

# Certification Inspection Report

## BRITISH COLUMBIA PROGRAM

*at*

COLEGIO CANADIENSE

MEDELLIN, ANTIOQUIA PROVINCE

COLOMBIA

DECEMBER 4-5, 2017

## INTRODUCTION

On December 4-5, 2017, a certification inspection was completed on Colegio Canadiense in Medellin, Antioquia, Colombia, referred to as CC or 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 inspector, appointed by the Executive Director of International Education, British Columbia Ministry of Education (MoE) in accordance with the *B.C. Global Education Program – Offshore Schools Certification Agreement* (the Agreement), was Mr. Edward Noot.

The School's B.C. program has an enrolment of 118 students, in grades 10 - 12. The B.C. program is housed within a larger pre-kindergarten to grade 12 school which has been in operation for 12 years. The B.C. program utilizes five classrooms in one of the eight buildings comprising the entire campus. The entire School, which houses the B.C. program enrolls 1118 students.

During the visit to the School, the Inspector 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, the academic director responsible for the entire pre-K-12 national program, the coordinator of the grade 8-12 national school program, B.C. teachers and support staff.

The owner/operator, Fundacion Colegio Canadiense, is responsible for the B.C. program along with the larger school in which the B.C. program is housed. Students graduating from Colegio Canadiense obtain both the B.C. Dogwood and Colombian National Bachillerata High School Diplomas. The School provides a unique program which satisfies Colombian national education requirements for pre-K through graduation and the B.C. program requirements from grades 10-12. The pre-K – grade 9 program is focused on addressing national program requirements while



incorporating ESL and B.C. prep classes to develop English language capacity, allowing students to be ready for entrance into the B.C. high school program. The dual diploma program requires a high degree of collaboration between the B.C. and national programs.

The B.C. program has embraced the mission, vision, values and beliefs of the larger school, subscribing to the motto “Forming the Future Entrepreneurs of Colombia”. The School’s vision is to “be recognized as an International School with high quality education, where students are formed with a solid comprehensive education and broad entrepreneurial thinking.” Its mission includes the following:

- being an academic community that contributes to forming honest people of an entrepreneurial mindset, with patriotic, ethical and Catholic values and principles
- striving to shape the future leaders of Colombia with an entrepreneurial vision, so that through their work, they can contribute to building a world that is more just and has more human social awareness
- relying on a team of highly qualified professionals who are in constant training to develop a pedagogical project built under the light of the Colombian and Canadian educational legislation, in order to address the world’s educational challenges.

The Inspector would like to thank Colegio Canadiense for its generous hospitality, full cooperation and thorough preparedness for the inspection visit.

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

Requirement Met       Requirement Not Met       Not Applicable

**Comment:**

The previous report contained one requirement and several suggestions. The School implemented changes to meet the requirement and has acted on several of the suggestions. Implementing change in some areas takes time, and potentially a paradigm shift, so some suggestions may be repeated to encourage the School to continue working on specific objectives.

**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 School has developed a business plan that addresses program development, growth and



sustainability within the somewhat challenging local regulatory framework. The owner/operator remains committed to ensuring that the B.C. program thrives in the Colombian context. The School continues to implement marketing initiatives to raise the public profile of the program, along with educational and informational strategies to encourage CC elementary students to join the B.C. program.

Although the program continues to be small, the commitment of the owner/operator remains strong. The owner/operator understands barriers to significant growth exist, but is steadfast in his efforts to identify and overcome these barriers and is commended for his efforts and enthusiasm in this regard.

**Commendation:**

The owner/operator is commended for this commitment to the B.C. program and his efforts to overcome barriers to growth, along with the development of creative initiatives to market the program.

## **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 owner/operator meets all requirements as outlined in Schedule A of the Agreement. Local government support is confirmed in a letter dated September 2011 from the Secretary of the Department of Education, Antioquia.

The ownership group was recently consolidated as one share holder left the partnership. This consolidation will allow the School to create a more cohesive vision and to implement change, from infrastructure to program, more proactively.

The School has worked closely with the Department of Education, Antioquia, to establish reasonable parameters to allow students to achieve dual graduation.

