

Certification Inspection Report

BRITISH COLUMBIA PROGRAM

at

SINO CANADA SCHOOL

WUJUANG, SUZHOU, JIANGSU PROVINCE

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

NOVEMBER 28-30, 2016

INTRODUCTION

On November 28 – 30, 2016, a Certification Inspection was completed on Sino Canada School (SCS) in Wujiang, Suzhou District, Jiangsu Province, People's Republic of China, termed 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 Agreement). The inspection team (the Team), appointed by the Director of International Education (the Director), British Columbia Ministry of Education (MoE) in accordance with the Agreement, consisted of Ms. Leslie Ramsay, Mr. Keith Watson and Mr. Edward Noot (Chair).

The School's B.C. Program has an enrolment of 973 students, in Grades 10-12. SCS functions as stand-alone program that shares the campus with a Chinese school of approximately 1000 students.

During the inspection process, 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)/Superintendent, B.C. Principal, B.C. Vice-Principals, B.C. teachers and students. The Inspection Team met with school personnel and reviewed files, certificates, handbooks and policies.

The Owner/Operator, Feng Hua Investment Group, Inc., is responsible for the B.C. Program and a Chinese elementary to junior high school program on the same campus. The Chinese program serves as a feeder school to the B.C. program.

The B.C. Program's philosophy and objectives are to provide the best, most authentic Canadian education that can be obtained in China to ensure the students' success when they go abroad to a post-secondary institution. The focus of the School is to guide students to become well rounded and successful, both as creative and critical thinkers.



The Team would like to thank the Sino Canada School and its staff for their cooperation and preparedness throughout the inspection process.

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

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met Not Applicable

Comment:

The 2014 Certification Inspection Report was a positive report with only one requirement and several suggestions. The Team noted that the requirement to report DPA on report cards has been addressed.

The Team also noted that the suggestions made by the 2014 Inspection Tteam have been addressed by the School, the most significant of these being an upgrade of the School's Wi-Fi system. In response to the 2014 Certification Inspection Report, Internet connectivity throughout the School has been significantly improved.

BUSINESS PLAN

The Owner/Operator has submitted a Business Plan to the B.C. Ministry of Education, confirming the sustainability of the Program.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Team reviewed the 2016-17 Annual Report that includes a Business Plan outlining the long-term sustainability of the B.C. Program. Sino Canada School is the second longest running school in the B.C. Global Education Program and continues to expand. The Owner/Operator is considering the establishment of a satellite campus to expand the Sino-Canada brand to other regions of China.

Through the use of social media advertising, enrolment in the Foundations Program is also growing. The School hopes to successfully transition increasing numbers of Foundations Students into the B.C. Program.

The School is enhancing teacher compensation and accommodations to minimize teacher turnover.

The School has a cooperative agreement with a metro Vancouver high school which allows students to spend a summer at school in B.C.



During the on-site inspection, the Team Chair participated in a joint meeting between the Chinese and B.C. Program administrators and was encouraged by the mutual understanding and shared commitment. Each administrative team recognizes that both programs would benefit from regular communication and from constructive cooperation. These administrators have begun to meet regularly and are committed to making creative and constructive program adjustments, particularly with respect to English language acquisition to create a positive and seamless transition of students into the B.C. Program.

Commendation:

The senior administration of the Chinese and B.C. Programs are commended for their open and constructive conversations and cooperative spirit.

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:

Sino Canada School holds appropriate provincial verification. The Team is satisfied that the facilities are in compliance and are suitable to support the B.C. Program.

Since the last annual certification inspection, the School has:

- hired an entirely new admin team;
- updated the internet connectivity; and,
- transitioned to a semester system.

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 Team viewed translated copies of building inspections, fire safety inspections and canteen food inspections. All reports indicate the School is in compliance with local regulations and authorities.

The School currently offers no on-site cafeteria services, but does run a 'canteen' just off campus for elementary students. B.C. Program students purchase food from a consortium of



restaurants nearby.

Fire and evacuation procedures and practices, which conform to local government requirements, are in place.

The SCS campus is located on a large property and is secured with fencing and gates in a very rapidly growing part of Wujiang. The educational center contains the administration offices, classrooms and specialty rooms that include two science laboratories, an art room and dance studio, a drama room, two multimedia theatres, a library, four computer laboratories and a multi court gymnasium and recreational facility. The campus also has a 400 meter all-weather track, complete with artificial turf within the soccer oval, as well as two tennis courts and outside basketball courts.

Almost all students live in the dormitories. Many go home on the weekends. The Team noted that new dormitory buildings along with a new Chinese program classroom building have recently been added to the campus.

