

Certification Inspection Report

BRITISH COLUMBIA PROGRAM

at

CANADA BRITISH COLUMBIA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS - ZIBO

ZIBO, SHANDONG PROVINCE

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

NOVEMBER 16-17, 2020

INTRODUCTION

On November 16-17, 2020 an online certification inspection was completed on Canada British Columbia International Schools – Zibo (CBCIS-Z) in Zibo, Shandong 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 (BC) education program have been met, according to the *BC Global Education Program – Offshore Schools Certification Agreement*. The inspection team (the Team), appointed by the Executive Director of Independent Schools and International Education, British Columbia Ministry of Education (MoE) in accordance with the *BC Global Education Program – Offshore Schools Certification Agreement* (the Agreement), consisted of Susan Dick and Hugh Gloster (Chair).

The School’s BC program has an enrolment of 110 students, in grades 10, 11 and 12. The School is located in an International Building on the campus of Zibo No. 11 Middle School. This is a well-established public school that has been in existence since 1956 and has a reputation in the area for excelling in school sports. The entire school, which houses the BC program, enrolls 3,600 students.

During their visit to the School, the Team reviewed all standards required in the *BC Global Education Program – Offshore Schools Certification Agreement* and *Operating Manual* and met with the School’s Superintendent, Offshore School Representative (OSR), BC Principal, vice principal, host school vice principal, Foreign Affairs Director, BC teachers, students and support staff.

The Owner/Operator, Mr. Sunny Bai, Beijing Kezhi Times International Consulting Co. Ltd., (Kezhi) is responsible for the BC program, as well as five other BC Offshore Schools that are all referred to as *Canada British Columbia International Schools* (CBCIS). Kezhi also operates Lowell High School in downtown Vancouver – a group four school that caters to international students. The relationship with Lowell High School provides an excellent opportunity for



students from any one of the CBCIS schools to attend secondary programs in BC. Whether students participate in a short-term camp or a full semester program at Lowell High School, they get to experience life in BC before committing to their post-secondary program. Numerous anecdotal comments suggested that this helps to encourage many CBCIS students to considering attending university in BC.

The BC program’s philosophy, objectives and special features include the statement that: *“We are dedicated to preparing our students for success in a rapidly changing world by providing a supportive learning environment that recognizes and respects individual differences, encourages students to challenge personal limits, and promotes excellence.”*

This mission statement is shared by all of the CBCIS schools; however, each campus has unique ways of striving to achieve this objective.

The Team would like to thank Canada British Columbia International Schools - Zibo for its cooperation and preparedness for the inspection visit.

The School has satisfactorily addressed requirements contained in the previous inspection report.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Not Met	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
<p>Comment:</p> <p>The School did not have any requirements resulting from the November 2019 inspection process. The Team recognizes the efforts of the Principal and the staff in responding to the four suggestions that were made at that time in the areas of curricular implementation, planning and parent education. Teacher interviews that took place as part of the current inspection affirmed the efforts of the administration to focus on the 2019 suggestions.</p> <p>It was noted by the Principal that the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic did result in other areas of focus that had to be prioritized from March until June last year.</p>			

BUSINESS PLAN 1.0

The Owner/Operator has submitted a business plan to the BC Ministry of Education, confirming the sustainability of the program.		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requirement Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Not Met
<p>Comment:</p> <p>The School submitted a detailed business plan that includes a review of current enrolment trends. Despite the impact of the pandemic, the School did manage to sustain overall</p>		



enrollment at the same level as in 2019/20. While the grade 10 intake was less than in previous years, the School was able to retain more of the grade 11 population than they had done in previous years. Both phenomena are theorized to be as a result of parental attitudes shifting as a result of the pandemic, with fewer families aspiring to have their children travel offshore for further education. This is a trend that will be monitored very closely in the coming years.

The School has a comprehensive strategy to engage parents and keep them fully informed about the progress of their children. They also have a robust marketing and recruitment strategy that is used to identify prospective students for the subsequent year's grade 10 intake.

In terms of local competition, there is one other school in the area that has an international department offering programs such Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate. As both schools draw from a similar target market, enrolment will be monitored closely over the coming years. Currently, the longevity of the BC program and stability of the administration at CBCIS-Z are considered to be strengths that make the school attractive to prospective parents and students. In the past, the opportunity for students to spend time at Lowell High School has also been viewed as a competitive advantage, however, this may not be as attractive until the global pandemic is more fully contained.

