

# Certification Inspection Report

## BRITISH COLUMBIA PROGRAM

*at*

BUNKA SUGINAMI CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

TOKYO, JAPAN

OCTOBER 19-20, 2017

### INTRODUCTION

On October 19-20, 2017, a certification inspection was completed on Bunka Suginami Canadian International School in Suginami-ku, Tokyo, Japan, referred to as BSCIS 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 46 students, in grades 10 - 12. BSCIS is excited to be offering the complete graduation program this year with their first graduation ceremony slated for March 2018. BSCIS is housed within a larger all-girls school, the Bunka Suginami Junior/Senior High School. This private high school enrolls students in grades 7-12 and has been in existence for 43 years. The larger host school has a long history of excellence in academics and is also known for its strong emphasis on the arts and athletics. The entire school, which houses the B.C. Program, enrolls some 1100 students.

During his 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, B.C. teachers, the principal and vice-principals of the host Japanese school, B.C. program assistant, other members of the joint administration team and students.

The owner/operator, responsible for the B.C. Program, is the Bunka Suginami Educational Foundation. This Foundation is prominently recognized for overseeing the Bunka Gakuen University in Tokyo. The Bunka Suginami Educational Foundation, recently experienced a leadership transition as long time chair and founder, Mr. Sunao Onuma retired and Mrs. Aizawa Makiyo, was appointed as the Foundation chairperson.



The B.C. program’s philosophy is to “develop innovative bilingual leaders who will live, learn and contribute within a global society.” BSCIS’s stated purpose is to have a dual Japanese/B.C. graduation program that provides a focus on excellence in academics, arts and athletics. The program builds on a strong Japanese foundation, allowing students to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes within the B.C. curriculum. Critical thinking, creativity and collaboration are cornerstones to preparing students now and for the future. All students in BCSIS are enrolled in a double diploma program, graduating with both the BC Dogwood Diploma and the Japanese High School Diploma. Some subjects, such as Math and Science, are co-taught by both a B.C. certified teacher and a locally certified Japanese teacher. This results in the students earning credits in both programs for courses in Math and the Sciences.

The Inspector would like to thank Bunka Sugunami Canadian International School, its ownership and staff, for their warm 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 2016 inspection report contained no recommendations. As anticipated, much effort at the school has gone into preparation and professional development in support of the B.C. Modernized Education Framework as well as planning for their first graduation class.

## 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:

A comprehensive business plan has been developed to continue to ensure program growth and sustainability. The five-year plan contains specific strategies and measurable outcomes. The strong commitment of the Foundation (Ownership) and the Japanese educational leaders to this program, along with a sound infrastructure and the positive trajectory of the School, particularly with the first graduating class gaining admissions into top ranked universities in both Japan and British Columbia, all bode well for future growth and sustainability.

The Program remains small and while there is a desire to grow, it is critical to maintain a focus on growing with the right students, namely, those who have a keen interest in the BC Program



and who have the academic and emotional capacity to master high school curriculum in a foreign language.

**Commendation:**

The School benefits from strong support from both the owner/operator and from the Japanese administration. The value of this support is critical to the success of any offshore school and, in the case of BSCIS this support is authentic, enthusiastic and unwavering.

**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 Inspector reviewed a translated letter from the Senior Director (whose name and telephone number are included), Private School Division, Bureau of Citizens and Cultural Affairs of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, dated October 4, 2017. The letter articulates that the bureau has 'no objection to the continuation of the British Columbia Global Education Program that has been carried out' by the owner/operator.

The School also provided for review, the Memorandum of Cooperation between the B.C. MoE and the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan, signed on June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015, which articulates various areas of potential cooperation, including the establishment of BC Offshore Schools in Japan. The same Japanese Ministry also issued a certificate to the School, granting permission for the school to develop new curricula as it has in the 'double diploma' program. This certificate is valid until March 2021.

**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 B.C. Program occupies a wing of a relatively new building, which will allow for significant future growth. Currently, the School uses several classrooms, offices and meeting rooms. The BSCIS program has access to the specialty facilities of the larger host school such as gyms, library, music room, home economics labs and science laboratories. The facilities are suitable for the current B.C. Program and the School could occupy an additional six classrooms on the



third floor. This will be sufficient for projected program growth for the next several years.

The Inspector reviewed safety and health inspections for all aspects of the facility and found these protocols to be comprehensive. Reports indicate that safety checks are carried out regularly with superior results.

