

Certification Inspection Report

BRITISH COLUMBIA PROGRAM

at

MAPLE LEAF INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL – XI'AN

XI'AN, SHAANXI PROVINCE

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

DECEMBER 1-2, 2017

INTRODUCTION

On December 1-2, 2017, a certification inspection was completed on Maple Leaf International School - Xian (MLIS-X) in Xi'an, Shaanxi Province, People's Republic of China, termed 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, British Columbia Ministry of Education (MoE) in accordance with the *B.C. Global Education Program – Offshore Schools Certification Agreement* (the Agreement), consisted of Mr. Theo VandeWeg and Mrs. Beverly Pulyk (Chair).

The School's B.C. program has an enrolment of 101 students; all students are currently in grade 10. Depending on a student's English language proficiency, the student is enrolled in a complete B.C. program or a partial B.C. program and partial language elective program (LEP). As such, 42 of the 101 students are enrolled in the full B.C. program, 28 students are enrolled in the School's bridging program and 31 students are enrolled in the foundations program. The Bridging students are expected to advance to the full B.C. program beginning the second semester. The foundations program students will transition to the bridging program and then to the full B.C. program as they acquire sufficient English language proficiency. All students are working towards earning a B.C. Dogwood graduation certificate.

MLIS-X is part of an education park – a combination of two or more schools within a larger school community. Currently the two schools within the education park include the Maple Leaf Chinese School (kindergarten to grade 9) and MLIS-X (the B.C. English high school). The intent and goal is that the Chinese kindergarten students will graduate from MLIS-X. The total enrolment of both schools is 682 students.



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 School's owner/operator, assistant superintendent, B.C. principal, B.C. teachers, Chinese headmaster, Chinese principal, director of the language elective program and a few Chinese support staff.

The owner/operator, China Maple Leaf Education Systems Ltd. (CMLES), owned by Dr. Sherman Jen, is responsible for the B.C. program. MLIS-X, which opened this year, is the newest of the B.C. Maple Leaf offshore schools in China offering the B.C. program. In addition to these schools, CMLES operates numerous other Chinese pre-school, elementary and middle schools throughout China. The CMLES organizational structures, policies and procedures have been an asset in the establishment of MLIS-X.

The B.C. program's philosophy, objectives and special features include the following:

- Philosophy - *Based on the belief that through blending the best of the innovations and higher level thinking western model with the cultural richness and discipline of the traditional Chinese educational model, students will be best prepared to meet the challenges of living and working in a more international society.*
- Objective - *MLIS-X provides an international education that emphasizes academic excellence within a supportive community that respects and promotes cultural norms and traditions for both Chinese and international students.*
- As noted by the principal, two special features of the school include a common/blended homeroom for all students regardless of program (full B.C., bridging or foundations) and the selection and calibre of the extra-curricular activities offered at the school.

The Team thanks 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:

MLIS-X is in its first year of operation, therefore there is no previous inspection report. The principal reviewed inspection reports of other Maple Leaf schools in preparation for this inspection.



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 business plan developed relates to the system as a whole, with MLIS-X being the newest addition to the CMLES schools. CMLES is beginning the third year of a five-year business plan. The plan projects steady enrolment increases, taking into account the current schools in existence and the projected enrolment in the new schools that CMLES intends to open over the next two years.

According to the principal, MLIS-X's current B.C. enrolment is projected to increase from 101 to 240 next year and to 500 the year thereafter. A new high school campus is being built across the street from the current kindergarten to grade 9 school facilities. The high school is currently located on the elementary school campus and is expected to relocate to the new campus next September; construction was well underway at the time of the inspection. Grade 11 will be added next year and grade 12 the following year.

CMLES completed a market analysis prior to receiving approval from the local government committee to open MLIS-X, and upon approval, a planned recruitment campaign was initiated. The Principal plans on being involved in recruitment in the coming years.

The School engages and communicates with parents through parent meetings and WeChat. The principal noted approximately 80% of the parents attended the two parents meetings held so far this year. He hopes to develop a parent advisory committee in the coming year.

