INTRODUCTION

On December 9-10, 2019, a virtual certification inspection was completed on Maple Leaf International Academy – Shenzhen (MLIA-S), 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 (BC) education program have been met, according to the BC Global Education Program – Offshore Schools Certification Agreement. The inspection team (the Team), appointed by the Executive Director of Independent Schools and International Education, British Columbia Ministry of Education (MoE) in accordance with the BC Global Education Program – Offshore Schools Certification Agreement (the Agreement), consisted of Dr. Dave Loewen (Chair), and Dr. John Churchley.

The School’s BC program has a reported enrolment of 31 students in Grades 10-11.

During their virtual visit to the School, the Team reviewed all standards required in the BC Global Education Program – Offshore Schools Certification Agreement and Operating Manual and met virtually with the Offshore School Representative, BC Principal, and all teaching staff. In addition, the Team also met with the academic advisors, administrative support staff and 4 high school students in Grades 10-11.

The Team also reviewed the inspection survey responses of the BC teachers, the BC Principal, the superintendent, and the Offshore School Representative.

The Owner/Operator, China Maple Leaf Educational Systems, Ltd., (CMLES) is responsible for the BC program. MLIA-S is one of fifteen China Maple Leaf Educational Systems schools in China offering the BC program. There are other educational programs being offered on the same campus as the BC program such as a Chinese elementary and middle school program. All these programs are under the authority of China Maple Leaf Educational Systems.
The China Maple Leaf Educational System BC program’s philosophy, objectives and special features include:

- An educational philosophy that is based on the belief that through blending the best of the innovations and higher level thinking western educational 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 global society.

- An educational philosophy that assumes that every child has a strong desire to learn and to develop an understanding of the world, to share their knowledge, and to communicate their understanding, thoughts, and feelings through wide-ranging personal expression.

- 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.

- Each school promoting and appreciating the diversity of people and cultures, providing an optimal environment for learning and teaching, and offering a globally respected curriculum that inspires in its students the spirit and ideals of global citizenship.

- Measuring each school’s success by the extent to which they guide each student in the exploration of their interests, assist them in the accomplishment of their goals and promote a sense of self-fulfillment and pride.

- Working to develop students to their best potential and to provide them with a world of opportunity.

The Team would like to thank Maple Leaf International Academy - Shenzhen for its cooperation and preparedness for the inspection visit.

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<th>The School has satisfactorily addressed requirements contained in the previous inspection report.</th>
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Comment: There were not requirements noted in the 2018 report.
BUSINESS PLAN 1.0

The Owner/Operator has submitted a business plan to the BC Ministry of Education, confirming the sustainability of the program.

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Comment:
CMLES has just completed the fourth year of their fifth five-year strategic plan. This plan projected the enrolment of students in the BC program to exceed 14,000 by the year 2019/20. However, for the past two years the China Maple Leaf Educational System has experienced an enrolment decline system wide. During this time Maple Leaf International Academy – Shenzhen has grown as it is in its second year and has added Grade 11.

CMLES has also added enrolment to its complement of elementary and middle schools for a system enrolment total of 41,380 students. It is expected that many of these younger students will transition seamlessly into neighbouring Maple Leaf international high schools. However, Maple Leaf International – Shenzhen stands somewhat apart from this process as an elite academically-orientated academy which requires all students to apply for admission and be accepted based primarily on academic ability.

To meet the demand for this expected growth from the elementary and middle feeder schools, it was reported that CMLES will be expanding the current facilities as needed and will be adding at least 6 new schools in 2019/20, including a new school in Jinan which will include a BC Graduation Program in 2020/21 and a Maple Leaf World School at Lakehead University in Ontario, Canada. Specifically, MLIA–S is well situated for growth with a significant number of classrooms currently sitting empty.

As China Maple Leaf Educational System develops its next five-year plan (2020-2025), the Team was also informed of an aggressive growth plan which sets a target of tripling the total enrolment of students in the BC program within the next five years.

