

Certification Inspection Report

BRITISH COLUMBIA PROGRAM

at

SINO CANADA SCHOOL

SUZHOU, JIANGSU PROVINCE

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

NOVEMBER 19-21, 2018

INTRODUCTION

On November 19-21, 2018, a certification inspection was completed on Sino Canada School (SCS) in Suzhou, Jiangsu Province, People's Republic of China, referred to as the School in this report. The purpose of this inspection was to determine whether the requirements for the British Columbia (B.C.) education program have been met, according to the *B.C. Global Education Program – Offshore Schools Certification Agreement*. The inspection team (the Team), appointed by the Executive Director of International Education and Independent Schools, British Columbia Ministry of Education (MOE) in accordance with the *B.C. Global Education Program – Offshore Schools Certification Agreement* (the Agreement), consisted of Terrence Sullivan (Chair) and Desmond McKay.

The School's B.C. program has an enrolment of 781 students, in grades 10 to 12. The campus also contains a separate building which houses a kindergarten to grade 9 school which has an approximate enrollment of 900 students.

During their visit to the School, the Team reviewed all standards required in the *B.C. Global Education Program – Offshore Schools Certification Agreement* and *Operating Manual* and met with the School's owner/operator, offshore school representative (OSR), B.C. principal, B.C. teachers, Chinese principal, the principal of the K-9 school, the head mistress of the school and the dean of studies at the school.

The owner/operator, Feng Hua Investment Group, Inc., is responsible for the B.C. program and there are no other programs or partnerships or educational connections to the school housing the B.C. program.

The B.C. program's philosophy, objectives and special features include:

- a belief that one of the greatest challenges students face in their present and future academic success is in the area of language and literacy skills. There is a high



expectation of staff in regard to language development support in their instruction and in their lesson planning. There is an expectation of ongoing implementation of English language learning and language acquisition strategies across all curricular areas.

The Team would like to thank Sino Canada 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 Not Met	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
<p>Comment: There were no requirements from the previous inspection and one suggestion. In response to the suggestion from the previous inspection the School did install a new electronic system to facilitate evacuations.</p>		

BUSINESS PLAN

The owner/operator has submitted a business plan to the B.C. Ministry of Education, confirming the sustainability of the program.	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requirement Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Not Met
<p>Comment: The owner/operator submitted a business plan to the Ministry of Education. The School utilizes several social media platforms to advertise its programs. The School also has a student recruitment network in five major cities in China and continues to build on the reputation for quality education developed through its 15-year history. The owner has shown a deep commitment to the school and the initiatives undertaken to sustain enrolment will ensure the long-term sustainability of the program.</p>	



**OWNERSHIP AND AGREEMENTS / BUILDING
AND SAFETY COMPLIANCE 2.0**

2.1 The owner/operator meets all requirements as set forth in the B.C. Global Education Program Offshore Schools Certification Agreement (the Agreement).

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Team met with the owner/operator and members of the Chinese administrative staff during the inspection. The Team reviewed the sections of the Agreement listing the responsibilities of the owner/operator and confirms that the owner/operator meets all the requirements set forth in the Certification Agreement.

Commendation:

The school administration is to be commended for the high degree of collaboration and cooperation with the Chinese administrative staff as well as with the principals of the primary and middle schools on campus.

2.2 The School meets local building, safety and cafeteria codes and regulations. The facilities are deemed to be suitable to support the B.C. program.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The administration confirmed that the school buildings are inspected once a year by the local government building inspection department and the local fire service. The School also has the necessary licenses for food services.

The Team discussed with the principal and the OSR plans for an event that would cause a temporary closure of the school. The plan would entail a compressed schedule and timetable once the School was able to be reoccupied to ensure the necessary hours of instruction could be maintained. The School is also investigating reciprocal agreements with other B.C. offshore schools in their vicinity to house one another's students in case of a prolonged closure of any of their respective buildings.

The School has continued to improve the infrastructure of the School throughout its fifteen-year history. However, the walls and doors in many classrooms are showing significant wear which can be greatly improved with some paint and minor maintenance. These minor improvements will cause a significant improvement in the learning environment for students and the work environment for teachers.