The Kezhi group also provides academic advising to students to prepare them to apply for acceptance in Canadian universities. While much is done by the BC program staff to promote post secondary options within the province, there is a bias toward applying to some of the highest ranked Ontario institutions. Some families also have personal reasons for wanting their children to attend post-secondary programs in countries other than Canada.

Commendation:

The School is commended for the efforts made to engage parents and to keep them informed about the progress of their children.



INSPECTION CATALOGUE 2.0

2.02 The Owner/Operator meets all requirements as set forth in the BC Global Education Program Offshore Schools Certification Agreement (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, Mr. Sunny Bai, meets all of the requirements as set forth in the Certification Agreement. While Mr. Bai was unavailable to participate in the inspection process, he was well represented by members of the Kezhi staff at the School, as well as the Superintendent and the Offshore School Representative.</p>		

2.03 The Owner/Operator has written approval from the appropriate government entity to operate the offshore 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 School provided a copy of an original 2009 agreement between the Zibo City Bureau of Education and Zibo No. 11 Middle School permitting the host school to have the BC program operating on its campus.</p> <p>The School also has a 2017 letter of approval/no objection on file from the Shandong Zibo Bureau of Education. This authorization to operate the BC program remains in effect until 2022.</p>		

2.04-2.05 The School meets local building, safety and cafeteria codes and regulations. The facilities are deemed to be suitable to support the BC program.		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requirement Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Not Met
<p>Comment:</p> <p>The Team was able to review official translations of the following documents during the inspection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A 2020 Fire Safety Inspection Record confirming that all systems were operating normally and there were items needing to be addressed; • A 2016-2021 Food Business License approving operation of a food business (cafeteria) on the premises; • A 2020 Occupancy Permit for the International School Building that houses the BC program; and 		



- A 2009 Seismic Safety Report from the Zibo Building Evaluation Authority covering both the International Building and the Cafeteria.

CBCIS-Z is operating on the fourth and fifth floors of the International Building on campus. This building was inspected during previous onsite visits and found to be suitable for operating the BC program. Students also have their own dining hall within the cafeteria and have access to many shared facilities with the host school. Most notably, these include science labs, a theatre, outdoor play spaces and dormitories.

The Team reviewed the School's emergency plans and found them to be very thorough. In the event of a natural disaster or an unplanned temporary or permanent closure of the School, CBCIS-Z would comply with the direction of the local education bureau, as was done during the current pandemic. The Owner/Operator has also established that the students and staff could be transferred to one of the 4 other CBCIS campuses in China, or to Lowell High School in Vancouver, BC.

The host school and the BC program have cooperated very effectively to establish comprehensive health and safety protocols in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Commendation:

The School is commended for its response to the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure the safety of all staff and students while maintaining the continuity of the educational program.

2.06 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
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 an educational consultant. He has also worked in international education at the post-secondary level in BC and has an extensive network of contacts throughout China.

The OSR fulfills the responsibilities as outlined in the Agreement and works in partnership with the Superintendent to provide support to the School. Clearly articulated role descriptions exist for both positions and the School reported being well supported by both the OSR and Superintendent.

Significantly this year, the OSR had to replace a number of teachers in the CBCIS group of schools who chose not to return to China following the outbreak of the pandemic. This



placed extra pressure on the OSR to recruit teachers to fill a number of vacancies, and this was done in a timely manner to ensure the continuity of the educational program.

The OSR is aware of the obligation to report critical information relating to changes in the operation of the School or ownership structure that could significantly impact the School's operation.

The OSR actively participated in the inspection process and was responsive to all requests for information.

Commendation:

The OSR is commended for the work done to identify a full complement of teachers to fill the vacated positions.

2.07 The Principal meets the requirements as outlined in section 2.07 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement
Met

Requirement
Partially Met

Requirement
Not Met

Comment:

The Principal is a graduate of the University of Victoria and has extensive experience in international education, including having worked in three different BC offshore schools. He is currently in his fifth year as the lead educator at CBCIS-Z and is well-versed in the new BC curriculum.

The Principal fulfills all the requirements as outlined in the inspection catalogue for offshore schools. It was also noted that both the BC program and Chinese host school staffs all commented on how much they appreciated the leadership being provided by the Principal. It was further noted that the Principal had made significant personal sacrifices to stay in China and work over the summer to ensure the BC program would be ready to open this year.