Commendation:
The China Maple Leaf Educational System is to be commended for 25 years of providing high quality BC Education and for its growth and impact in China and beyond.
2.02 The Owner/Operator meets all requirements as set forth in the BC Global Education Program Offshore Schools Certification Agreement (the Agreement).

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Comment:
MLIA-S is located in a multi-building complex that includes all the necessary facilities to offer the BC program. The facility also includes unique speciality spaces such as dance studios, a golf simulator and a flight simulator. The cafeteria provides food services for all Grades 1-12 students and the campus and dormitories house all the students in the BC program during the week. The grounds include badminton and tennis courts, an outdoor swimming pool (not yet operationalized), an artificial turf field space, a running track, basketball courts and play areas for younger children. The School has a bright and open floor plan with wide hallways and natural light.

The Team reviewed current documentation verifying MLIA-S holds appropriate provincial verification. Within the limitations of a virtual inspection, the Team is satisfied that the facilities are in compliance and are suitable to support the BC program.

Since the last annual certification inspection, the School has:
- Relocated the BC program to the third floor so that all facets of the BC program (classrooms, offices, etc.) are together.
- Technologically upgraded and refurbished all teaching classrooms in order to enhance the teaching/learning experience.
- Expanded the use of the parent portal within the Power School Data system.

2.03 The Owner/Operator has written approval from the appropriate government entity to operate the offshore school, as outlined in section 5.03 of the Agreement.

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Comment:
The Team confirms that the Owner/Operator has written approval from the appropriate government entity to operate the offshore school, as outlined in section 5.03 of the Certification Agreement.
2.04 The School meets local building, safety and cafeteria codes and regulations. The facilities are deemed to be suitable to support the BC program.

☐ Requirement Met  ☐ Requirement Not Met

Comment:
The Team reviewed translated copies of building and cafeteria inspections. All reports indicate that the School is in compliance with local regulations and authorities and facilities are suitable to support the BC program. These documents include a local engineering assessment verifying the buildings are safe for occupancy.

All Maple Leaf schools are provided with policies to guide schools in dealing with emergency procedures, fire and earth quake plans. These are documented and outlined in the CMLES Handbook of Policies and Procedures, section III, under Emergency Evacuation Procedures. Unplanned temporary closures are also covered, such as an electrical blackout procedure. The Team was informed of several emergency drills that have already taken place this school year and the plans to continue to revise and improve current emergency practices in order to make those practices more specific to the Shenzhen campus.

2.05 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 Team notes that the role of the OSR has changed significantly over the past number of years as the CMLES organization has grown in both size and scope. Many of the OSR duties (teacher recruitment and onsite visits to Maple Leaf Schools) have been delegated to the superintendent and assistant superintendent as well as the department of human resources. The OSR has not been on-site at MLIA-S this year with the exception of attendance at a CMLES board meeting. However, it was further reported that the OSR does respond in a timely matter to any emails, phone calls, etc. initiated by the Principal.

It was reported that the OSR role now includes the responsibilities of Superintendent for ML Global Educational Systems and membership on the CMLES Board of Directors as Executive Director.

The Team suggests that given the OSR requirements stated in section 14 of the Agreement, there may be a conflict of interest. It would be prudent for CMLES to seek clarification from the Ministry of Education regarding the status of its OSR.
### 2.06 The Principal meets the requirements as outlined in section 2.06 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

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Comment:
The Principal is in her first year of leadership at MLIA-S but is an experienced educational leader with successful previous experience in a British Columbia Independent School. She fulfils the requirements as outlined in section 3.2 of the Annual Report.

The Principal’s job description is comprehensive, outlining all elements required in the Agreement. She also holds the title of the Executive Head of the Grade 1-12 program and is supported by a competent personal assistant and regular contact with the OSR, CMLES superintendent and assistant superintendent.

**Commendations:**
CMLES is to be commended for appointing a highly experienced and well-respected principal to lead the school in its formative stage as an elite academic academy.

