

Certification Inspection Report

BRITISH COLUMBIA PROGRAM

at

SUZHOU INDUSTRIAL PARK FOREIGN LANGUAGE SCHOOL

SUZHOU, JIANGSU PROVINCE

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

NOVEMBER 22-23, 2018

INTRODUCTION

On November 22-23, 2018, a certification inspection was completed on Suzhou Industrial Park Foreign Language School (SIPFLS) 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 157 students, in grades 10 to 12 and 14 students in the B.C. foundations program. The B.C. program is housed on a spacious and modern campus which also houses a kindergarten program with 255 students, a primary school with 971 students, a middle school with 345 students, an IB program with 102 students and an American GAC program with 12 students. The entire School, which houses the B.C. program, enrolls 1856 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. vice-principal, Chinese principal, the national program director and B.C. teachers.

The owner/operator, Suzhou Industrial Park Oriental Education Investment Co. Ltd., is responsible for the B.C. program. The owner/operator also operates two middle schools in the two other cities in China.



The B.C. program's philosophy, objectives and special features include:
SIP Foreign Language School, in partnership with its member communities, strives to develop responsible and educated citizens by providing an environment that expects and encourages respect for each other and the community.

The Team would like to thank Suzhou Industrial Park Foreign Language 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:</p> <p>There were no requirements contained in the previous inspection report. However, the School has acted on the suggestions from the previous inspection and ensured there is a clear path of entry into the B.C. program and has doubled the amount of bandwidth within the School to significantly improve internet connectivity throughout the School.</p>
<p>Commendation:</p> <p>The School is to be commended for clarifying a clear path of entry to the B.C. program and for investing in improving the bandwidth for the school.</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:</p> <p>The owner/operator has submitted a business plan to the B.C. Ministry of Education. The School uses Chinese social media to promote the program, attends student recruitment fairs, advertises in print media and uses the B.C. Ministry of Education promotional material, which has been translated into Mandarin, to also promote the program. The School is working hard to maintain the 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 examined a signed copy of the B.C. Global Education Program – Offshore School Certification Agreement dated July 1, 2018 and a three-year license to operate beginning in June 2017 by the Suzhou Industrial Park Education Bureau giving Suzhou Industrial Park Oriental Education Investment Co. Ltd. authority to operate Suzhou Industrial Park Foreign Language School. The owner/operator meets all the requirements set forth in the Agreement.

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 School undergoes annual building inspections from the local municipal government, fire service as well as an annual inspection of its clinic by government health services. The School has a number of state of the art outdoor athletic facilities including a track, soccer pitches and basketball courts. The School has included in its emergency plan, described in an addendum to its handbook, a comprehensive plan for the housing of its staff and students in the event of an unforeseen closure. The plan has been vetted by the offshore school representative (OSR).

The indoor and outdoor facilities are modern and suitable to support the B.C. program.

Commendation:

The School is to be commended for its clear and comprehensive plan for housing its staff and students, so the school program can continue in the event there is an unplanned closure of the School.



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. Charles Etchell as its offshore school representative (OSR). Mr. Etchell has been confirmed by the province and is aware of all his responsibilities under the agreement including his responsibility to report critical information relating to changes in the operation of the school or ownership structure that could significantly impact the School's operations.

Commendation:

The OSR is to be commended for being present throughout the inspection and for his presence at all the OSR meetings sponsored by the province.

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 22 years' experience as a teacher and school administrator. Six of those years were spent in Canadian schools and sixteen years in international schools. The principal has also served for four years as a vice-principal and four years as a principal in B.C. offshore schools. Eight of his sixteen years in international education have been spent in B.C. offshore schools. The principal has his COQ certification, is fully qualified to be principal of the school and meets the required items outlined in the inspection catalogue.

Commendation:

The principal is to be commended for the organization of documentation and the very high level of preparation that went into in readying the school for the inspection.



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 Schools has a principal, a vice-principal, 1 FTE secretary, 1 FTE national program director, and 1 FTE assistant to the national director. The School meets the administrative support requirements as outlined in section 3.3 of the inspection 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:

The Team examined a random sample of 30 student records, ten from each grade level. Each student record contained the updated parent and student consent forms. All student records examined are in full compliance with the requirements outlined in section 3.4 of the inspection catalogue.

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.

Each teacher file and administrator file were examined by the Team. One teacher was not properly certified but has been given an exemption while his application for his Certificate of Qualification is in progress. The OSR has been in constant communication with the Teacher Regulation Branch about the teacher's application. All other teachers and administrators have their proper certification and each file fully meets the requirements outlined in section 3.5 of the inspection catalogue.