The School is very conscious of earthquake, fire and safety threats and actively practices responses to each of these potential threats. The offshore school representative (OSR) is aware of these emergency plans and will be involved in any further plans as they are developed.

With recent tests of ballistic missiles over Japanese airspace the School has developed a comprehensive emergency protocol for school closure and staff evacuation. All staff are required to register with the Canadian Embassy as a safety precaution.

### 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) effective January 1, 2015. The OSR's suitability for this position has been confirmed by the B.C. MoE and she is now in the third year of a five-year contract.

The OSR meets all the requirements set out in Section 1 of the Agreement. Her responsibilities are appropriately outlined in a comprehensive job description that meets the expectations outlined in the Agreement.

The OSR was instrumental during the school set up phase and continues to play an active and vital leadership role within the School, including regular bi-weekly skype contact with the leadership team. The OSR was on-site for the inspection. The OSR maintains a strong presence in the School's B.C. summer program when the grade 10 students come to Vancouver Island for 4 weeks for an English immersion experience.

The OSR also serves on the B.C. Ministry of Education Offshore School Program Advisory Committee and brings her wealth of B.C. offshore school experience in four different countries to this leadership role.

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.

The Inspector confirms that the OSR is an excellent support to the B.C. Program and makes a significant contribution to the success of the school.

Commendation:

The Inspector confirms that the OSR is an excellent support to the B.C. Program and makes a significant contribution to the success 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 founding principal remains in his role as the school completes the development of the B.C. Graduation Program bringing leadership continuity to the School during its critical developmental phase.

The principal has over 17 years of administrative experience in British Columbia. He is multi-lingual and has taught internationally. He has a good understanding of the needs of the English language learner. He brings a wealth of educational knowledge and inspiration to the School, particularly in language acquisition.

A comprehensive job description that meets the requirements of the Agreement was reviewed during the inspection process.

The principal mentors and coaches his teaching staff, and has developed excellent working relationships with the OSR, the host Japanese school's leadership team, and the Foundation Chairperson. These positive working relationships are foundational to the success of the BC Offshore School Program.

Commendation: The owner/operator is commended for attracting an experienced B.C. administrator and for retaining him throughout the development years of the Program. The principal is commended for establishing an excellent working relationship with his Japanese leadership counterparts.



**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 developed several administrative supports to strengthen the B.C. Program.

The Principal is ably supported in his duties by the vice-principal of Bunka Suginami Junior/Senior High School who was instrumental in the initial development of the B.C. Program. A B.C. program office assistant provides invaluable office and clerical support for the administration and assists with translation services. The Inspector noted the positive and collaborative way all the B.C. Program and Japanese staff work together to ensure the success of the B.C. Program and its students.

The School utilizes Maplewood School Administrative software to manage student data.

The School has three computer labs available as outlined in Schedule F of the Agreement.

Preliminary discussions about the School's role in the assistance of obtaining foreign student visas for its eventual graduates have begun. The School intends to remain actively involved in all aspects of the placement of its future graduates in foreign universities.

**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 an administrative office and were found to be in exceptional order. They are meticulously maintained by the Administrative Assistant, contain all required elements and were found to be up to date.

**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 meticulous and contain all necessary documentation. 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 BC.

Professional development plans are well articulated and are currently being implemented. During the on-site visit additional resources and opportunities for professional development were discussed.

The School experienced limited staff turnover this past year. They are establishing an impressive pattern of staff retention and should do everything in their power to maintain this trajectory.

Commendation:

The School is establishing an impressive pattern of staff retention

## 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. Teachers generally utilize the new curriculum, even though it is draft form. They are commended for utilizing the new curriculum and 'accommodating' the current curriculum, where needed, for example in the writing of provincial exams.

The Inspector noted teachers implementing many pedagogical strategies reflective of the modernized curriculum.

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

Teachers have consistently incorporated big ideas and curricular competencies into unit plans



and have focused on diverse pedagogy along with formative and summative assessment.

**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 uses a B.C. program language assessment entrance examination and an oral exam to determine students' ability to be admitted into and be successful in the B.C. Graduation Program. Many students admitted into the B.C. program were previously enrolled in the Grade 7-9 global (English) program within the Bunka Suginami Junior/Senior High School. Students applying from other schools are closely screened prior to admission.

The B.C. Principal assesses the students who are interested in the B.C. Program and the final decision on admission to the B.C. Program rests with the B.C. Principal, who informs the Bunka Suginami vice-principal of the successful applicants.