The Principal is to be commended for the positive improvements that have already been made at MLIA-S. Significant improvements in student records K-12, modification of safety protocols, and engaging all BC teachers in learning Mandarin all work to set a tone of high expectations and a strong learning culture.

### 2.07 The School meets the administrative support requirements as outlined in section 2.07 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

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Comment:
The School employs a number of employees to provide various levels of administrative, cleaning and security support to operate the School.

In addition to the significant system support from China Maple Leaf Educational Systems, the School has the following support personal on site: a deputy head with primary responsibilities for the K-9 program and oversee of general affairs, an English head who provides additional English support to students as needed, an admissions office with 3 full time employees, a business/finance office with 2 full time employees, an administrative office with 3 full time employees working in human resources, foreign affairs, and information technology, dormitory supervisors, a security team, and a school medical clinic.

The School is commended for a full complement of administrative support services that are all designed to support the School’s delivery of its educational program.
Commendation:
The School is commended for a full complement of administrative support services that are all designed to support the School’s delivery of its educational program.

2.08 The School meets the Student Record requirements as outlined in section 2.08 of the Inspection Catalogue for offshore schools.

☐ Requirement Met  ☐ Requirement Not Met

Comment:
The Team relied on previous inspection reports, the verbal confirmation of the BC Principal, and sample student records to confirm that each student had a Permanent Student Record (PSR) card showing the Personal Education Number (PEN), school and attendance record and historical achievement records by grade/year. The file also contained the student’s report cards and English language assessment, as well as Chinese policies and letters.

The Team was able to confirm that the student and parent consent forms (2018 version) have been updated based on the ministry guidelines for the 2019/20 school year.

The Team notes that student files are securely kept in the BC Principal’s office.

2.09-2.14 The School meets the teacher certification requirements as outlined in sections 2.09-2.14 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

☐ Requirement Met  ☐ Requirement Not Met

Comment:
The Team received an updated Certificate Verification Response File from the Teacher Certification Branch (TCB) dated December 5, 2019. In addition, the Team was able to examine approved Letters of Exemption from the Ministry dated September 24, 2019 and December 9, 2019 for those teachers who are permitted to teach while their teaching certification application is in process.

The Team was able to confirm that all authorized persons under the Agreement possess valid and current certification under the Ministry of Education. Letters of exemption will expire January 2020.

It was reported that both this current year and last year in the School’s founding year, the academic school year starts without the School having a full contingent of teachers. The School accommodates this reality by creatively scheduling semester courses according to teacher’s areas of competency and utilizing existing staff to cover as TOC’s until new teachers
arrive at the School. Clearly this annual teaching shortage at the beginning of each school year is less than desirable and detrimental to the BC program.

The School is encouraged to continue addressing this perennial problem through changes in the current teacher recruitment, hiring and retention process.

### 2.17 The School meets the requirements for curriculum implementation outlined in section 2.17 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

- **Requirement Met**
- **☐ Requirement Not Met**

**Comment:**
The Team observed evidence of the School’s transition journey to the new BC curriculum in Grades 10 - 12. Big Ideas, curricular competencies, content and core competencies are evident in lesson plans and descriptions. Core competencies are being integrated into all courses. The School is building on its integration of Aboriginal Perspectives and Knowledge into all courses. This is particularly evident in Humanities subjects.

Staff have been involved in a number of different professional development activities regarding the new curriculum. This includes a training hub for teachers new to the BC curriculum. This hub supports teachers who may be limited in their transition time to the BC learning standards. There are also opportunities for professional development through the Maple Leaf system staff and professional development events and resources. At MLIA-Shenzhen, the small staff size allows for the teachers to share practices formally and informally with each other to develop their knowledge and skill in the new curriculum and pedagogies. The Principal is also available to coach and assist teachers with curriculum and instruction – particularly those that arrive mid-term and need an orientation to the BC learning standards. This was evident in the knowledge about the new curriculum presented by teachers who have only been at the school for a month.

**Commendation:**
The School is to be commended for their implementation of the new curriculum, especially their concerted effort to focus on authentic learning experiences.