The Principal was proactive in preparing for the inspection and was very helpful to the Team.

Commendation:

The Principal is commended for the sacrifices made to remain in China throughout the pandemic and school holidays to plan for the delivery of the educational program, both online and face-to-face.

The Principal is also commended for the work that has been done to foster positive relationships with the host school and Chinese staff.



2.08 The School meets the administrative support requirements as outlined in section 2.08 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement Met

Requirement Partially Met

Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Team confirmed that a full complement of support staff is in place to support the Principal. Along with the CBCIS Superintendent and OSR, the following personnel are also directly involved:

- A vice principal who has experience as a BC offshore school principal;
- An International Affairs Director who is the primary liaison with the host school;
- A bilingual administrative assistant who supports the Principal in his daily duties, and acts as a translator anytime those services are required;
- A Chinese staff member assigned to assist with residence permits, housing, facility issues; and
- Four Chinese support staff members whose duties include acting as homeroom teachers and providing direct support to students.

This team assists with a variety of duties such as recruiting, admissions, finances, university/academic advising, library support and facility booking.

Along with the school-based support staff, Kezhi also offers parents and students the option of contracting a person who provides individualized support for families to understand and complete university entrance applications and secure student visas.

2.09 The School meets the Student Record requirements as outlined in section 2.09 of the Inspection Catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement Met

Requirement Partially Met

Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The School Principal and administrative assistant maintain and securely store individual student record files for all students. Despite the limitations of a virtual inspection, the Team was able to confirm that the files contain current registration forms, English language assessments (verified by the Principal), report cards and the current versions of the parent and student consent forms.

Commendation:

The School is commended for the excellent record keeping that is done to ensure all school files are complete and well organized.



2.10-2.18 The School meets the teacher certification requirements as outlined in sections 2.10-2.18 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement Met

Requirement Partially Met

Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Team reviewed the requirements and confirm that three of the BC teachers have full certification in place. The other four teachers have valid Letters of Exemption in place while their applications are under review by the Teacher Certification Branch. The OSR confirmed that he is following up on the status of these applications on a regular basis, as some of the Letters of Exemption will expire in January 2021.

The Principal and vice principal provide support to the teachers on Letters of Exemption in a variety of ways, including meeting with them on a regular basis for mentorship, providing them with professional development and observing them teaching their classes.

During the inspection, the Team also examined the teacher files and found that they meet the requirements as identified in Section 2.11 of the Annual Report.

The Team confirmed that all locally certified teachers who are teaching the exempted courses, as well as the Chinese support staff, have current criminal record checks in place.

2.19 The School meets the requirements for curriculum implementation outlined in section 2.19 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement Met

Requirement Partially Met

Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The School has fully implemented the new curriculum for grades 10-12. Course overviews, lesson plans, student learning experiences and assessment practices are reflective of the foundational principles of the new curriculum. In addition to reviewing the documents provided, the Team engaged in Zoom interviews with administrators, students, and teachers.

Implementation is going remarkably well in spite of the level of staff turnover, the number of teachers that are teaching online, the lack of experience of some of the new teachers, and the different training teachers received from universities outside of British Columbia. With the leadership and support of the teaching Principal and vice principal, teachers are doing a good job of bringing the curriculum to life with thoughtful planning and implementation. The Team observed that efforts have been made for shared support through online calls, staff meetings and professional development. The staff members are encouraged to further share with each other their best practices, and a variety of examples of the ways in which they teach, engage, and interact with students online, including their varied uses of technology.



2.20 The School meets the requirements for English language assessment and acquisition as outlined in section 2.20 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement Met

Requirement Partially Met

Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The School administers an English language entrance exam to all prospective grade 10 students. This exam was developed for and used by all Kezhi schools in China. It includes the components of listening, grammar, reading comprehension, vocabulary, writing, and an oral interview. Rubrics are used in many of the assessments. The Principal administers all CBCIS-Z entrance exams and oversees the admission process to determine student eligibility to enter grade 10. The Team encourages the School to ensure that the revised English language assessment includes the Principal's signature, the current date, as well as the year that the exam was administered.

English language development receives the highest priority at the School. Teachers incorporate learning activities into their lessons which address cross-curricular communication skills in various forms. Curriculum-specific vocabulary is also introduced and reinforced.

