

Certification Inspection Report

BRITISH COLUMBIA PROGRAM

at

MAPLE LEAF INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL – XI'AN

XI'AN, SHAANXI PROVINCE

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

NOVEMBER 13-14, 2018

INTRODUCTION

On November 13-14, 2018, a certification inspection was completed on Maple Leaf International School – Xi'an (MLIS-X) in Xi'an, Shaanxi Province, People's Republic of China, referred to as the School in this report. The purpose of this inspection was to determine whether the requirements for the British Columbia (B.C.) education program have been met, according to the *B.C. Global Education Program – Offshore Schools Certification Agreement*. The inspection team (the Team), appointed by the Executive Director of International Education and Independent Schools, British Columbia Ministry of Education (MoE) in accordance with the *B.C. Global Education Program – Offshore Schools Certification Agreement* (the Agreement), consisted of Dr. David Loewen and Mr. Hugh Gloster (Chair).

The School's B.C. program has an enrolment of 221 students, in grades 10 and 11. MLIS-X is being housed temporarily in an educational complex that also includes an elementary and a middle school. All three schools are part of the China Maple Leaf Education System (CMLES) and are located in a new economic development area adjacent to the Xi'an Airport. The entire school complex, which houses the B.C. program, enrolls 1,242 students. The B.C. program is getting ready to relocate across the street to a new, purpose-built high school that will have a capacity of 750 students in grades 10-12.

During their visit to the School, the Team reviewed all standards required in the *B.C. Global Education Program – Offshore Schools Certification Agreement* and *Operating Manual* and met with the B.C. program superintendent of schools (who represented the owner/operator and the offshore school representative), the B.C. principal, B.C. teachers, the Chinese headmistress, members of the office staff and the recruiting and finance team.

The owner/operator, China Maple Leaf Education Systems Ltd., (CMLES), owned by Dr. Sherman Jen, is responsible for the B.C. program. MLIS-X is now in its second year offering the program and is getting ready to move into a new B.C. high school building this spring. The B.C.



program operates on the same campus with an elementary, middle and high school, all operated by CMLES. Maple Leaf currently operates 90 schools in 20 cities in China, 3 in Canada and one in Australia. Overall enrolment in the system is approximately 40,000 students, with 7,100 students enrolled in the full B.C. program and another 1,700 students in Bridging and Foundations Programs.

The B.C. Program's philosophy, objectives and special features include its desire to develop and deliver a high-quality educational program with a global focus. System-wide, CMLES has a comprehensive description of its mission, vision, philosophy and direction. Highlights include:

- The desire to blend the best educational practices of the East and the West;
- The belief that every child has a strong desire to learn and to develop an understanding of the world;
- The desire to provide an international education that emphasizes academic excellence within a supportive community that also respects diversity and promotes global citizenship; and
- The goal to develop students to achieve their best potential and to provide them with a 'world of opportunity'.

In its second year of operation, MLIS-X continues to develop its unique identity. The school has already experienced success in both extra-curricular and co-curricular activity during its short time in operation. Planning for the move into their new building and separate campus provides them with further opportunity to consider how they will distinguish themselves from other schools.

The Team would like to thank Maple Leaf International School – Xi'an for its hospitality, cooperation and 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:

While there were no specific requirements in the previous report, the School has responded to the suggestions by the previous external evaluation team. Noteworthy in this regard is:

- The work on the implementation of aspects of the new B.C. curriculum, including core competencies and the incorporation of First People's Principles of Learning;
- Professional development work being done to support teachers in the use of Performance Standards/Quick Scales;
- Efforts being made to purchase more equipment and resources to support the delivery of the B.C. program, although some of this has been delayed pending the opening of the new school facility; and
- The development of the parent/student handbook that also serves as a planning tool for students and their families as they look to the year ahead.



It is also noted that CMLES has wording within the existing teacher contract regarding instructional supplies for teachers which states that teachers are to use the instructional supplies provided by Maple Leaf to meet the learning goals prescribed by the B.C. provincial learning standards.

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:

CMLES has developed comprehensive 5-year plans to guide future growth and development. In each case the system has typically met or exceeded the goals they have set for themselves. The latest of these plans includes ambitious targets for both increasing enrolment and adding new schools, both in China and abroad. The growth of the Maple Leaf system has resulted in it now being the largest kindergarten to grade 12 international school system in China.

In the case of MLIS-X, it has already demonstrated significant growth in its short time in operation, suggesting it will be a sustainable program in the future.

Commendation:

The owner/operator is commended for effective and ambitious planning that has resulted in the growth in student enrolment and the expansion of facilities both at MLIS-X and throughout the Maple Leaf system.

CMLES is also commended for providing a school-based budget to allow the principal to make decisions regarding resource acquisition in a timely fashion.

