the staff from last year, the Principal has



been acknowledged for his educational leadership by all teachers. He has also had many opportunities to talk with parents as they request to meet the new principal.

The Team reviewed the Principal's job description and contract and confirmed that both meet the requirements outlined in the BC Offshore School Program Operating Manual. Even though he was still learning the office system that he had taken over, the BC Principal was proactive in sending detailed information in advance of the inspection and was responsive to questions and requests from the Team throughout the process.

Commendation:

Despite facing COVID-19 lockdowns, and the departure of more than half of the staff and the Principal from last year, the Team commends the Principal and the Vice-Principal for the work that has been done to provide educational leadership and build positive relationships with all stakeholders in the school community.

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:

Along with support from the Offshore School Representative (OSR), Superintendent and the Kezhi main office in Beijing, the School has a full complement of administrative support staff that work directly with the Principal. This includes an International Director who oversees the three international programs on campus, along with an Administrative Assistant who directly supports the BC program.

The Team also interviewed the School counselor and homeroom teachers from grades 10, 11 and 12 as well as the Office Manager. All members of the support staff spoke with pride about the School and the work they were doing in support of the BC program. The School meets the requirements for internet connectivity as outlined in the Agreement, although the BC program teachers expressed concern about the slow Wi-Fi and the computer labs that were too small for their large classes.



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:

Despite the limitations of a virtual inspection, the Team was able to verify the student records. Samples of student files included a Permanent Student Record (PSR) card showing the Personal Education Number (PEN). The files also contained copies of the English language assessments, report cards and the appropriate consent forms.

The School is using the Windsor Harts TESS administrative software and the Team observed that the Permanent Student Records (1704) are stored electronically, with hard copies being placed in the student files.

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 confirmed that three of the teachers delivering the BC program have valid and current BC teaching certificates, three have Letters of Exemption (LOE) providing them with eligibility to teach in the program until December 23, and there are five subject-restricted teachers.

One other teachers' application for an LOE is in process and is expected to be issued soon. In reviewing this situation with both the OSR and the Principal, the Team was able to verify, within the limits of the virtual inspection, that the teacher who has not received their LOE is providing resources to a BC certified teacher who is running the class. The OSR is also actively liaising with the appropriate Ministry staff regarding the teacher's application as well as that of the other teachers with LOEs. The Principal is also supporting the teachers with an LOE in place to ensure their application for certification is complete and can be reviewed prior to the expiry of their exemptions.

Teacher contracts were reviewed and found to be complete, addressing all the required areas. Teacher files were also reviewed, including the most recent consent forms. Evidence of completed teacher and principal evaluations were seen in the files of returning staff members.



All locally qualified teachers and support staff have valid employment cards in their files. The Team also reviewed criminal record checks in Chinese with the official translation attached.

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 Annual Report 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, Vice-Principal, and a selection of students from all three grades. The Team confirmed that BC's curriculum has been fully implemented. The Team also determined that staff are genuinely eager to continue to deepen their implementation of the curriculum through ongoing professional development that is collaborative and participatory.

The Team confirms that each course has a detailed overview that reflects the BC curriculum framework. Overview and planning materials are developed by individual teachers using a common system template and includes elements such as Big Ideas, Core and Curricular Competencies, English language learning strategies, First Peoples Principles of Learning, assessment strategies, and resources. Through interviews with teachers and students it is clear that these framework pieces are incorporated into daily teaching practice.

Commendation:

The Team commends the BC program teaching staff for utilizing a common course planning template through which they are ensuring the implementation of BC's curriculum in all courses daily.

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 School administers an English language assessment to all prospective grade 10 students and the Principal oversees the assessment process and selection of students for the BC program.



English language development is given a very high priority in the BC program. The Team learned of the CBCIS-Hefei teacher ethic that “all teachers are English Language Learning (ELL) teachers” and observed how the teachers have incorporated ELL strategies across all course planning documents. During teacher interviews they described the many strategies they use to support the development of students’ English language proficiency such as highlighting key vocabulary, encouraging students to use English only in class, as well as many assignments, projects and presentations that require the use of English to complete.

BC teachers engage in focused professional development, professional learning community (PLC) meetings (through Microsoft Teams), and regular discussions with homeroom teachers to support students. The School has also developed a variety of supports aimed at enhancing student English language proficiency such as Club Day, an initiative created to encourage students to speak English while engaging in extra-curricular and social activities. Students are also encouraged to ask their teachers for individual support as well as to access the library and its many resources.

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 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 Mandarin 10, 11 and 12. Letters granting permission for the exemptions are on file.

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 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 have determined that all grade 10-12 course planning documents meet the requirements of BC’s curriculum. Through a review of documents as well as 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 provided the opportunity to



demonstrate their learning through the creation of posters, presentations, academic reports, designing games, writing plays, essays, lab experiments, and other types of projects.