ADMINISTRATION 3.0

3.1 Offshore school representative (OSR) - The owner/operator must appoint an individual to act as offshore school representative. This individual must be confirmed by the province and must meet all of the requirements set out in section 14 of the Agreement.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The School has appointed Mr. George Watson as the offshore school representative (OSR). Mr. Watson has been confirmed by the province, has attended all the OSR meeting with the Ministry and was present throughout the inspection.

3.2 The principal meets the requirements as outlined in section 3.2 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The principal has three years' experience as a secondary teacher, two years' experience as a registrar and two years' experience as a principal before assuming his present position as principal of Sino Canada School where he has served for the past three years. The principal has his Certificate of Qualification from the B.C. Teacher Regulation Branch (TRB) and meets all the requirements listed in section 3.2 of the inspection catalogue.

Commendation:

The Team commends the principal for his leadership of the administrative team, the high degree of energy and collaboration within the administrative group and the high degree of organization and commitment he brings to his leadership role on a daily basis.

3.3 The School meets the administrative support requirements as outlined in section 3.3 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The School has a full-time principal, two FTE vice principals, an FTE education coordinator, one FTE academic advisor, one FTE bilingual academic advisor, two FTE secretaries and one FTE human resources secretary. The OSR and the Chinese administration also collaborate with the school administration to supply additional administrative assistance when needed. The School fully meets the administrative support requirements outlined in the catalogue.



3.4 The School meets the Student Record requirements as outlined in section 3.4 of the Inspection Catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

A random sample of ten student files were selected from each of the three grade levels. Each file was thoroughly reviewed, and all files met the list of requirements outlined in the inspection catalogue. All parent and student consent forms have been updated, digitized and placed in each student file.

Commendation:

The administration is to be commended for digitizing the information on the student files which greatly facilitated the work of the team.

3.5 The School meets the teacher certification requirements as outlined in section 3.5 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Team confirms that all authorized persons under the Agreement possess valid and current certification under the B.C. Teacher Regulation Branch.

All 45 teacher and administrator files were examined and meet the list of requirements as outlined in the inspection catalogue. Two teachers have applications in progress for their COQ's and have received an exemption as a result. The Team examined the exemption letter for both teachers. The administration of the School and the OSR are assisting both teachers with their applications and have been in constant contact with the TRB about their applications.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM 4.0

4.1 The School meets the requirements for curriculum implementation outlined in section 4.1 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

SCS has fully updated and implemented the new grade 10 B.C. curriculum, and most grade 11 and 12 course overviews have been re-written using the new curriculum frameworks.



The School has chosen the Atlas Rubicon platform as its curriculum and course planning management system. Its planning template mirrors the new B.C. curriculum framework for developing course overviews and daily lesson plans. The Big Ideas, core competencies and curriculum and content competencies are pre-loaded for every course. When planning their units and lessons, teachers are able to select the specific curricular and course competencies they will be covering. This feature also assists teachers with developing assessments that are directly linked to the core and curricular competencies being assessed. The program keeps a record of how and where the competencies are linked within the teacher generated course and lesson planning documents. The program is able to generate a list of competencies covered, as well as those yet to be covered, which provides valuable instructional planning support.

Atlas Rubicon has the added feature of staff collaboration. Teachers of the same course and department are able to share resources, update lessons and develop assessments within the program. The reflection option makes it possible for staff to offer their assessment of resources, lessons and projects and give suggestions for making them student friendly and learning rich.

SCS's professional development focus for the 2018/2019 school year is the implementation of the new B.C. curriculum for grades 10 to 12. Department heads and teams of teachers are exploring instructional strategies and teaching resources to initiate student centered / student directed learning, student self-assessment and First People's Principles of Learning.

SCS is well positioned to have full implementation of the new curriculum for grades 11 and 12 by 2019/20.

Commendation:

SCS staff is to be commended for its planning and commitment to implement B.C.'s new curriculum in grades 10 to 12.

4.2 The School meets the requirements for English language assessment and acquisition as outlined in section 4.2 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

SCS has developed a comprehensive English language acquisition model for ESL and EFL support.