Students in grade 10 begin the program by taking a BAA ESL 10 – Canadian studies course. Grade 10 students also participate in a non-credit, double block of English tutoring three times per week with a Chinese English teacher. English language courses are doubled in each grade and the Staff regularly practices and analyzes previous provincial exams as well as utilizes provincial literary assessment resources. Assessment of English language proficiency is both formative and summative and occurs regularly in the classroom.

In addition, all students participate in a Whole School Write twice a year, for which the instructions and rubrics are based on the former grade 12 provincial English exam. The results are collated over three years and allow teachers, parents, and students to recognize the progress that the students have made in their writing skills.

Commendation:

The School is commended for providing a comprehensive and multi-disciplined approach to English language skill development.



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 inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement Met

Requirement Partially Met

Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The School has approval to deliver exempt courses in PHE-10, and Mandarin 10, 11, and 12 that are taught by locally certified teachers under the supervision of the Principal. There is evidence of local teacher certification on file and course overviews were reviewed and found compliant with the curricular framework.

This year the School is offering a BAA course entitled ESL-10 – Canadian Studies. The Team was able to confirm that the course has a corresponding BAA course code and that the course planning documents, and lesson plans meet all requirements.

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 the 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 course outlines, annual plans, unit plans, and lesson plans. These documents provide evidence that the School has met the learning standards of the new BC curriculum. They include the Big Ideas, curricular competencies, content, teaching strategies, resources, and formative and summative assessment strategies for each unit of study.

Documentation also reflects thoughtful preparation that strives to invite and engage students in their learning. Students are able to demonstrate their learning in multiple ways, get involved in critical thinking and self-reflection, practice skills, and participate in multiple cross-curricular forms of communication.

The Team appreciates the effort of the teachers, some of whom are unfamiliar with the new BC curriculum, for researching curriculum documents on the BC MoE website, and for the thoughtful planning for presentation of the learning program.

The Team also recognizes the determination that the teachers have displayed to explicitly include the core competencies in the written planning documents of course overviews, unit plans, and in some cases lesson plans.



In spite of this hard work, the Team still encourages the teachers to further refine their day-to-day obvious use of the core competencies in the classrooms so that students are aware of them and are able to recognize and use them in their learning.

The Team also suggests that the teachers consider developing additional ways to further their work in incorporating First Peoples Principles of Learning in their planning and daily instructional practice.

Commendation:

The Team appreciates the effort of the teachers, some of whom are unfamiliar with the new BC curriculum, for researching curriculum documents on the BC MoE website, and for the thoughtful planning in preparation for the presentation of the learning program.

The Team recognizes the determined effort that the teachers have made to explicitly include the core competencies in their written planning documents of course overviews, unit plans, and in some cases lesson plans.

2.22 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
Partially Met

Requirement
Not Met

Comment:

Instructional time fully meets requirements. The School provides five hours of instruction per day over 190 days per year for a total of 950 hours of instruction per school year, which is well in excess of the Ministry's requirement of 850 hours.

2.23 The School meets the assessment methods requirements as outlined in section 2.23 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement
Met

Requirement
Partially Met

Requirement
Not Met

Comment:

Curricular documentation and staff interviews indicate that teachers are making good use of formative and summative assessment practices. Students are able to demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways and receive regular and frequent feedback. Assessment methods include peer and self-assessment of both curricular and core competencies, as well as



methods such as quizzes, tests, projects, presentations, regular assignments, research, and reports.

All assessments are designed to ensure that they align with curricular competencies and content of the new curriculum. The teachers are encouraged to review samples of the students' work using the BC Performance Standards. Staff meetings, professional development, and individual principal/teacher conferences also discuss the benefits of reviewing previous provincial assessments, comparing school based testing with provincial testing in terms of the types and styles of questions, and using past data collected to determine the areas that instructional strategies may need to be focused on. The data from the Whole School Writes also allows teachers and students to recognize the areas for growth.

The Principal makes all the necessary preparations to ensure the invigilation of all assessments align with the invigilation procedures laid out by the BC MoE. The Principal also oversees the invigilation during the process.

2.24 The School meets the learning resources requirements as outlined in section 2.24 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement Met

Requirement Partially Met

Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Team was able to confirm through a video tour, teacher surveys, and interviews that the School is well equipped with print resources such as textbooks, fiction and non-fiction English language reading selections, reference texts, and class sets of novels.