SCS has on-site medical services with a resident doctor and clinic available to students. SCS also has a large maintenance and custodial staff. Cleaning of buildings and inspection and maintenance of the grounds is done on a regular basis.

The Team is satisfied that the present school facilities are entirely adequate to meet the requirements for the instruction of programs currently being offered and for longer term future growth of the school.

ADMINISTRATION 3.0

3.2 Offshore School Representative (OSR) - The Owner/Operator may 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 Owner/Operator has appointed an OSR who meets all the requirements set out in the Agreement (section 14 and Schedule B, Part II). The OSR has extensive experience with the B.C. Graduation Program and with the B.C. Global Education Program. The Team reviewed the OSR job description and confirms that it meets the terms of the Agreement. The OSR has also been appointed as the Superintendent of the B.C. Program with additional duties and authority assigned.



3.3 The Principal meets the requirements as outlined in Section 3.3 of the Inspection Catalogue for Offshore Schools.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Principal is in his first year of leadership at the school and meets all requirements as outlined in the Agreement. He has 12 years of teaching experience, eight of which were in B.C. offshore schools. He has four years of experience as an administrator in the B.C. offshore school system.

The job description is comprehensive and clear, outlining all elements required in the Agreement. The Team noted a constructive relationship between the Principal and OSR, in fact, the OSR has recently also been named the School's Superintendent and will use this role to mentor the Principal. The School is experiencing committed, proactive and creative leadership.

The transition to the new administrative team seems to have taken root well. Both Vice-Principals could not get to the School until early October, for legitimate reasons. As such, the Principal shouldered an unusually heavy work load as he began this school year.

Commendation:

The Principal is commended for leading through a significant transition.

3.4 The School meets the Administrative Support requirements as outlined in Section 3.4 of the Inspection Catalogue for Offshore Schools.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The key administrative support comes from the Vice-Principals. Two new Vice-Principals were appointed this year. Their duties are clearly outlined. The full administrative team works well together and meets regularly to share ideas and to plan collaboratively.

Additional administrative support comes in the form of course leaders, who provide a level of curricular leadership and support, along with three bilingual administrative assistants.

Commendation:

The new leadership team has become a cohesive, creative and energetic team.



3.5 The School meets the Student Record requirements as outlined in Section 3.5 of the Inspection Catalogue for Offshore Schools.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

Student files are stored in an administrative office and were found to be in good order. They are maintained by the administrative assistant and contain all required elements and were found to be up to date.

3.6 The School meets the Teacher Certification requirements as outlined in Section 3.6 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. Teachers' Regulation Branch.

The School has translated local certificates for teachers of exempted courses and they are duly filed. Staff files contain all necessary documentation. Teacher evaluation procedures are in place and the evaluation process for this year has been initiated.

The Team verified that valid criminal record checks are in place for all non-teaching /non-certified staff in the B.C. Program.

Staff contracts were reviewed and found to be comprehensive and competitive.

Professional development plans are well articulated and are currently being implemented.

The School experienced significant staff turnover this past year, more so than in the past. Several factors could account for this anomaly. The Owner/Operator and OSR are well aware of this issue and are committed to doing all they can to secure a higher degree of staff continuity to allow for program stability and development.



EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM 4.0

4.1 The School meets the requirements for curriculum implementation as outlined in Section 4.1 of the Inspection Catalogue for Offshore Schools.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

Each division, at Sino Canada School, Grades 10 to 12 shows that areas of redesign and implementation of the redesigned B.C. curriculum are in place. The Team found that overviews, course outlines and daily lesson plans reflected what was happening in the classroom and in the teacher's instructional practice.

Collaborative teams have developed common overviews, templates and assessment tools that support the B.C. redesigned curriculum (i.e., big ideas; core competencies; teaching; learning and assessment strategies). There is an enthusiasm to embrace further implementation of the redesigned B.C. curriculum. Staff views the redesigned curriculum as opportunity to improve the quality and standard of education.

Commendation:

SCS staff and administration are to be commended the collaborative approach they have taken in preparing for the implementation of the redesigned B.C. curriculum.

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 administrative and teaching teams are working together to enhance graduation rates and overall student academic success. Students are required to write a comprehensive English language proficiency exam for acceptance into the B.C. Program. This testing and interview process places the student in one of the four English language levels, reflecting English language readiness and educational support needs. Periodic language reviews ensure that students move out of more foundation level programs as their skills improve.

The academic advisory team is made up of both a B.C. certified teacher and a Chinese teacher. This team works closely to support the student social and academic growth, as well as communicating with parents to answer questions and clarify concerns. Parents report that they have a greater understanding and confidence in the education process and the post-secondary opportunities available to their child.