The School is to be commended for the Principal’s support of teachers new to the school and their orientation to the BC curriculum.
### 2.18 The School meets the requirements for English language assessment and acquisition as outlined in section 2.18 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

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**Comment:**
The Team confirms that the School meets the requirements for English language assessment and acquisition.

The Principal is responsible for administering the managing and making final decisions on student admission and assessment of English language skills.

The School is offering English language classes to monolingual Chinese-speaking staff and Chinese language classes to monolingual English-speaking staff. This will build coherence and communication among all MLIA-Shenzhen staff, but more importantly models the acquisition and use of a target language for the students. It also models the risk-taking and vulnerability sometimes associated with using a new language. This program is being used throughout the campus including the Chinese elementary and middle schools. In addition, bilingual (Chinese/English) staff are preferred in recruiting for positions at these schools, including dorm teachers. This is intended to support English language usage throughout the entire campus and prepare students for the BC program in Grade 10.

Students are supported in their English language learning in a number of ways:
- Key teaching strategies common to all Maple Leaf schools
- School-wide encouragement of spoken English
- English speaking “lunch with the Principal” opportunities for students

**Commendation:**
The School is commended for modeling language acquisition and the associated risk-taking by having all monolingual staff take language lessons (in Mandarin or English).

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### 2.19(a-e) The School meets the course credit requirements (equivalency, challenge, exemptions and BAA courses) as outlined in section 2.19 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

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**Comment:**
The School offers the following courses not requiring BC certified teachers: Mandarin 10, 11, 12.
Currently, the School does not offer the opportunity for students to challenge courses. The School offers the following approved BAA courses: Chinese Social Studies 10, 11, 12; Developmental English 10; Chinese Language and Culture 10.

The Team reviewed course overviews for the above courses and noted they meet expectations as outlined in the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

2.19(f-g) The School meets the course overview/course planning requirements as outlined in Schedule B Part I, 2. (e) of the Agreement; namely, that all BC 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 Team noted evidence from lesson descriptions and lesson plans from all courses that meet the requirements of the new curriculum. Lesson plans and teacher interviews provided evidence that teachers are reflecting on their lessons to develop their professional practice.

The Team also confirms that in addition to the planning, there is evidence of instructional practices that reflect the pedagogical direction of the new curriculum, featuring active and authentic learning experiences. These include:
- outdoor projects in math and science; Science Fair, Model UN, and a Canadian election simulation
- cross-grade and cross-disciplinary learning activities which leverage both the small class sizes and the skills of older students in supporting younger students.

Many of these activities proactively support English Language Learning as well as the learning standards.

Commendation:
The School is commended for its implementation of authentic and active student learning experiences in implementing the learning standards as well as supporting English language learning.
2.20 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 Team confirms that the School meets the requirement for instructional time allotments. Student instructional time totals 1145.73 hours per year, which exceeds the minimum requirements for Grade 10-12.

2.21 The School meets the assessment methods requirements as outlined in section 2.21 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

☑ Requirement Met  ☐ Requirement Not Met

Comment:
The Team confirms that the School meets the requirement for assessment methods. The School ensures consistent evaluation through the use of rubrics. The use of BC Performance Standards is encouraged.

There is evidence that a variety of formative and summative assessment strategies are used to inform students about their learning and to help guide instruction for teachers. Students are able to re-submit work and can demonstrate their learning in a variety of media.

The teachers use a variety of authentic assessment tools including projects and presentations, performance assessments and flexibility in the time needed for students to learn.

BC provincial assessments are rigorously invigilated according to Ministry of Education requirements.

Commendation:
The School is to be commended for their implementation of a variety of authentic and performance assessment tools and their ongoing professional development work in this area.
### 2.22 The School meets the learning resources requirements as outlined in section 2.22 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

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Comment:
The Team confirms that School meets the expectations for learning resources.