**Commendation:**

Ownership consolidation which will allow for cohesive vision and proactive action to implement change or address issues.



**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:**

Colegio Canadiense is located on a scenic 14-hectare property in the hills on the outskirts of Medellin, Colombia. Recent improvements include the completion of the library into a learning commons.

The K-12 School is comprised of numerous separate buildings. The property includes six play areas or fields and a fenced swimming pool. The B.C. program uses five classrooms and has access to the computer labs, library/learning commons, chemistry lab and playfields, as well as an office for the B.C. principal and the other B.C. program teachers.

The B.C. program was moved to a building away from the outdoor volleyball courts and this has alleviated the noise problem referred to in previous reports. The School is commended for this move as it has given the B.C. program a better learning environment and greater program identity.

The owner/operator has some exciting future plans for a middle school classroom building, maker space areas and a new gymnasium. Construction on these projects will likely not commence until at least the 2018-19 academic year.

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 B.C. Program and noted that the owner/operator is committed to allocating more classroom space as the B.C. program grows.

**Commendation:**

The School is commended for moving the B.C. classrooms and office as it has given the B.C. program a better learning environment and greater program identity.



### 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 owner/operator appointed an experienced individual to act as the offshore school representative (OSR). The OSR's suitability for this position has been confirmed by the B.C. MoE. His first association with the School was in 2011 when the program was being developed and he has also served a semester as the principal. He serves as OSR on an annual contract.

The OSR meets all the requirements set out in Section 14 of the Agreement. His responsibilities are appropriately outlined in a comprehensive job description that meets the expectations outlined in the Agreement.

The OSR connects with the B.C. program principal as requested, providing mentorship and support. He takes on an advisory role with the owner/operator in terms of long term planning and advocacy for the B.C. program as the opportunity arises. The OSR has been actively involved in the grade 9 English immersion visit to British Columbia.

The Inspector confirms that the OSR is knowledgeable about all aspects of the school's operations and all related aspects of the owner/operator's business operations; particularly the governance, business and administrative functions of the owner/operator's operation of the School.

**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 is in her first year in this role. She meets the criteria outlined in Schedule B, Part III of the Agreement.

The principal has four years of teaching experience, with leadership experience gained in her role as B.C. prep head teacher at CC. She currently has a very limited teaching load, allowing time to properly administer the school. She is working on completing her Master's in Education concentration in Classroom Specialist from Queen's University.

A comprehensive job description that meets the requirements of the Agreement was reviewed



during the inspection process.

The principal mentors and coaches the teaching staff and is aware of her need to support their transitions to the modernized B.C. curriculum. She has developed excellent working relationships with the OSR, the owner/operator and the national program director. She is bilingual, which facilitates communication with Spanish speaking staff and parents. She is commended for developing positive working relationships which are foundational to the success of the B.C. offshore school program.

The School would do well to consider possible leadership succession plans for when the next transition is needed.

Commendation:

The Principal has developed positive working relationships with key school personnel, which are foundational to the success of the B.C. program.

### **3.3 The School meets the administrative support requirements as outlined in section 3.3 of the Inspection Catalogue for offshore schools.**

Requirement Met       Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The School has allocated an office administrator dedicated to the B.C. program. The program shares other support staff with the national program, including two technical support staff, a high school psychologist who acts as discipline coordinator and works with families of students in grades 7-12, two staff in the human resources department, and an international relations coordinator.

The School meets the administrative support requirements as outlined in section 3.4 of the inspection catalogue, and uses Windsor-TESS software to manage student data.

### **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:

Student files are stored in the principal's office and maintained by the office administrator. They were found to be in good order, containing all the required documentation. Report cards are produced and filed electronically and teachers can access them as needed.



**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 Inspector 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 are orderly and contain all necessary documentation, including work visas. Teacher evaluation procedures are in place and regular evaluations are duly filed.

The Inspector verified that valid criminal record checks are in place for all non-teaching/non-certified staff in the B.C. program as per the local regulations.

Staff contracts were reviewed and found to be comprehensive and competitive. The School is aware of the new contract clauses that are now required and will have these in place within the allocated implementation period. The School is reminded to be aware of the current teacher shortage in B.C. Attracting teachers to offshore schools will undoubtedly be more challenging with so many teaching opportunities open in B.C. As such, the School should do all it can to retain current teaching staff.

