

# Certification Inspection Report

BRITISH COLUMBIA PROGRAM

*at*

COLEGIO CANADIENSE

MEDELLIN, ANTIOQUIA PROVINCE

COLOMBIA

DECEMBER 9-10, 2015

## INTRODUCTION

On December 9 - 10, 2015 a Certification Inspection was completed on Colegio Canadiense in Medellin, Antioquia, Colombia, termed the School or CC, 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 Inspector, appointed by the Director of International Education (the Director), British Columbia Ministry of Education (MoE) in accordance with the *BC Global Education Program – Offshore Schools Certification Agreement (the Agreement)*, was Edward Noot.

The School's BC Program has an enrolment of 82 students in Grades 10, 11 and 12. The BC Program is housed within a larger Kindergarten - Grade 12 school, which has been in operation for 11 years. The BC program utilizes 3 classrooms in one of the 10 blocks in which the school is divided. The entire School, which houses the BC Program, enrolls 1038 students.

During the visit to the School, the Inspector reviewed all standards required in the *BC Global Education Program – Offshore Schools Certification Agreement* and met with the School's Owner/Operator, BC Principal, Offshore School Representative (OSR) and BC Teachers.

The Owner/Operator, Fundacion Colegio Canadiense, is responsible for the BC Program along with the larger school in which the BC Program is housed. The School graduated its first class in 2014-15. Students graduating from CC obtain both the BC Dogwood and Colombian High School Diploma.

The BC Program's stated philosophy and key objectives are:

- to offer educational services that meet international standards;



- to educate and form citizens with integrity, who care about life in society and who pursue a better world for life;
- to form competitive citizens with balanced principles and values and personal goals for their lives;
- to prepare individuals with all necessary skills for a successful life in a globalized and competitive world;
- to educate citizens who are taught to care about others;
- to maintain healthy learning environments;
- to help teachers and staff in general succeed in their careers;
- to maintain a healthy work environment; and,
- to contribute to Colombia's development and growth and make efforts that will allow Colombia to interface with modern society and become a better place to live.

The Inspector would like to thank Colegio Canadiense for its hospitality, cooperation and preparedness for the inspection visit. He commends the school for creating a friendly and welcoming environment.

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

Requirement Met       Requirement Not Met

**Comment:**

The School has completed work related to the requirements outlined in the previous report.

Changes at the School include a new principal, the adoption of a semester system, schedule changes to increase hours of instruction, acquisition of new student resources in math and the offering Communications.

The Inspector commends the BC Principal and OSR, who are thinking strategically about program improvement and growth, seeking to work within complex Colombian regulations, and with various stakeholder groups.

**Commendations:**

The inspector commends the BC Principal and OSR, who are thinking strategically about program improvement and growth while seeking to work within complex Colombian regulations and with various stakeholder groups.



## OWNERSHIP AND AGREEMENTS / BUILDING AND SAFETY COMPLIANCE 2.0

### 2.1 The Owner/Operator meets all other requirements as set forth in the BC Global Education Program Offshore Schools Certification Agreement (The Agreement).

Requirement Met       Requirement Not Met

**Comment:**

The Owner / Operator meets all requirements as outlined in Schedule A of *the Agreement*. The Owner / Operator signed a Certification Agreement with BC MoE, leading to the School's initial certification. Local Government support is confirmed in a letter dated September, 2011 from the Secretary of the Department of Education, Antioquia.

The Department of Education of Antioquia has issued a letter for support for the program, but have been somewhat inconsistent in demonstrating the needed flexibility in allowing the BC Program to flourish. School officials will need to continue work closely with the Department to effect BC Program improvements.

### 2.1 (v) The Owner/Operator has completed and filed the Business Plan section with the BC Ministry of Education, confirming the sustainability of the Program.

Requirement Met       Requirement Not Met

**Comment:**

The Owner/Operator has submitted a comprehensive Business Plan to the Ministry.

The School celebrated its first graduating class in 2014-15, with graduates moving into Colombian post-secondary education.

The school has a stated goal of having 10% of 2015-16 grads to attend North American Universities; a goal that is admirable and one that will require strategic support.