The Team confirms the business plan items as noted in the *B.C. Offshore School Program Annual Report*.

Commendation:

Commendations are extended to the owner/operator for his long-term CMLES vision and for the thorough development of the CMLES business plan which confirms the sustainability of MLIS-X and the ongoing system-wide growth of CMLES.



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 verified all items noted in Section 2.1 of the *B.C. Offshore School Program Annual Report*. The Team also confirmed that the owner/operator meets the requirements set forth in the Agreement, including:

- confirmation of the qualification criteria for owner/operator s as outlined in Section 5.0 and Schedule A of the Agreement.
- verification of an operating permit from the Xianyang Education Bureau (April 2016 to April 2019).
- verification of a signed agreement between Dalian Maple Leaf Education System and Xi Xian New Area Airport New City Government Committee (dated March 29, 2016).
- verification of Private Non-enterprise Unit Registration Certificate issued by the Civil Affair Bureau of Xianyang (dated Dec 29, 2016 to Dec 29, 2018).
- public announcements regarding the School meet the criteria outlined in Section 8 of the Agreement.
- the owner/operator and principal are aware of the requirement to report the dismissal, suspension and/or discipline of teachers as required in Section 17 of *The Agreement*.

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 MLIS-X education park is located on a large piece of property in a new development zone of Xianyang. The first phase of the education park opened last year for the Chinese kindergarten to grade 9 School. As noted previously, the high school will relocate to the new facilities which are currently under construction across the street from the elementary school. The existing facilities are made up of nine buildings (eight of which are joined). The School includes administration offices, staff work areas, general classrooms, a science lab, a computer lab, two libraries (one elementary and one high school), a gymnasium with adjoining activity rooms, an amphitheatre, lecture hall, cafeteria, dormitories as well as outdoor track and play areas.

The MLIS-X education park is a self-contained gated community. The administration offices are located on the second floor while the grade 10 classrooms are located on the third floor of Building #2. The gymnasium, track and play areas, science lab and computer lab are shared with



the elementary school. The science lab is not yet operational due to a lack of supplies and necessary safety equipment. The School is in the process of addressing this issue.

All of the students live on campus with most of the students returning home on weekends. Chinese staff members supervise students outside of school hours. B.C. teachers and administration communicate with the Chinese support staff as needed about issues affecting students. A nurse provides on-site medical services 24 hours per day. A current Cafeteria Operation Certificate (valid to September 9, 2018) is posted on a wall in the cafeteria.

Students in the B.C. program at MLIS-X practise evacuation drills (fire, earthquake, etc.). The principal plans on having students practise lockdown drills before the end of the school year. A MLIS-X emergency binder was available for review. The assistant superintendent noted that CMLES is developing a detailed emergency plan template for all CMLES schools to assist them in completing a more detailed site specific emergency plan.

The Team completed a review of the facilities and deemed them suitable to support the B.C. program.

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 offshore school representative (OSR), appointed by the owner/operator and approved by the Province, represents all CMLES schools. His extensive experience as a teacher and administrator in B.C. and China provides him the knowledge and expertise required of the position. The OSR is supported by the CMLES Vancouver office. The OSR was not present during the inspection; the assistant superintendent was available in his place.

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 was appointed to his position at MLIS-X effective the 2017-18 school year and is responsible for the duties of a principal as noted in Section 3.2 of the *B.C. Offshore School Program Annual Report*. The principal possesses experience as a B.C. offshore teacher,



department head and vice-principal within CMLES. The principal indicates his focus is on developing a positive school culture, promoting the development of values with the students, building a 1000 book library, supporting the laptop program for all students, and promoting the pedagogy and experimentation with the new curriculum.

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 principal of MLIS-X is supported by an administrative team consisting of the Chinese headmaster, Chinese principal, language elective program director, B.C. school secretary, administrator of general affairs and admissions director. CMLES supports the School with policy development, teacher recruitment, curriculum development and professional development (to name a few).