Despite the ongoing challenges resulting from COVID-19, school administrators have been working with new and returning teachers, in person and virtually, to assist with the ongoing implementation of the BC curriculum framework components, and with course planning. Both the Principal and Vice-Principal provide classroom teachers with opportunities to take part in group professional development to ensure consistency in practice as well as providing them with individualized support when requested. During the interview process BC teachers stated their appreciation of the consistent professional support from both their school administration as well as from their teacher colleagues.

Commendation:

The BC program administration is commended for providing excellent in-person and virtual curricular leadership and support to staff during a challenging start to the school year.

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 confirmed that BC teachers provide five hours of instruction per day for 181 days for a total of 905 hours of instruction annually. CBCIS-Hefei 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 Annual Report for offshore schools.

☒ Requirement Met ☐ Requirement Partially Met ☐ Requirement Not Met

Comment:

Through a review of course planning documents and interviews with teachers, the Team confirmed that both formative and summative assessment practices are being utilized by BC teachers. The School has set in place a requirement that no more than twenty percent of assessment should be summative. Therefore, with eighty percent of assessment being



formative, students demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways and receive regular and frequent feedback.

Teachers use WebTess and Canvas 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 professional learning community (PLC) sessions.

The Team confirmed that appropriate security and invigilation procedures are in place for BC provincial assessments. Due to COVID-19, assessment schedules had to be adjusted and the Team has verified that planning is underway for the grade 10 and 12 BC Graduation Numeracy and Literacy Assessments.

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:

Given the limitations of a virtual inspection, it was not possible to visit classrooms, computer labs, or the new library to witness the range of teaching resources available. However, through teacher and administration interviews it became apparent that many hard copy and digital resources are available.

Teachers reported having access to computer labs on a sign-up basis; however, they stated that many computers often require maintenance resulting in there not being enough for a full class. The Team learned that this issue has been brought forward to the school administration.

The School uses Canvas and WebTess to support student learning and collaboration. The School struggles with internet connectivity, which has limited the interaction students can have with teachers during a lesson when the teachers are teaching off-site and it also limits the on-site teacher access to teaching and assessment resources. The Team was told that bandwidth varies depending on the time of day due to any number of factors, and it was noted that both students and staff expressed a desire for better connectivity to facilitate lesson preparation, online instruction, and to extend 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:

The School operates on a two semester and four term system. Formal reports are issued once each term and followed by parent meetings. The Team reviewed samples of formal report cards for students and can confirm they contain the required elements for compliance with the Ministry's student progress report order.

Homeroom teachers are assigned to each grade and it is their responsibility to communicate regularly with parents to update them on their child's progress at the School. They also schedule meetings between BC teachers and parents, and act as interpreters if the need arises during the term.

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 is current for the 2022/23 school year. The handbook describes admissions, student assessment, as well as expectations for student and teacher conduct. Detailed policies dealing with student behavior identify both expectations and consequences. The handbook is translated into Chinese.

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 Team reviewed the School's updated 2022/23 staff handbook. This document contains detailed information to enable teachers to be successful in their roles within the BC program and to function effectively in Chinese society. It covers specific information in the areas of the School's mission and philosophy, the unique teaching environment of a BC offshore program in China, professional responsibilities, school organization, school routines and procedures. A staff complaint resolution process, and the Province of BC disclaimer that they are not a party to the employment contract, are included in the document. Evaluation policies, along with



details related to growth plans and sample forms that may be required for school or personnel-related activities are also included.

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 currently 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:
CBCIS-Hefei is delivering Calculus 12 via Remote Instruction using a BC-certified teacher located in Vancouver, British Columbia and according to the parameters of the BC Offshore School Program Remote Instruction Policy. CBCIS-Hefei has qualified education assistants to support the students. If there is enough student interest in second semester, the School also plans to deliver Anatomy and Physiology 12 in the same manner.

CONCLUSION

Commendations

The Inspection Team wishes to recognize the Owner/Operator, Principal, staff and Offshore School Representative (OSR) of Canada British Columbia International Schools - Hefei for:

- the efforts that continue to be made to ensure the long-term sustainability of the BC program despite the challenges of COVID-19 and a large staff turnover this year.
- developing a long-term staffing strategy to ensure appropriate staffing and smooth transition throughout the CBCIS system.
- the work the OSR and Superintendent have done throughout the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic to support CBCIS-Hefei and to keep it staffed with competent personnel.



- the thorough and clear International School Emergency Response Manual for staff and students.
- the work that has been done to provide educational leadership and build positive relationships with all stakeholders in the school community.
- providing excellent in-person and virtual curricular leadership and support to staff during a challenging start to the school year.
- utilizing a common course planning template through which teachers can ensure the implementation of BC's curriculum in all courses daily.

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 British Columbia International Schools - Hefei *continues* to be recognized as a British Columbia-certified school.