The intake of 35 students in Grade 10 is the largest ever. Plans are in place to enhance English instruction to students in Grades K – 9 along with increasing the profile of the BC Program in the area, with a view to achieving an admission of at least 60 students per year into the program.

The inspector noted with appreciation that 34 Grade 9 students participated in a 5 month immersion experience to BC communities with a view to increasing:

- English Language proficiency;
- interest in the BC Program; and,



- familiarity with British Columbia.

**Commendations:**

The School is commended for offering Grade 9 students an extended English immersion experience in BC.

**2.2 The School meets local building, safety and cafeteria codes and regulations. The facilities are deemed to be suitable to support the BC Program.**

Requirement Met       Requirement Not Met

**Comment:**

Colegio Canadiense is located on a scenic and steeply sloped 14 hectare property in the hills on the outskirts of Medellin, Columbia. Recent improvements include a library renovation, road widening and construction of breezeways to shelter students from the rain when moving from building to building.

The K-12 School is comprised of numerous separate buildings. The property includes six play areas or fields and a fenced swimming pool. The BC Program uses three classrooms and has access as needed to the computer labs, library, common areas, chemistry lab and playfields, as well as an office for the BC Principal and the other BC program teachers. As noted in the previous report the renovations to the library are now complete and have created a vibrant learning center for student use.

The K-12 school provides daily snacks and lunches for all students and staff choosing this option. The cafeteria must meet local regulations and is inspected to ensure compliance.

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

A school nurse is employed to serve the needs of the K-12 school. No student dormitories or other forms of student housing are provided.

The Inspector confirms that the facilities are entirely adequate to support the BC Program and noted that the Owner/Operator is committed to allocating more classroom space as the BC Program grows.

The Inspector visited several classes during the on-site visit. The consistent noise from adjacent classrooms was noticeable and bothersome. This level of noise detracts from learning and the Inspector encourages the School to take reasonable steps to mitigate this distraction.



Commendations:

The School is commended for ongoing property enhancements to buildings, roads, fields and play structures.

### ADMINISTRATION 3.0

#### 3.2 Offshore Program Consultant (OSR) - The Owner/Operator may appoint an individual to act as Offshore Program Consultant. 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 BC Graduation Program and with the Global Education Program. The Inspector commends the School for hiring an OSR. As noted in previous reports, an OSR can support the school with added administrative support, facilitation of the principal evaluation and enhanced connections with schools in BC.

The OSR was on site during the school inspection to answer questions and provide support.

Commendations:

The School is commended for hiring an OSR.

#### 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 has been granted an exemption by the BC MoE regarding the requirement for previous administrative experience. She meets all other requirements as outlined in *the Agreement*. The Principal arrived at the School mid-way through last year. She has experience in Canadian Schools and in another BC Offshore School in China.

The job description is comprehensive and clear, outlining all elements required in *the Agreement*. The Inspector noted a constructive relationship between the Principal and OSR. The School is experiencing stable and proactive leadership in spite of a sudden change mid-way through last year.



The School has a history of rapid leadership turnover – the current principal is the 4<sup>th</sup> in four years. When this issue is canvassed on a case by case basis the reasons are clear and explicitly; however, the negative effect of this cycle of change on the development and enhancement of the BC Program cannot be underestimated. The Owner/Operator is aware of this issue and engaged with the Inspector in open dialogue on this issue. Achieving greater stability of leadership is recognized by all stakeholders as a critical goal for the School.

**Commendations:**

The School is commended for achieving stable and proactive leadership in spite of an unexpected transition last year.

**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 school meets the administrative support requirements as outlined in section 3.4 of the Inspection Catalogue.

Support staff include a full time secretary to the principal, two information technology staff to support the school and the program, a discipline coordinator who works with families in the K to 12 program, two staff in the Human Resources Department, an extracurricular director who is responsible for the grade nine transition program in BC, an academic director who serves as a Vice Principal for the K to 12 program, a school psychologist, an international relations coordinator, an administrative director and the Owner/Operator.

During the on-site inspection it became apparent to the Inspector that several administrators are placing demands on the secretary's time. As the BC Program grows so too will the administrative details; therefore this position should be utilized to fully support the BC Program Principal.