The Chinese headmaster is responsible for the overall school operations in both the Chinese elementary school and the B.C. high school. The Chinese principal is in charge of the Chinese staff in the high school. The B.C. school secretary is responsible for the office management, student records, supporting the B.C. teachers with living issues and providing translating services for the B.C. staff. The LEP director is responsible for the LEP program and supervises the ESL (English as a Second Language) teachers. The administrator in charge of general affairs oversees the maintenance of both schools.

PowerSchool, the student data management system, is used to store student information and is used to transmit school and student data to the Ministry.

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, housed in the administration office, are maintained by the school secretary. Student files contain a copy of the student registration form, student demographic information, Permanent Student Record (form 1704), English language assessment exam, results of those exams, report cards and signed B.C. Ministry of Education's Personal Information Consent forms. The files are stored in fireproof cabinets.



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

The Team confirmed all items outlined in Section 3.5 of the *B.C. Offshore School Program Annual Report*. B.C. teachers plan, evaluate and provide instruction; a locally certified Chinese teacher teaches Mandarin. This teacher is exempt as per Ministry requirements. The locally certified Chinese teacher has appropriate documentation on file. Moral education is a pre-requisite of Chinese teacher certification and satisfies Chinese criminal records check requirements. Criminal record checks for Chinese support staff were verified.

Teacher files are stored in the principal's office. These files include: employment application information, Teacher Regulation Branch certificate and current membership, observation reports, contracts, signed personal information consent forms, teacher work permits, visas and permanent residency documents. The principal has completed some classroom observations for the purpose of teacher evaluation. The terms and conditions of employment are included in the teacher and principal contracts, with the exception of language regarding the "availability of instructional supplies".

The teacher handbook was updated this year and contains all currently required information.

This year, the principal attended two professional development events for school leaders (three days in July and three days in November). One more event is being planned this year. New teachers attended an orientation session before coming to China. Monthly professional development has been scheduled during the year (half days). The Chinese ESL teachers join the B.C. teachers for professional development.

CMLES provides incentives promoting the retention of teachers, such as stock options and a new teacher referral bonus.



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:

CMLES introduced the upcoming curriculum transformation for the graduation program and its centralized support mechanisms to CMLES teachers during the orientation week in August. Recently, CMLES staff participated in an all-day online workshop (with Darren Spyksma from the Ministry of Education Outreach Team) which launched the experimentation phase using core competencies and project-based learning. Subsequent monthly half-day professional development sessions have been allocated on a system-wide (CMLES) basis and will focus on other aspects of the new curriculum. The teachers at MLIS-X have been actively exploring and collaborating on implementation strategies. For the remainder of the school year, other professional development will include inter-school visitations.

CMLES has created an assistant superintendent position to manage the curricular transformation process for the system with the help of curriculum writers and system coordinators.

CMLES has system-wide capacity to conduct data analysis and in the coming years will use data analysis to drive continuous improvement strategies throughout the system. For now, MLIS-X being in its first year of operation, data is merely being generated for subsequent analysis.

Course overviews include pointers for both formative and summative assessment strategies and these are actively included in classroom activities. With the upcoming 2018-19 curricular transformation in grade 10, MLIS-X teachers are participating in system-wide and ongoing professional development to address assessment strategies and further enhance reporting frameworks to address curricular changes moving forward.

Commendation:

CMLES is commended for creating an assistant superintendent position for the purpose of supporting teachers and administrators through the curricular transformation process with the assistance of curriculum writers and system coordinators.



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:

MLIS-X has used a system-developed language assessment tool to evaluate each student's language proficiency when entering the school. The MLIS-X Principal has expertise in language acquisition strategies and is directly involved in the student English proficiency assessment and student placement. This assessment tool is undergoing further review. It currently consists of three components that are assessed (reading comprehension and listening skills, original composition writing component, oral interview with an English native speaker) and is used to determine which program is best suited to the student's relative English language proficiency. The three entry programs are: foundations, bridging, or full B.C. program.