Professional development plans are well articulated and are currently being implemented. The School expressed appreciation for B.C. MoE sponsored professional development on the modernized curriculum. The School is commended for engaging in professional development activities focussed exclusively in the B.C. modernized curriculum.

**Commendation:**

The School is commended for engaging in professional development activities focussed exclusively in the B.C. modernized curriculum.

**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 continues to take positive steps in transitioning to the modernized B.C. curriculum. Recent professional development in this regard proved very useful for teacher's to enhance their understanding of the changes and to see how these changes can be practically



implemented in curricular planning.

Teachers are well on their way to utilizing the new curriculum. The Inspector noted teachers implementing pedagogical strategies reflective of the modernized curriculum. Teachers are commended for utilizing some very creative course/unit overview formats that reflect the principles of B.C.'s modernized curriculum and are encouraged to continue this journey to ensure that curriculum, instruction and assessment are all adjusted in line with the modernized curriculum.

Ongoing professional development for the B.C. teachers is planned with the purpose of further implementing the modernized B.C. curriculum.

Commendation:

Teachers are commended for utilizing some very creative course / unit overview formats that reflect the principles of B.C.'s modernized curriculum and are encouraged to continue this journey, ensuring that curriculum, instruction and assessment are all adjusted in line with the modernized 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:

All grade 9 students at CC write the English language intake assessment in late spring. The assessment includes a reading comprehension component and a writing sample. All B.C. teachers and the grade 9 B.C. prep teacher are involved in the administration and marking of the exam, under the supervision of the principal. The B.C. principal makes the final determination in accepting students, based on the intake assessment result along with the student's overall academic performance and a demonstrated level of maturity required to undertake dual diploma studies.

Students are introduced to the English language in the primary years and the focus intensifies as they progress through the grades. The B.C. prep program, taught by native English speakers, provides students with four weekly hours of English language instruction and interaction. Students also receive five hours of ELL instruction by national instructors with C1 level English. The ELL program is coordinated separately from the B.C. prep program and falls under the direction of the national program. The B.C. prep program coordinator has worked with the B.C. prep teachers to align with B.C. curriculum while at the same time adhering to Colombian national requirements for English language instruction.

It was apparent that the ELL and B.C. prep program operate as two parallel systems with





differing objectives, mostly due to organizational constraints. There is undoubtedly potential for significant additional gains to be made in developing students English language skills if there is a higher level of coordination and harmonization of learning outcomes between the two programs. This process has begun and cooperation between the two programs is improving. The School is encouraged to continue to foster increased collaboration between these two critical programs.

The School also coordinates a grade 9 'study abroad' program that introduces grade 9 students to life and education in B.C. This immersive experience is very beneficial for induction into the B.C. graduation program.

At this point the School has experienced only limited success with encouraging graduates to study abroad. They are encouraged to intensify efforts to support students in taking the step of studying abroad after they graduate from CC. Any subsidy, bursary or scholarship the School could offer, or secure, would increase the percentage of students for whom studying abroad may be an option.

**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 policies followed at the School are consistent with the B.C. International Student Credit Policy.

The School has authorization to offer PE 10, PE 11 and Fine Arts 11 as exempted courses, taught by locally certified national teachers. As supported by the B.C. program operating guide, students also receive credit for Spanish 10, 11 and 12, which is offered through the national program.

The School currently does not offer 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 Inspector reviewed course overviews and engaged in classroom visits to confirm that



progress toward implementation of the B.C. modernized curriculum is well underway. Instructional practice and documentation, in many classrooms, already reflect the necessary curricular requirements and strategies of the modernized curriculum (e.g. big ideas, curricular competencies, formative assessment).

As noted in section 4.1 above, teachers are well on their way to utilizing the new curriculum. Teachers are commended for utilizing some very creative course/unit overview formats that reflect the principles of B.C.'s modernized curriculum and are encouraged to continue this journey to ensure that curriculum, instruction and assessment are all adjusted in line with the modernized curriculum.