Students are assigned laptops and Wi-Fi is available in each classroom. Each classroom has an interactive display board. The School has a wide variety of facilities including a makerspace with 3D printers. Teachers use OneNote to share class resources with students.

The School has a Library which has comfortable seating and workspaces. The School has electronic resources available such as Proquest and is building a collection of hard copy books.

All subject areas are supported by appropriate text and online resources. The operating practice is for the Principal to oversee and approve all learning resources, in consultation with teachers as subject matter experts and with further support and oversight from Maple Leaf Schools.

### 2.23 The School meets the student progress report requirements as outlined in section 2.23 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

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Comment:
The School has four formal report cards per year and two interim reports. There are two formal sets of parent-teacher interviews. Parents are also contacted individually as needed. Parents and students have access to student achievement information online through the PowerSchool Parent Portal.

### 2.24 The School meets the parent/student handbook requirements as outlined in section 2.24 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

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Comment:
The Team reviewed the School’s updated 2019-20 parent/student handbook. It contains appropriate information for students and their parents on such topics as the vision, mission and beliefs of CMLES, the curricular programs for the Graduation Program Grades 10-12, the
ESL Pathways (Foundations and Bridging program), Assessment, the School’s schedule/timetable, and a number of school policies that directly impact students and their parents.

These include such items as student behavior policy, attendance and lates, appeal process, Wi-Fi and laptop student use, course drop & course change, academic advising, summer school program and student athletic code of conduct.

In short, the MLIA-S parent/student handbook is relevant, informative and very helpful for parents and students alike.

**Commendation:**
The School is commended for developing a parent/student handbook that is relevant, informative and helpful for parents and students alike.

### 2.25 The School meets the teacher handbook requirements as outlined in section 2.25 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

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**Comment:**
The Team reviewed the School’s updated 2019-20 teacher handbook. The extensive 142 page handbook contains detailed information required by teachers to help them understand their unique roles and responsibilities as professional teachers with the BC Offshore School Program in China.

Topics covered within the handbook include such items as:
- **Section I:** Maple Leaf International High School System Calendar for Year 2019/20
- **Section II:** Student Matters
- **Section III:** Student Safety
- **Section IV:** Professional Conduct
- **Section V:** Performance Management
- **Section VI:** Payroll Administration and School Budgeting
- **Section VII:** Hours of Work
- **Section VIII:** Employee benefits
- **Section IX:** Conditions of Employment
- **Section X:** Communications
- **Section XI:** Employment Separation

**Appendices**
- APPENDIX 1 – Teacher Recruitment
- APPENDIX 2 - Required HR Forms
- APPENDIX 3 - Student Safety Instructions for Extracurricular Activities
- APPENDIX 4 - Employee Travel and Reimbursement Policy
In summary, the staff handbook is clear, extensive, and informative.

Commendation:
The School is to be commended for the development of a clear, extensive, and informative staff handbook.

2.26 The School meets the distributed learning requirements as outlined in section 18 of the Agreement and section 2.26 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

☐ Requirement Met ☐ Requirement Not Met ☒ Not Applicable

Comment:
The School does not currently offer distributed learning courses.

CONCLUSION

Commendations

The Inspection Team wishes to recognize the Owner/Operator, Principal and staff of Maple Leaf International Academy – Shenzhen for:

- On the eve of its 25th anniversary the Maple Leaf International group of schools is commended for its development, growth and global impact over the past quarter century.
- CMLES is to be commended for appointing a highly experienced and well-respected principal to lead the school in its formative stage as an elite academic academy.
- The School is commended for a full complement of administrative support services that are all designed to support the School’s delivery of its educational program.
- The School is to be commended for their implementation of the new curriculum, especially their concerted effort to focus on authentic learning experiences.
- The School is to be commended for the Principal’s support of teachers new to the school and their orientation to the BC curriculum.
- The School is commended for modeling language acquisition and the associated risk-taking by having all monolingual staff take language lessons (in Mandarin or English).
- The School is commended for the development of a clear, extensive, and informative staff handbook.
SUMMATIVE RECOMMENDATION

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