Available classroom resources suitably meet the requirements necessary to effectively deliver the BC curriculum. Each classroom is equipped with an integrated smart board and computer which are used frequently, especially with so much online instruction this year. Students are allowed to bring their own laptops from home and also have access to two computer labs, only one of which is equipped with updated equipment.

Unfortunately, the bandwidth is not strong enough for the size of the School. Both staff and students express frustration with the intermittent internet connection. The Team also experienced this during the inspection. The School is encouraged to enter into dialogue with the host school about the potential to expand the bandwidth to improve internet connectivity.

Set procedures are established to acquire additional library, classroom, and print resources each year. The CBCIS-Z Principal and the BC Superintendent work together to assess future resources needed for the program. Once the lists of library books, textbooks, novel sets and other print resources is compiled, the Superintendent submits the orders which are



processed and shipped from Canada. Due to the logistical situation brought about by COVID-19, this year's order has not yet arrived.

2.25 The School meets the student progress report requirements as outlined in section 2.25 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement Met Requirement Partially Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

Parents receive four formal student progress reports each school year in November, January, April and June. They may also receive informal interim reports from time-to-time as needed. Student self-assessment of the core competencies are included with the January and June reports. The parents of any students experiencing difficulty will also receive an I Plan (in progress) report prior to the formal reports being issued.

The Team noticed that not all assessments included in the student files have complete dates recorded and would encourage the School to take action to confirm that the full date of month, day and year are noted on the inclusions.

Parents are also kept informed about their child's progress through WeChat, Schoology, and student-parent-teacher conferences twice a year. Parents or teachers may also request a meeting at any time throughout the school year.

The Team also noted that steps have been taken to update the report template to include the Ministry required components but would encourage that student attendance records be included as 'Days Absent' and 'Times Late'.

2.26 The School meets the parent/student handbook requirements as outlined in section 2.26 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement Met Requirement Partially Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

CBCIS-Z has a detailed student and parent handbook that was updated for the current school year. The handbook is customized for the School with a letter from the Principal along with information about the staff and pictures from the campus. This document is prepared in English, with Mandarin translations included for parents. It includes all necessary information including the procedures for appeals and dispute resolution. The School also has detailed appeals and dispute policies depending on whether these are initiated by parents, students or staff.



2.27 The School meets the teacher handbook requirements as outlined in section 2.27 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement Met

Requirement Partially Met

Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The teacher handbook is a very well organized and comprehensive document that includes all the required elements that are part of the Agreement. This includes an explicit statement acknowledging that the Province is not party to the contract of employment between the Owner/Operator and the teachers. The CBCIS Superintendent confirmed that the handbook is updated regularly to reflect changing circumstances or requirements.

2.28 The School meets the distributed learning requirements as outlined in section 18 of the Agreement and section 2.28 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement Met

Requirement Partially Met

Requirement Not Met

Not Applicable

Comment:

The School currently has six students taking Anatomy and Physiology 12 and 21 students taking Calculus 12 by distributed learning. Both courses are delivered by the authorized service provider – the School District 73 business company, Global Education, and are supervised by BC-certified teachers.

An equivalency review was conducted on both courses by CBCIS-Z prior to students enrolling.

CONCLUSION

Commendations

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

- the efforts made to engage parents and to keep them informed about the progress of their children;
- its response to the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure the safety of all staff and students while maintaining the continuity of the educational program;
- the work done by the OSR to identify a full complement of teachers to fill the vacated positions;



- the sacrifices made by the Principal to remain in China throughout the pandemic and school holidays to plan for the delivery of the educational program, both online and face-to-face;
- the work that has been done to foster positive relationships with the host school and Chinese staff;
- the excellent record keeping that is done to ensure all school files are complete and well organized;
- the work done to provide a comprehensive and multi-disciplined approach to English language skill development;
- the effort of the teachers, some of whom are unfamiliar with the new BC curriculum, for researching curriculum documents on the BC MoE website, and for the thoughtful planning in preparation for the presentation of the learning program; and
- the determined effort that the teachers have made to explicitly include the core competencies in their written planning documents of course overviews, unit plans, and in some cases lesson plans.

SUMMATIVE RECOMMENDATION

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