The director of ELL and the ELL advisor for SCS have developed a strategic plan for supporting students entering the B.C. program that reaches into the elementary years. Working with elementary and middle school administrators and teachers in the Chinese program, the



director has developed an early and middle years English language acquisition program. ELL teachers and support staff provide learning resources and language support for students in the Chinese program.

SCS has a comprehensive B.C. English language exam that all students entering the B.C. program must pass. The exam is administered by B.C.-certified teachers under the direction and oversight of the principal. Students who successfully pass the exam are admitted directly into the B.C. program. Students who are unable to pass the exam, but have a reasonable level of English proficiency, are enrolled in B.C. language rich courses while continuing to receive ELL support. Students who have very weak English skills are enrolled in a foundation English language support program. Students are formally re-assessed at the end of each semester and their course schedules revised based on their results.

SCS provides an additional level of support through the use of trained bilingual non-B.C. certified support teachers as tutors. Bilingual teachers are assigned to shadow classroom teachers in the math, science and humanities curricular areas during the week. During the day they provide subject specific tutoring support to senior students with study blocks; in the evenings, they provide compulsory subject specific learning support for all grade 10 students.

SCS has also implemented a professional development plan for teaching ESL learners. Teachers are given ESL in-service training during the last week of August and are provided ongoing support and service throughout the school year.

Commendation:

SCS is to be commended for the level of English language support it provides all students, grades 10 through 12. ESL teachers and bilingual tutoring teachers provide students with focused language development support.

4.3 The School meets the course credit requirements (equivalency, challenge, exemptions and BAA courses) as outlined in section 4.3 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

SCS meets the course credit requirements as outlined in section 4.3 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

SCS offers Basketball 11, Yearbook 11 and Horsemanship 11, but has chosen to move away from grade 10 BAA courses. Grade 10 students in the English language foundation program are enrolled in Ministry curriculum courses such as Drama and P.E. while continuing to receive ESL support.



4.4 The School meets the course overview/course planning requirements as outlined in Schedule B Part I, 2. (d) of the Agreement; namely, that all B.C. 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 Not Met

Comment:

SCS is a large high school with 781 students enrolled in the B.C. offshore program. To maintain a standard of instructional quality and consistency throughout their system, SCS has adopted Atlas Rubicon as its curriculum and lesson planning management system.

Department heads and department leaders work with teachers to develop common course overviews using the new B.C. curriculum framework. As teachers develop their unit and lesson plans they are able to select the pre-loaded core and curricular competencies that will be covered. These overviews and accompanying lesson plan templates are a valuable instructional planning support for teachers, particularly those new to the B.C. curriculum.

All SCS course planning documents are created using the Atlas Rubicon system, therefore, grade 11 and 12 teachers have started the process of migrating their course overviews and instructional planning over to the new B.C. curriculum framework.

SCS has created a culture of learning and support for both staff and students. Moodle and Atlas Rubicon have provided forums for collaboration and communication among staff members and have opened portals of support for students.

All B.C. program courses offered at SCS meet or exceed the ministry learning outcomes/learning standards identified in the educational program guides.

4.5 The School meets the instructional time allotment requirements as outlined in section 4.5 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 Not Met

Comment:

SCS students are in session 6 hours per day for 158 days per year for a total of 948 hours per year, thus exceeding the 850 hours per year required by the Educational Standards Order.

Grade 10 students also attend compulsory tutoring sessions every evening provided by non-B.C. certified, highly trained bilingual teachers.



Commendation:

SCS is to be commended for providing students extended learning opportunities and English language support by exceeding the minimum 850 hours of instruction per year and providing after hours tutoring sessions for all grade 10 students.

4.6 The School meets the assessment methods requirements as outlined in section 4.6 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

A major challenge for offshore schools, and senior English teachers in particular, is keeping the gap between school marks and exam marks within the 25% allowable range. SCS has addressed this issue in a number of ways, including working with the English department to make consistency in marking a professional development focus. Department marking rubrics have been created for common assessments and team marking exercises are used to develop departmental marking consistency.

The principal also shares with English department teachers the historical average of offshore English 12 government exam and school marks for the past 15 years. Department heads and school administration review term marks assigned by each teacher and for each course to ensure they are within a reasonable range consistent with past years. This also ensures that marks between teachers teaching the same course and marks within the department are reasonably consistent.