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:

The school staff have updated and fully implemented the grade 10 curricula and have re-written all grade 11 and 12 course overviews to reflect the new curriculum frameworks. The School has also implemented several new Ministry courses and participated in the cohort of offshore schools that piloted the Ministry numeracy exam. All course overviews identify the Big Ideas, First People's Principles of Learning, core and curricular competencies, assessment strategies and key ESL learning strategies. Staff have also adopted the practice of having students record and assess their mastery of the competencies covered at the conclusion of each lesson using the Ministry's recommended four-point scale.

Departments and teams of teachers are exploring instructional strategies and teaching resources to integrate student self-assessment and First People's Principles of Learning. SIPFLS administration and staff are also exploring ways to integrate numeracy and literacy strategies across the curriculum in preparation for Ministry literacy and numeracy assessments.

Commendation:

The school administration and staff are to be commended for their commitment to implementing the new grade 10-12 curriculum.

The School is to be commended for implementing the practice of having students self-assess their mastery of the competencies covered at the conclusion of each lesson.

The school staff is to be commended for investigating ways to integrate First People's Principles of Learning across the curriculum.

The school administration and staff are to be commended for creating a culture of learning and support for each other and for their students.



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:

The school staff and administration have developed an entrance screening exam for all students entering the B.C. program which is administered by B.C. certified teachers and the principal. As part of the pathway into the B.C. program, grade 9 students intending to enroll in the B.C. program, write five English proficiency exams throughout the year. The screening entrance exam is marked by B.C.-certified teachers using a double marking system. Students scoring 55% and higher are admitted directly into the B.C. program, students scoring between 40% and 55% are given conditional entrance and students scoring lower than 40% are enrolled in a language development foundations program. Students who are given a conditional entrance to the B.C. program are re-assessed mid semester, and if they have not improved to the 55% level of proficiency are moved back to the foundations program.

The foundations program is taught by highly trained Chinese-certified national teachers. Additional ESL support is provided by twinning 16 national teachers with B.C. teachers for two blocks every day. The national teachers provide tutoring support in the classroom, during the compulsory homeroom/tutoring block from 3:15 to 4:30pm daily, and in the evenings from 6pm to 8pm.

School historical data indicates all the top students who have graduated from the School came through the foundations program.

Commendation:

The School is to be commended for its English language screening program.

The School is to be commended for developing a language and academic support program using skilled certified Chinese teachers.

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:

The School meets the course credit requirements as outlined in section 4.3 of the inspection catalogue. However, the School has chosen to offer a selection of Ministry developed courses rather than create BAA courses.



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:

The School has met the course overview/course planning requirements as outlined in schedule B Part 1.2(d) of the Agreement.

The school administration and staff collaboratively developed a course overview template based on Ministry presentations. The template, which is used by all teachers, grades 10 through 12, reflects the elements of the new curriculum frameworks with clear references to the Big Ideas, First People's Principles of Learning, and core and curricular competencies. This past year SIPFLS students participated in the Numeracy assessment and are scheduled to participate in the 2019 Literacy assessment.

SIPFLS students also keep a notebook dedicated to recording the core competency statements posted by teachers at the end of every class. Students self-assess their understanding and progress of the posted competencies using the four-point scale developed by the Ministry for the numeracy and literacy assessment. The accompanying reflections provide valuable feedback for lesson planning and learning support.

In addition to using the new frameworks for planning, the School also offers the following new Ministry courses: Science for Citizens 11, Explorations in Social Studies 11, Career Life Education 10, Anatomy and Physiology 12, Music Production 11, and the two credit English 10 courses. The School has also double scheduled English 10, 11 and 12 to give students maximum English support and preparation for Ministry Numeracy and Literacy assessments.

Commendation:

The School is to be commended for having students keep a dedicated notebook recording their self-assessment of the core and curricular competencies posted by teachers at the conclusion of each lesson.

The School is to be commended for re-writing their grades 11 and 12 course overviews incorporating all the elements of the new curriculum framework.

The School is to be commended for implementing the new Ministry courses Science for Citizens 11, Explorations in Social Studies 11, Career Life Education 10, Anatomy and Physiology 12, Music Production 11, and the two Credit English 10 courses.



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:

SIPFLS students are in session 5 hours and 40 minutes per day for 181 days per year for a total of 1,025 hours per year, thus exceeding the 850 hours per year required by the Educational Standards Order.