In the foundations program, students initially focus on language acquisition and ESL and take one course for credit in the first year. These students are on track to complete the B.C. graduation requirements in four years. In the bridging program, students are more proficient and will take two courses for credit the first year, while still enhancing their English language skills. Bridging program students typically complete graduation requirements in three and a half years. The most language proficient students will enter the full B.C. program and are on track for completing graduation requirements in three years.

CMLES has developed a model to support ESL students in acquiring the requisite English language skills using 12 key strategies on a system-wide basis in all courses. This model addresses the specific needs of second language English learners in China and incorporates effective instructional pedagogy for use in Chinese classrooms.

MLIS-X is in the process of establishing a school-based team to provide ongoing support and placement review ensuring students are enabled to move through the three streams based on performance. Monthly professional development at the school includes discussions of language acquisition theories (Basic Interpersonal Communications Skills/Cognitive Academic Language Proficiencies - BICS/CALP; Content Language and Integrated Learning - CLIL).

A particular program strength at MLIS-X is that the ESL teachers are included in all curricular transformation professional development and work in tandem with the B.C. program teaching staff. This ensures teaching strategies are consistent throughout the School's program.

Commendation:

The English language proficiency assessment and the three subsequent program entry options are serving students well and support English language acquisition and student success 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:

MLIS-X is in its first year of operation and currently does not offer BAA courses. There has been no application of challenge or equivalency credits at this time but policies are in place should the situation arise.

The School meets course credit requirements in all courses. The Mandarin 10 course is taught by the Chinese teacher and is under supervision of the Chinese program principal. The course overview for this course is fully developed and operational.

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 grade 10 program at MLIS-X offers the following courses:

- In the first semester, credit courses include Planning 10, Social Studies 10, Foundations of Mathematics 10, Science 10, Physical Education 10, Applied Skills 11, Communications 11, Mandarin 10. Non-credit courses include Bridging Language Arts, Communications Skills, Chinese Moral Education 10, Chinese Social Studies 10, and Foundations of Language 10.
- In the second semester, course offerings will additionally include English 10, Drama 10 (2 credits), and Information Technology 10 (2 credits).

MLIS-X is using the CMLES curriculum overviews which align with the 2004 graduation program requirements. As MLIS-X prepares for the curricular transformation, these course overviews will be adjusted to meet the 2018-19 curricular requirements.

MLIS-X has designated one course as Applied Skills 11 (ASK 11). However, its course overview and curriculum appears to be more suited to an English language acquisition BAA course such as the CMLES BAA course: Canadian Academic Essentials.

Commendation:

The School's educational program is complete and well-structured. MLIS-X is commended for making a first-year program well-developed and 'mature'.



Requirement:

MLIS-X is required to review the ASK 11 course and assign it to a more suitable course code which accurately reflects the course content.

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:

The Team confirms that all four-credit courses (including Mandarin 10) are offered in 108.5 hours of instruction per semester. Linear course are offered all year and also total 108.5 contact hours. The School exceeds the minimum 850 hour requirement.

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:

MLIS-X is in its first year of operation. Under direction of the school principal, the teachers have established acceptable grade range benchmarks for all English Language Arts classes. The School is also exploring the creation of an evaluation committee to review student placements. The School has not yet adopted the B.C. Performance Standards in all English Language Arts classes nor explored the adoption of the "ML Quick Scale" for formative assessment which parallels the B.C. Performance Standards "Quick Scale." These tools are being reviewed for implementation in future.

MLIS-X intends to use CMLES Data Analysis to examine and plan for student success.

The CMLES course overviews pay particular attention to formative and summative assessment strategies and teachers are incorporating these in their planning for assessment. Teachers at MLIS-X work with system-wide supports to standardize important summative assessments.

The School does not offer examinable courses at this time. However, when examinations will be administered in the future, MLIS-X will follow examination security and invigilation protocols established by CMLES. These protocols are rigorous and secure and meet Ministry requirements.