SCS has developed specific protocols to protect the security and integrity of grade wide assessments and B.C. provincial examinations and assessments. These include the following:

- training for invigilators regarding specific exam administration requirements;
- clearing all materials from the examination room
- installing the Provincial security protocols on the computers
- directing students to pre-assigned stations.
- having two invigilators in the examination room at all times;
- requiring invigilators to submit completed exams.



Commendation:

SCS is to be commended for developing strict protocols to protect the security of B.C. provincial exams and assessments.

SCS English department is to be commended for developing departmental marking rubrics for common writing assessments and for creating team marking exercises to ensure departmental marking consistency.

4.7 The School meets the learning resources requirements as outlined in section 4.7 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

SCS department heads work with teams of teachers to select learning resources that are age appropriate, circularly aligned and culturally sensitive. Their lists are forwarded to the school administrative team for review, and the principal's approval.

4.8 The School meets the student progress report requirements as outlined in section 4.8 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Team confirmed SCS teachers use a variety of formative, summative and student self-assessment practices to assess student growth and development. It was also noted that teachers use a variety of marking rubrics and the B.C. performance standards when planning their lessons and when assessing student learning.

Parents receive six reports per year; two formal and one informal report card per semester; however, parents are also able to get up-to-date information about their child's progress using Power School's Parent Portal. Chinese academic advisors also monitor student progress and contact parents personally if a student is given an "I" grade, and an "I-Report".

Commendation:

SCS is to be commended for its use of academic advisors and Power School to keep parents informed about their child's progress.



POLICY DEVELOPMENT 5.0**5.1 The School meets the parent/student handbook requirements as outlined in section 5.1 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.**

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Team examined the parent/student handbook which has been updated for the 2018/2019 academic year. The handbook contains the appropriate sections for dispute resolutions and appeals for parents and students. The handbook also contains policies on student admissions, student assessment and student conduct. The handbook meets the requirements outlined in the inspection catalogue.

5.2 The School meets the teacher handbook requirements as outlined in section 5.2 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The teacher's handbook has been updated for the 2018/2019 academic year. The handbook contains the requisite requirement regarding the Province of British Columbia not being a party to the contract of employment between the owner/operator and the staff. The handbook also contains a policy on teacher evaluation.

The principal and the OSR are in the process of developing a policy for the evaluation of the principal by the OSR. The principal evaluation will take place during this school year, after the policy on principal evaluation is completed. A policy for vice principal and coordinator evaluations also will be completed by the principal during this school year. The vice principal and coordinator evaluations will take place according to their years of service.

COURSE ACCREDITED VIA DISTRIBUTED LEARNING 6.0**6.1 The School meets the distributed learning requirements as outlined in section 18 of the Agreement and Section 6 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.**

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met Not Applicable

Comment:

The School has one student taking a course through distributed learning which is Applications of Workplace Math. The student is taking the course through GlobalEd the Ministry approved distributed learning provider. The student is receiving support from the school



teaching staff while taking the course. Course overviews for the course were examined by the team and have been updated to the new curriculum. The School meets the distributed learning requirements listed in the catalogue.

CONCLUSION

Commendations

The Inspection Team wishes to recognize the owner/operator, principal and staff of Sino Canada School for:

- the high degree of collaboration and cooperation with the Chinese administrative staff as well as with the principals of the primary and middle schools on campus;
- the principal's leadership of the administrative team, the high degree of energy and collaboration within the administrative group and the high degree of organization and commitment he brings to his leadership role on a daily basis;
- digitizing the information on the student files which greatly facilitated the work of the team;
- planning and commitment to implement B.C.'s new curriculum in grades 10 to 12.
- the level of English language support it provides all students, grades 10 through 12. ESL teachers and bilingual tutoring teachers provide students with focused language development support;
- providing students extended learning opportunities and English language support by exceeding the minimum 850 hours of instruction per year and providing after hours tutoring sessions for all grade 10 students;
- developing strict protocols to protect the security of B.C. provincial exams and assessments;
- developing an English departmental marking rubric for common writing assessments and for creating team marking exercises to ensure departmental marking consistency; and
- using academic advisors and Power School to keep parents informed about their child's progress.

SUMMATIVE RECOMMENDATION

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