All grade 10 students are double-blocked in English to support the acquisition of the English language. Further, the B.C. teachers work collaboratively and have adopted a common B.C. curriculum delivery model across the subjects, recognizing that they are all teaching English language learners.

The Inspector was encouraged by school plans to initiate an English learning class in the junior high school. Also noted was the commitment to offering SS 10 offered in BC as a summer program in cooperation with the Qualicum School District. This immersive experience is formational during students first year in the BC Program.

**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 appropriately utilizes course credit challenge and equivalency. Students receive equivalency credits for Japanese 10, 11, & 12 and the School maintains careful documentation in each student's file that demonstrates compliance with the International Student Graduation Credit Policy for equivalency and challenge.

Documentation has been received from the Ministry granting exemption status for Physical Education 10, 11, 12, Fine Arts/Applied Skills 10 and World History 12.



The School offers Journalism 12 as an approved BAA course. The Inspector approved World History 12 as a BAA course after careful review of well developed course overview and BAA template. The B.C. MoE exemption allows this course to be taught by a locally certified teacher.

**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 BC modernized curriculum is well underway. Instructional practice and documentation, in many classrooms, already reflect the necessary curricular requirements and strategies of the draft curricula (e.g. big ideas and curricular competencies).

Positive provincial exams results in Math 10, Science 10 and English 10 for students currently in grade 10 are exceptional and a credit to the entire program. The School is commended for admitting students who have the ability to succeed in a second language program and they are supporting them in language acquisition.

Commendation: The School is commended for excellent exam results to date. A rigorous entrance process and a sound educational program are leading to impressive academic results.

**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:

BSCIS significantly exceeds the instructional time allotments requirements as outlined in Section 4.5 of the Inspection Catalogue for Offshore Schools. The Japanese school year begins in April and runs through the following March, encompassing 278 instructional days, including some instructional time on Saturdays. The extended school day and school week allows all students to complete both the B.C. Graduation Program and the Japanese high school diploma program within the same three years.



All students take Physical Education 10 as an exempted course, which meets the Daily Physical Activity requirement in Grade 10 and Japanese PE 11 and 12 meet the requirement in those grades.

**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. The Inspector noted evidence of performance standards, criterion referenced assessment and assessment rubrics in usage. Teachers are also introducing students to self and peer assessment.

Since the School is only in its third year of operation it has limited data on B.C. provincial exams results. Initial results indicate that no significant discrepancies between school grades and provincial examination results occurred, in fact exam results were very encouraging with the average exam marks generally exceeding that of the provincial average.

**4.7 The School meets the learning resources requirements as outlined in section 4.7 of the Inspection Catalogue for offshore schools.**

Requirement Met       Requirement Not Met

**Comment:**

The School has sufficient digital and print resources available for delivery of the B.C. Program. The Inspector noted the emerging library collection of English resource materials. Additional English resources are teacher developed and adapted for ELL instruction. The School's library collection is growing as the school grows. With a dedicated annual budget, the OSR and B.C. teachers purchase appropriate library resources for the collection which has now grown to 7000 volumes.

**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 School meets all student progress report requirements through the use of formal report cards, parent-teacher conferences and student led conferences.



**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 School has a comprehensive teacher handbook which addresses all required areas in sufficient clarity and detail. The Inspector noted the teacher handbook contains a particularly comprehensive and useful section on dispute resolution and the appeal process.

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

**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 is offering one DL course to one student in an exceptional circumstance. They are following all regulations regarding the delivery of DL courses in the BC Global Education Program. It is the School's intention to use DL courses only in exceptional circumstances, but not as part of their regular program.



## CONCLUSION

### Commendations

**The Inspector wishes to recognize the owner/operator, principal and staff of Bunka Suginami Canadian International School for:**

- developing strong support from both the owner/operator and from the Japanese administration - the value of this support is critical to the success of any offshore school and, in the case of BSCIS this support is authentic, enthusiastic and unwavering
- ensuring that the OSR is an excellent support to the B.C. Program, making a significant contribution to the success of the school
- attracting an experienced BC administrator and enthusiastic teachers and for realizing healthy staff retention rates throughout the development years of the Program
- establishing an excellent working relationship between the BC and Japanese administration
- achieving excellent exam results to date, the result of a rigorous entrance process and a sound educational program

### SUMMATIVE RECOMMENDATION

**The Offshore Inspector recommends to the Executive Director of International Education that the British Columbia education program offered at Bunka Suginami Canadian International School continue to be recognized as a British Columbia Certified School.**