**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 the Principal's 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 BC Teachers' Regulation Branch.**

The School has local certificates for teachers of exempted courses duly filed. Staff files contain all necessary documentation. Teacher evaluation procedures are in place and the evaluation process for this year is well under way.

Staff contracts were reviewed and found to be comprehensive. The Owner/Operator is encouraged to ensure that contracts remain competitive enough to enhance staff retention.

Professional development plans are well articulated for the year.

The School continues to experience significant staff turnover from year to year. The Owner/Operator and OSR should do 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 English Language Assessment and Acquisition as outlined in Section 4.1 of the Inspection Catalogue for Offshore Schools.

Requirement Met       Requirement Not Met

**Comment:**

All students entering the BC Program at CC complete a comprehensive English Language Assessment. The four-part assessment focuses on reading and writing and is administered by BC certified teachers under the supervision of the BC Principal. The students entering the BC Program have likely been enrolled in CC for some time, taking the English Language Assessment as they are completing their Grade 9 year.

The School has been actively seeking to enhance the English instruction to students from Grades K – 9 and it is paying dividends as recent impressive results on the English 10 exam confirm.

In addition all students at CC take the Oxford Exam every two years from K – 12. The Inspector visited classes for all three grades and noted that the level of English spoken by the Grade 10



students, who have only recently entered the program, was particularly impressive.

**Commendations:**

The School is commended for the impressive level of English spoken by the Grade 10 students, who have only recently entered the program.

**4.2 The School meets the Course Credit requirements (equivalency, challenge, exemptions and BAA courses) as outlined in Section 4.2 of the Inspection Catalogue for Offshore Schools.**

Requirement Met       Requirement Not Met

**Comment:**

The School offers no BAA courses, or equivalency and does allow for challenge under an approved policy.

The School utilizes approved exemptions for the maximum 20 credits in PE 10, 11 and Spanish 10, 11 and 12. The Inspector confirms that course overviews are in place to ensure that locally certified teachers meet BC Program learning outcomes in all exempted courses.

**4.3 The School meets the Course Overview requirements as outlined in Schedule B Part I (d) of the Agreement; namely, that all BC Program courses offered in the School meet or exceed the learning outcomes identified in the Educational Program Guides for each course, with a course overview for each course that includes content, teaching strategies, evaluation and assessment methods which are clearly linked to the BC learning outcomes.**

Requirement Met       Requirement Not Met

**Comment:**

The Inspector reviewed course overviews for each BC Program course. Comprehensive course overviews, using a variety of formats, have been developed that included content, timelines, planning for teaching strategies, assessment indicators and links to the prescribed learning outcomes. The course planning documents demonstrate alignment between long-term plans, short-term unit plans and daily lesson plans. Classroom observations confirmed the implementation and delivery of instruction as planned and outlined in the course overviews.

A positive school and classroom environment has been developed and mutual respect and rapport is evident among students and staff.





**4.4 The School meets the Instructional Time Allotments requirements as outlined in Section 4.4 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 Inspector confirmed that the School meets all of the subject, instructional time and learning outcome requirements for the Graduation Program being offered, including Daily Physical Activity.

The School provides a variety of programs at the K to 9 level to support the BC Program including ESL, English Literacy, English Social Studies and English proficiency assessment for students at the K to 9 level. Programs such as the previously referenced grade 9 extended immersion learning camp with a schools in BC are also beneficial to language development.

As noted in previous reports, the School meets time requirements, but does not exceed them. The Inspector encourages the School to explore all opportunities to extend hours in the BC Program to enhance English language development, particularly in the area of reading comprehension and writing. Student verbal comprehension and expression is excellent, but the English 12 exam requires expertise in reading comprehension and written expression – the development of which takes concerted effort and time. The Inspector acknowledges the complexity of this discussion with the stringent Colombian national requirements that the School must meet.

**4.5 The School meets the Assessment Methods requirements as outlined in Section 4.5 of the Inspection Catalogue for Offshore Schools.**

Requirement Met       Requirement Not Met

**Comment:**

As noted in the previous report, the School has been strategic in its approach to assessment and has made very specific gains in reducing the gap between classroom marks and provincial examination marks. Innovations like flipped classroom and analysis of examination results combined with classroom adaptations continue to work well.