Team teaching, information sharing and planning are common practice at Sino Canada. For



example, to clarify whether slow academic progress is an issue of understanding the content/concept or language proficiency, a Chinese teacher might sit in the English classroom to become familiar with content and lesson expectations and later review the material with the struggling students. This bilingual support is done during designated study sessions.

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 has a policy that addresses course challenges or requests for equivalency credits. The School is offering Yearbook; Communications 10, Canadian Studies 10, Teacher Assistant 11, Horsemanship 11 and Basketball 11 as approved BAA courses.

The Team appreciated the vibrant and diverse activities that are offered at this school including a dynamic student council, dance, choir and inter school athletics. The school also participates in an eight team B.C. offshore school sports conference.

Making improvements to various campus facilities is seen as important in order to reduce the potential of seasonal interruptions for these popular student programs and regular classes.

4.4 The School meets the course overview / course planning requirements as outlined in Schedule B Part I (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:

The Team review of course overviews and classroom visits confirm that progress toward implementation, outlined in the redesigned B.C. curriculum, is well underway. Instructional practice and documentation, in many classrooms, already reflect the necessary curricular requirements and strategies (i.e. “big ideas” and curricular competencies).



4.5 The School meets the Instructional Time Allotments 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), of Ministerial Order 41/91, the Educational Standards Order, enacted under the Independent School Act.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Team confirmed the school exceeds ministry instructional time requirements. Students are in session for 190 days a year for six hours a day for a total of 950 hours of instruction yearly, well above the minimum requirement of 850 hours. Students in the Graduation Program complete 150 minutes of DPA weekly.

The Team noted English language support in the form of ELL teachers and classroom bilingual assistants. The Team experienced that students were comfortable interacting in English.

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:

Teachers use a variety of formative and summative assessment methods to determine individual student achievement. Each department organizes a minimum of eight common summative assessments including a mid-term and final exam. Formative assessment practices are also developed at the school, department, and course level. Teachers use common rubrics across the curriculum. The Team found that performance standards, criterion referenced assessment and daily performance rubrics are in common usage. Teachers are also introducing students to self and peer assessment.

The Team noted a high correlation between course and provincial exam marks for 2015-16. This pattern was consistent in all examinable subjects.

Commendation:

The School's assessment development and implementation has brought consistency across the school, department and subject areas.



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:

The Team observed students using a variety of textbooks and other resources to support their learning. In addition to print resources, students have access to personal and school computers and a library that is well stocked with fiction and non-fiction collections. There are also computer labs, which are used for both classroom learning activities and for administering provincial exams which have security and exam supervision criteria. The library uses Follett management system and is able to track circulation, which provides valuable feedback to administration and teachers. The School has access to online academic database EBSCO host. Teachers use the library both as an instructional space and a research space for project based learning.

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:

Sino Canada meets all student progress reporting requirements. Permanent student records are digitally stored. Students receive digital report cards four times per year. Parents and their children are also invited to a scheduled conference with the student's teacher. The Chinese advisory teacher may attend a meeting to support the parents understanding of their child's progress. Teachers use both *School Logic* and *Teacher Logic* for keeping a record of the student marks and emails weekly progress updates to parents. *In-Progress Reports* are a common way to communicate with parents of at-risk students.

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 School has a comprehensive Parent/Student Handbook which addresses all required areas in sufficient clarity and detail. This handbook is bilingual so it is of use to both students and parents.



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 School has a comprehensive Teacher Handbook which addresses all required areas in sufficient clarity and detail. The Team noted the Teacher Handbook contains a particularly comprehensive and useful section on adapting to and understanding the cultural realities of living as a foreigner in China.

Teacher and principal evaluation policies have been updated and are being implemented.

The Principal evaluation is being facilitated by the OSR and is underway.

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:

SCS does not offer any credits through Distributed Learning courses.

CONCLUSION

Commendations

The Inspection Team wishes to recognize the Owner/Operator, Principal and staff of Sino Canada School for:

- the open and constructive conversations and cooperative spirit of the senior administration of the Chinese and B.C. Programs;
- the dedicated work of the Principal in leading through a significant transition;
- the new leadership team forming a cohesive, creative and energetic unit as highlighted in section 3.4 of this report;
- taking steps to ensure contracts at the School remain competitive in the offshore market as outlined in section 3.6 of this report;



- the collaborative approach they have taken in preparing for the implementation of the redesigned B.C. curriculum as highlighted in section 4.1 of this report; and,
- school-based assessment development and implementation has brought consistency across the school, department and subject areas as outlined in section 4.6 of this report.

SUMMATIVE RECOMMENDATION

The Offshore Inspection Team recommends to the Director of International Education that the British Columbia Program offered at Sino Canada School continue to be recognized as a British Columbia Certified Program.