This being the first year of operation for MLIS-X, there is no previous year's inspection data to



review.

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 is in start-up mode and the program is currently minimally-resourced in several areas.

The gymnasium facility is impressive but is lacking sufficient variety and quantity of physical education equipment.

MLIS-X is currently building its library resources. The current library collection consists primarily of fiction (450) titles—most of which are levelled readers. These resources support English language acquisition but provide little support for topical research. The School is actively building the resources and anticipates substantial upgrades and book purchases. Access to Proquest as a resource of reading and research material is available. The School will have a full-time librarian guiding a library development plan.

The School is participating in the Model United Nations conference in Wuhan in December 2017.

The science lab is still being stocked with safety equipment and resources and has yet to be used to support the School's science program. The School is considering participating in a science fair later this year.

Since the School only offers grade 10 Math in this start-up year, it has not been involved in preparations for the Provincial Numeracy Assessment. The math teacher made arrangements for Math 10 students to participate in the Waterloo Math Contest. The contest has been completed and the students are awaiting the results.

All students at MLIS-X have been issued student laptops which are integrated into the instructional program. In addition, the School has an IT lab and MLIS-X is exploring ways to make use of the School's lab after school hours.



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:

MLIS-X teachers are beginning to explore and experiment with core competencies and inquiry/project-based learning. While MLIS-X's reporting templates currently reflect the 2004 Grad Program reporting standards, this year's professional development focuses on how these will be reflected in the 2018-19 student progress reports.

Student progress reports are managed through PowerSchool software. MLIS-X currently issues four formal report cards and four interim reports (two formal and interim per semester) with three parent teacher conferences held per year. Parents have ongoing online access to student progress reports.

MLIS-X students receive their progress reports directly from the Chinese counselors and B.C. homeroom teachers in grade meetings and homeroom classes. Parents receive their children's progress reports through a variety of strategies, including access to PowerSchool's online reporting features, as well as, regular contact with the Chinese counselors in person, by phone, or through WeChat social media links.

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 parent/student handbook is created each year by CMLES for all schools in the system. Each CMLES principal is expected to update the handbook to personalize it to reflect their local school; some items in the handbook are written in both English and Chinese. The Team confirmed that the handbook meets the requirements as outlined in the inspection catalogue (i.e. Appeals and Dispute Resolutions Policy, policies related to assessment, admissions, student conduct and supervision).



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 developed by CMLES and is updated as needed and/or required. The handbook includes a variety of policies and procedures and meets all requirements as outlined in the annual report.

COURSE ACCREDITED VIA DISTRIBUTED LEARNING 6.0

6.1 The School meets the Distributed Learning (DL) 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:

MLIS-X does not offer any DL courses.

CONCLUSION

Commendations

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

- The owner/operator’s long-term CMLES vision and for the thorough development of the CMLES business plan which confirms the sustainability of MLIS-X and the ongoing growth of CMLES.
- The creation of an assistant superintendent position for the purpose of supporting teachers and administrators through the curricular transformation process with the assistance of curriculum writers and system coordinators.
- The English language proficiency assessment and the three subsequent program entry options are serving students well and support English language acquisition and student success in the full B.C. program.
- The School’s educational program is complete and well-structured. MLIS-X is commended for making a first-year program well-developed and ‘mature’.



Requirements

In order to meet the requirements of the *B.C. Global Education Program – Offshore Schools Certification Agreement*, the Team requires that by March 15, 2018, the owner/operator provide the Executive Director of International Education, responsible for B.C. Global Education Program - Offshore Schools, with a plan and timeline for proposed implementation of the following items:

- Review the ASK 11 course and assign it to a more suitable course code which accurately reflects the course content.

SUMMATIVE RECOMMENDATION

The Offshore Inspection Team recommends to the Executive Director of International Education that, contingent on responding to the above requirements to the satisfaction of the Executive Director of International Education, the British Columbia Education Program offered at Maple Leaf International School – Xi'an be recognized as a British Columbia-certified School.