Through classroom visits, observations of student work, review of course planning documents, and assessment records the Inspector confirms that the School is implementing appropriate assessment practices and strategies. Both summative and formative assessment methods are being used to determine student performance. Assessment practices are linked to the Provincial Learning Outcomes and provide evidence of student understanding in relation to the



learning outcomes. The Inspector noted appropriate use of assessment rubrics and student self-assessment.

The School's achievement on provincial exams is impressive with the notable exception of English 12. Since the School has graduated only one class the data set is limited, but this area requires the focused attention of administration and teachers alike.

#### **4.6 The School meets the Learning Resources requirements as outlined in Section 4.6 of the Inspection Catalogue for Offshore Schools.**

Requirement Met       Requirement Not Met

##### **Comment:**

The Inspector confirmed that the School has sufficient learning resources available to implement the BC Program. Students have access to and are supplied with educational print resources such as textbooks, novels, and workbooks – acquisition of new resources in an ongoing process as student numbers increase and curriculum changes. Students do have access to computer technology, but it is more limited than in many other settings and increasingly computers are becoming an important learning tool for students in BC schools.

The Inspector observed teaching staff utilizing a variety of instructional strategies that integrate educational resources and classroom technologies. Teachers make use of and utilize online internet resource materials to enhance instruction within the classroom.

Previous reports have commended the efforts to transform the library into a 21<sup>st</sup> century learning commons. These efforts are nearing completion. The physical space has been re-organized, improved (more windows, new ceiling, new flooring) and expanded. A research area is equipped with several computers and 8 new laptops have been approved. Library software has been ordered and is due to arrive early in the new year, and more books are arriving regularly. The physical transformation of this space is exciting but will be for naught if teacher practice does not change to include the library as a vital learning center and resource. The administration is well aware of the ongoing effort that will be required in this respect. BC Program teachers would do well to lead the way in this ongoing transformation!

##### **Commendations:**

The School is commended for completing the extensive renovations and expansion of the Library, paving the way for its transformation into a 21<sup>st</sup> century Learning Commons.



**4.7 The School meets the Student Progress Report requirements as outlined in Section 4.7 of the Inspection Catalogue for Offshore Schools.**

Requirement Met       Requirement Not Met

**Comment:**

Student Progress Reports were reviewed and found to be in compliance with the requirements. They are comprehensive and each term mark is separated into its various components with appropriate comments where necessary. The provincial exam mark can be readily compared to the class mark.

**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 currently available only in English but the School is required to communicate this information to parents, most of whom speak limited English. Any resources, such as this parent handbook and the teacher Manual de Convivencia, that need to be read by both English and Spanish speakers ought to be translated by the School.

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

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



**Appendix 5 The School meets the Distributed Learning requirements as outlined in Section 18 of The Agreement and Appendix 5 of the Inspection Catalogue for Offshore Schools.**

Requirement Met       Requirement Not Met

**Comment:**

The School has one student enrolled in a distance learning course which is offered by the School District #73 Business Company which is the Ministry authorized service provider. The Principal acts as the on-site facilitator for the course at the school. The Inspector confirmed that the teacher is duly certified.

## CONCLUSION

### Commendations

**The Inspection Team wishes to recognize the Owner/Operator, Principal and staff of Colegio Canadiense for:**

- thinking strategically about program improvement and growth while seeking to work within complex Colombian regulations and various stakeholder groups, as outlined in the introduction to this report;
- offering Grade 9 students an extended English immersion experience in BC, as referenced in section 2.1 of this report;
- ongoing property enhancements, as noted in section 2.2 of this report;
- contracting an OSR, as noted in section 3.2 of this report;
- achieving stable and proactive leadership in spite of an unexpected transition last year, as highlighted in section 3.3 of this report;
- achieving an impressive level of spoken English by Grade 10 students, as noted in section 4.1 of this report; and,
- completion of the physical transformation of the Library into a 21<sup>st</sup> century Learning Commons as outlined in section 4.6 of this report.

### SUMMATIVE RECOMMENDATION

**The Offshore Inspection Team recommends to the Director of International Education that, contingent on responding to the above requirements to the satisfaction of the Director of International Education, the British Columbia Program offered at Colegio Canadiense be recognized as a British Columbia Certified Program.**