OWNERSHIP AND AGREEMENTS / BUILDING AND SAFETY COMPLIANCE 2.0

2.1 The owner/operator meets all requirements as set forth in the B.C. Global Education Program Offshore Schools Certification Agreement (the Agreement).

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Team confirmed that the owner/operator is meeting the requirements set forth in the Agreement and has the appropriate permits and licensing in place to operate the MLIS-X school. On file during the inspection were:



- A current registration certificate from the Civil Affairs Bureau of Xianyang;
- A signed agreement between the school authority and the Xianyang New Area Airport New City Government; and
- An operating permit from the Xianyang Education Bureau.

During the inspection, the B.C. program superintendent also indicated that CMLES is working on updating the agreement with the local authority to align with the language required by the province for local authority approval or no objection.

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:

In its current location, MLIS-X shares the campus with elementary and middle schools that all belong to the CMLES family of schools. This is a multi-building complex that opened within the last two years and includes all the necessary facilities to offer the B.C. program. Additionally, there are specialty spaces such as science labs, computer labs, libraries, a gymnasium, amphitheatre and lecture hall. An onsite cafeteria provides food services for the campus and dormitories house all the students during the week. The grounds are fully landscaped and include an artificial turf field space, running track, basketball courts and play areas for younger children.

An almost identical campus has been constructed across the road from the existing one. This is intended to become the permanent facility for the B.C. high school program, unfortunately its completion has been delayed due to issues that are being resolved between CMLES and the building contractor. The Team was able to tour this new facility during the inspection as it is substantially complete, and it is anticipated that MLIS-X will relocate to this complex in the spring. The new campus has a full complement of facilities and specialty spaces to accommodate the planned future enrolment of 750 students. CMLES has also purchased adjacent property in anticipation of further expansion as the area surrounding it expands with housing and other development. A subway line is also coming to the immediate area in the near future and this will further enhance the desirability of this new community.

Both the existing and new campuses are gated facilities with security staff monitoring access by visitors. Students are also supervised after regular school hours by Chinese staff who also oversee the dormitories and report to the B.C. program staff as appropriate. Nursing staff are on-site 24 hours a day to look after the needs of students and staff.

MLIS-X provided certificates of compliance for fire safety, building inspection and food production (cafeteria operation) during the inspection process.



CMLES has recently created a detailed emergency plan that is adapted for individual school sites and this was available for review during the inspection. Deliberate plans exist for dealing with emergencies that could involve keeping the students on campus or having to relocate them elsewhere. There are also contingencies within CMLES in the event of an unplanned temporary or permanent closure of any one of their schools for any reason.

Commendation:

CMLES is commended for the quality of the facilities and equipment being provided to operate the B.C. program at the MLIS-X campus.

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:

MLIS-X is supported by a highly qualified person in the role of Offshore School Representative (OSR). CMLES has also appointed both a superintendent and an assistant superintendent to provide supervision and support for the schools offering the B.C. program. These individuals are further supported by a full complement of staff located at the Maple Leaf office in Dalian.

Commendation:

CMLES is commended for the centralized support structures that are in place to assist the school in its operation.

3.2 The principal meets the requirements as outlined in section 3.2 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The principal has experience within the Maple Leaf system as a teacher, department head, education coordinator, vice-principal and principal. He has Bachelor and Master of Education degrees from the University of British Columbia and has been working offshore since 2008. He has been in his current assignment for the past two years and is focused on supporting his staff with the implementation of the new B.C. curriculum while also helping to prepare them for the move to their new campus.



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:

MLIS-X has a support staff to help with the delivery of the B.C. program. The Chinese headmistress has responsibility for overseeing all programs on the campus. She has extensive experience with the Maple Leaf school system and expressed full support for the B.C. program during the inspection. The School is further supported by a B.C. school secretary who looks after the student records and assists the teachers and principal with their day-to-day needs. A position of educational coordinator was also added this year to assist the principal with administrative duties. The Team also met with staff from the admissions office who help with the recruitment of students and were informed that there are also Finance, IT and General Affairs (Maintenance) staff on campus to support the School.

CMLES also provides administrative support to their B.C. offshore schools through the offices of the superintendent and assistant superintendent.

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 B.C. principal's office and are maintained by the school's secretary. These files include Program Application Forms, B.C. Program Entrance Exams, Student Demographic Information, Student Health Declarations, Permanent Student Records, Updated Student and Parent/Guardian Consent forms, Previous Report Cards and Daily Physical Activity logs. A sampling of report cards also provided evidence of other ELL assessments/supports and I report records when a student had received an incomplete mark in any of their courses.



3.5 The School meets the teacher certification requirements as outlined in section 3.5 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Team confirmed that two teachers currently have an exemption in place from the International Education Branch at the Ministry of Education to allow them to teach pending approval by the Teacher Regulation Branch (TRB). All other teachers possessed valid and current certification under the TRB. All locally certified teachers also had certifications on file and criminal record checks completed.