**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), 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:**

Although scheduling is complicated by the requirements of meeting both programs, the School has developed a schedule which allows it to exceed the required 850 hours of instruction in the B.C. Program. As noted in the previous reports, external demands can reduce instructional time. B.C. staff appreciate the School's efforts to 'guard' their time. The Inspector notes that any opportunity to increase instructional time would increase the efficacy of the B.C. program.

The Inspector noted that, at times during B.C. program instructional time, students were permitted to speak Spanish. While at times this may be prudent and even necessary in a dual language program the School is encouraged to maximize English communication by students during B.C. Program instructional time.

**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. Assessment methods are articulated in unit plan documents to ensure alignment with the modernized curriculum.

While data on provincial exams and graduation rates is limited to only the last three years, the overall school trend is positive. The School is encouraged to continue to monitor provincial



assessment and graduation rate data to inform improvement strategies.

**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:**

Classroom resources are adequate to support instruction.

Library resources have improved immensely over the years with the transformation of the library into an attractive learning commons. As the library collection and technology resources continue to grow the learning commons will continue to effectively support the program.

While B.C. program teachers can access specialty rooms such as science and computer labs, access is limited. In the case of the science lab, access is restricted by location. As the lab is located far uphill from the B.C. classroom building it makes regular access difficult. As the School embarks on strategic and infrastructure plans it would do well to consider a more accessible location for this important teaching resource.

Access to computer technology is also very limited, particularly for B.C. teachers who are used to having ready access to this key learning resource. This is the third inspection report to highlight the need for the school to increase access to computer technology within the B.C. program. It is strongly suggested that the School commission a study of available options to provide increased access to students (more lab access, more labs, mobile labs, student owned devices, etc.). If this study was completed in early 2018 then decisions could be made for purchase that would allow the technology to be in place before the next annual inspection cycle.

**4.8 The School meets the student progress report requirements as outlined in section 4.8 of the Inspection Catalogue for offshore schools.**

Requirement Met       Requirement Not Met

**Comment:**

The Inspector found the description of the student progress reports as outlined in the inspection catalogue to be accurate. The School issues report cards four times each year with one formal parent teacher conference hosted by the national program's homeroom teacher. Parents and students have ongoing access to all student evaluations online via BEAM software.



## 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 and contains appropriate information on such topics as the School's statement of purpose and vision, admissions, parent-teacher conferences, communicating with parents, use of digital devices, code of conduct, dispute resolution, emergency evacuation procedures in the event of fire and/or earthquake, administration of medication procedures and required courses for graduation from the B.C. program.

### 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 has been recently updated and the Inspector confirms that it meets requirements.

Policies for the evaluation of teachers and administrators are in place. Criteria for teacher evaluation are provided through a comprehensive set of rubrics. The evaluation process for teachers is clearly articulated and reviewed during teacher orientation at the start of the school year. It is well suited to helping teachers plan for future growth, change, and improvement.

The Inspector confirms that teacher and principal evaluations occur as per policy.

## COURSE ACCREDITED VIA DISTRIBUTED LEARNING 6.0

### 6.1 The School meets the Distributed Learning requirements as outlined in section 18 of the Agreement and Section 6 of the Inspection Catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement Met       Requirement Not Met       Not Applicable

**Comment:**

The School does not offer distributed learning courses.



## CONCLUSION

### Commendations

**The Inspection Team wishes to recognize the owner/operator, principal and staff Colegio Canadiense for:**

- a strong commitment to the B.C. program and efforts to overcome barriers to growth, along with the development of creative initiatives to market the Program
- ownership consolidation which will allow for cohesive vision and proactive action to implement change or address issues
- moving the B.C. classrooms and office which has given the B.C. program a better learning environment and greater program identity
- the positive working relationships between the principal and school stakeholders and personnel
- engaging in professional development activities focussed exclusively in the B.C. modernized curriculum
- utilizing some very creative course / unit overview formats that reflect the principles of B.C.'s modernized curriculum – teachers are encouraged to continue to implement these changes in the areas of curriculum, instruction and assessment

### SUMMATIVE RECOMMENDATION

**The Offshore Inspector recommends to the Executive Director of International Education that the British Columbia education program offered at Colegio Canadiense continue to be recognized as a British Columbia-certified school.**