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:

The School has implemented a number of structural supports to keep the gap between school and provincial examination marks within the 25% allowable range. Teachers are provided historical final exam mark data, and new teachers are buddied with experienced teachers who provide resourcing, planning, and assessing support. English teachers collaborate on developing major school assessments and conduct cross curricular marking exercises using the provincial performance standards to maintain marking quality and consistency. Department heads and school administration review marks assigned by each teacher and for each course to ensure they are within a reasonable range consistent with past years.

SIPFLS English teachers also participate in the Jiangsu Province Offshore Schools Roundtable for English teachers to discuss resources, best practices, assessment and preparation for provincial exams.

The School has implemented the following exam protocols to maintain the security of Provincial exams and assessments:

- the exam room is cleared of all materials and papers the day before the exam;
- the lab technician re-installs and tests the provincial security protocols;
- there is no access to the lab until the B.C.-certified teachers invigilating the exam open it;
- students are directed to pre-assigned seats;
- the principal or vice-principal type the exam password into each student's computer directly;
- a minimum of three invigilators are in the room at all times;



- student confirmation codes and times of exit are recorded by the invigilators;
- staff are in the exam room before students arrive, and direct them to their pre-assigned seats;
- the principal or vice-principal type the exam password into each student's computer directly; -invigilators record student confirmation codes and times of exit.

Commendation:

The School is to be commended for implementing grade wide assessments and cross curricular marking sessions.

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:

SIPFLS 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 principal for approval. The School is very aware of the importance of balancing culturally sensitive issues and Ministry curriculum requirements.

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:

SIFLS parents receive report cards five times a year, four formal and one informal. However, Chinese national homeroom teachers, working with B.C. teachers, report to parents on an on-going basis through text messaging or phone calls. The first interim report is issued at the end of the first six weeks of the first semester. Formal report cards with grades and comments are sent home at the end of November, the end of January, mid-April and the end of June. The Chinese national homeroom teachers also send digital copies of the report cards directly to parents. Parent/teacher conferences are held after the November and mid-April interim report cards.



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 parent/student handbook has been updated for the 2018/2019 academic year, is comprehensive and contains policies on the conduct of students, student assessment, parent and student dispute resolution, student admissions and student supervision. The parent/student handbook meets the requirements of 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 handbook was reviewed by the team and has been updated for the 2018/2019 school year. The handbook contains policies on teacher and principal evaluation as well as dispute resolution processes for staff and administrators. The School has also added the acknowledgement that the Province of British Columbia is not party to the contract of employment between the owner/operator and the teachers and that the Province of British Columbia is not liable in any instance where the owner/operator is found to be in contravention of the laws or requirements of the country of operation.

The School has also developed professional development opportunities for staff and administrators. The School has sent representatives to the summer conference sponsored by the Ministry in British Columbia. It has supported the school administration in their attendance at the annual conference for B.C. offshore school administrators and has supported teacher participation in subject area round tables.

The teacher handbook meets the requirements as outlined in section 5.2 of the inspection catalogue.

Commendation:

The owner/operator is to be commended for her support of professional development opportunities for staff and administration at the school



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.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Not Met	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
Comment: The School does not have any students enrolled in distributed learning courses.		

CONCLUSION

Commendations

The Inspection Team wishes to recognize the owner/operator, principal and staff of Suzhou Industrial Park Foreign Language School for:

- clarifying a clear path of entry to the B.C. program and for investing in improving the band width for the School;
- its clear and comprehensive plan for housing its staff and students so the school program can continue in the event there is an unplanned closure of the School;
- supporting professional development opportunities for staff and administration at the School;
- the commitment to implementing the new curriculum in grades 10 to 12;
- implementing the practice of having students self-assess their mastery of the competencies covered at the conclusion of each lesson;
- its English language screening program;
- developing a language and academic support program using skilled certified Chinese teachers;
- investigating ways to integrate First People’s Principles of Learning across the curriculum;
- creating a culture of learning and support for each other and for their students;
- having students keep a dedicated notebook recording their self-assessment of the core and curricular competencies posted by teachers at the conclusion of each lesson;
- re-writing their grades 11 and 12 course overviews incorporating all the elements of the new curriculum framework;
- implementing the new Ministry courses, Science for Citizens 11, Explorations in Social Studies 11, Career Life Education 10, Anatomy and Physiology 12, Music Production 11, and the two Credit English 10 courses; and
- implementing grade wide assessments and cross curricular marking sessions.



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 Suzhou Industrial Park Foreign Language School continue to be recognized as a British Columbia-certified school.