The Team confirms that all authorized persons under the Agreement possess valid and current certification under the B.C. Teacher Regulation Branch.

Teacher files were reviewed during the inspection and were found to include the necessary information as well as additional data requested by CMLES. Evidence also existed of feedback being given to teachers following classroom visits and of completed formal teacher evaluations.

A list of professional development offerings through CMLES was also reviewed by the Team as was the participation of the MLIS-X principal and teachers in their own professional development activities.

Commendation:

CMLES is commended for the robust professional development program that has been made available to teachers and administrators working in their system.

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 Team observed evidence of the new curriculum being implemented in grade 10. This included the use of core competencies, big ideas, curricular competencies and the integration of First Peoples' Principles of Learning into course overviews and daily lesson planning. The Team also observed that the school is beginning to explore the new curriculum in their grade 11 classes, especially the integration of core competencies into daily lesson planning.



The School has prepared for this implementation by directing most of its professional development towards training teachers in the new curriculum. This included both teacher led workshops focused on the core competencies as well as a combined teacher-student activity regarding First People's Principles of Learning and Chinese ancient teachings. The School has also adopted new classroom furniture to better create more flexible learning spaces for students to collaborate on projects and engage in inquiry-based learning. The School has also hosted parent meetings to explain the new curriculum.

The School system has an assistant superintendent position solely directed towards supporting teachers in curriculum development and implementation.

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 has developed the 'ML 3 key instructional strategies' for use by all teachers and the 'ML Global Curriculum' which meets the certification requirements of the Ministry of Education and which identifies and addresses specific needs for second language English learners in China. The School also has a system coordinator for English language instructional support and a computer-assisted English learning program for individual self-study. During daily home room time students spend 20 minutes in silent reading of English language novels. The School also supplies vocabulary books to each student and supports all teachers with ongoing professional development in the area of ELL teaching strategies.

The School has established a graduated system for entry into the B.C. program at grade 10. Students' English proficiency is assessed, and they are placed accordingly in a Foundations, Bridging, or Full B.C. program. These assessments include a reading assessment, a written assessment and an oral communication assessment interview conducted by a 'native' English speaker. In Foundations students are focused primarily on English language acquisition and take one course for credit in their first year. These students typically complete the B.C. graduation requirements in four years. In Bridging students will take two courses for credit in their first year and continue to enhance their English language skills. These students typically complete the B.C. graduation requirements in three and a half years. Those deemed proficient in English enter the full B.C. program and typically complete the B.C. graduation requirements in three years. Students advance based on successful completion of the B.C. entrance exam. All components of the assessment and advancement of students are under the supervision of the B.C. principal.



Commendation:

The School is commended for implementation of a rigorous English language proficiency assessment and advancement program that more readily ensures students are ready to be successful in the full B.C. 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 Team observed evidence that the School demonstrates compliance with the International Student Graduation Credit Policy for equivalency and challenge. At this point the School does not offer any BAA courses, however, plans are in place to offer BAA courses in the future once they are submitted and receive approval from the Ministry of Education. Currently, Mandarin is the only course exempted from having a B.C.-certified teacher teach the course in English. The course overview for this course is fully developed.

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:

Grade 10 Curriculum: The Team observed evidence that all grade 10 course overviews met the requirements of the new curricular frameworks. This was observed in yearly overview documents, unit plan/course overview documents, and in daily lesson plans. These documents also gave evidence of the Schools' unique vision for developing globally minded citizens. Planning for assessment was demonstrated to be consistent with the new grade 10 curricular frameworks.

Grades 11-12 curriculum: While the grade 11 course overviews were primarily the traditional 'course overview' method to show curricular compliance, the Team did observe evidence of the School reviewing and experimenting with the grade 11 draft curricula.

Commendation:

The School is commended for its authentic implementation of the new curricular frameworks in grade 10 and its beginning work towards the implementation of the new curricular frameworks in grade 11 for the 2019-2020 school year.



4.5 The School meets the instructional time allotment requirements as outlined in section 4.5 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools, including the requirements set out in sections 1.1 to 6, with the exception of s. 4(5)(b), 4 (6), 5 (8)(a) and (d) and s. 5.3 of Ministerial Order 41/91, the Educational Standards Order, enacted under the Independent School Act.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The School provides 999 hours of instruction per school year which exceeds the Ministry requirement of a minimum of 850 hours. All four credit courses also meet the instructional time allotment requirements. The school year is divided into two equal semesters and the school day begins at 7:40 AM and ends at 3:40 PM.

4.6 The School meets the assessment methods requirements as outlined in section 4.6 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The School uses data to analyze trends in student achievement. The School takes strong steps to ensure that the school grades and the provincial exam results are aligned in English language arts. The School also sets achievement standards that align with the outcomes provided by the Ministry.

The School encourages teachers to utilize both formative and summative assessment by providing regular professional development opportunities. Teachers' lesson plans reflect a variety of assessment methods including, but not limited to, observation, collection of work, anecdotal notes, self-assessments, projects, and tests and quizzes. Teachers are encouraged to choose a variety of assessment strategies for their final assessments.

Teachers are using B.C. performance standards in their planning and these are given to students to set guidelines for expectations and evaluation of student work.

The School applies a rigorous security and invigilation procedure for B.C. provincial examinations and provincial assessments:

E-exam rooms are sealed off from student use during exam time and students are assigned a computer terminal. Invigilators arrive early and input the PEN and passwords for all students based on a seating plan and exam register. Passwords are never revealed to students and they are led into the exam areas 15 minutes prior to the exam once they have shown their picture ID, left all bags outside and have turned out their pockets when entering. Students sit at their assigned terminal, confirm their



name and PEN on the screen and place their ID on their desk. Invigilators check each ID and each room has 2 invigilators and one hall invigilator for support. This entire operation is overseen by the B.C. principal.

Commendation:

The School is commended for conducting a rigorous and secure exam process.

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 Team observed that the School has improved its learning resources over last year. The science lab has sufficient lab equipment and materials to support the current grade 10 and 11 course offerings. The online library resources (ProQuest: Canadian Curriculum Edition E-Library and TumbleBookCloud) are also sufficient, however the print collection is limited and could improve to support both the current and future course offerings as well as the daily silent reading program that occurs in home room.

Each student at the School also has their own laptop and is therefore able to readily access the above noted online resources as well as other online information.

There is also a clear policy in place to ensure all learning resources used in the school are approved by the B.C. principal.

Commendation:

The School is commended for improving its online learning resources, moving toward a 1-to-1 laptop program and enhancing its science lab equipment and materials.

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 communicates progress reports directly to students and parents currently may receive this information by telephone or at grade level parent meetings, which are held each semester as needed. This process is a collaborative effort between the BC Office and the Chinese counselors. Parent communication also occurs through Chinese social media such as QQ and Weixin platforms where the School maintains official parent user groups, and



through the School's Chinese website. The School is moving towards giving progress reports through the Powerschool parent portal online.

At this time there was no evidence of self reflection as an essential component of the progress reporting process.

Commendation:

The School is to be commended for making information regarding student progress readily available to parents in their own language.

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 principal has produced an updated version of the parent/student handbook that includes the necessary content in both English and Mandarin, while also including planning calendars for future events and activities. Relevant sections dealing with Appeals and the Dispute Resolution Policy, as well as policies dealing with admissions, assessment, student conduct and supervision are contained in the handbook.

Commendation:

For the comprehensive parent/student 'learning' handbook that includes relevant information for both students and parents, with entries in both English and Mandarin, and includes a detailed day planner for students to use.

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 is prepared centrally by CMLES and contains all the required elements as part of the Agreement. The policy regarding the evaluation of teachers was also being adhered to at MLIS-X.



COURSE ACCREDITED VIA DISTRIBUTED LEARNING 6.0

6.1 The School meets the distributed learning requirements as outlined in section 18 of the Agreement and Section 6 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Not Met	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
Comment: MLIS-X does not currently offer any distributed learning courses.		

CONCLUSION

Commendations

The Inspection Team wishes to recognize the owner/operator, principal and staff of Maple Leaf International School – Xi’an for:

- effective and ambitious planning that has resulted in the growth in student enrolment and the expansion of facilities both at MLIS-X and throughout the Maple Leaf system,
- providing a school-based budget to allow the principal to make decisions regarding resource acquisition in a timely fashion,
- the quality of the facilities and equipment being provided to operate the B.C. program at the MLIS-X campus,
- the centralized support structures that are in place to assist the School in its operation,
- the robust professional development program that has been made available to teachers and administrators working in the system,
- the implementation of a rigorous English language proficiency assessment and advancement program that more readily ensures students are ready to be successful in the full B.C. program,
- its authentic implementation of the new curricular frameworks in grade 10 and its beginning work towards the implementation of the new curricular frameworks in grade 11 for the 2019-2020 school year,
- conducting a rigorous and secure exam process,
- improving its online learning resources, moving toward a 1-to-1 laptop program and enhancing its science lab equipment and materials,
- making information regarding student progress readily available to parents in their own language,
- the comprehensive parent/student ‘learning’ handbook that includes relevant information for both students and parents, with entries in both English and Mandarin, and includes a detailed day planner for students to use.



SUMMATIVE RECOMMENDATION

The Offshore Inspection Team recommends to the Executive Director of International Education and Independent Schools that the British Columbia education program offered at Maple Leaf International School – Xi’an continue to be recognized as a British Columbia-certified school.

