

Certification Inspection Report

BRITISH COLUMBIA PROGRAM

at

MAPLE LEAF INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL - YANCHENG

YANCHENG, JIANGSU PROVINCE

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

NOVEMBER 26 – 27, 2020

INTRODUCTION

On November 26–27, 2020, an online certification inspection was completed on Maple Leaf International School – Yancheng (MLIS-Ya) in Yancheng, Jiangsu 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 (BC) education program have been met, according to the *BC Global Education Program – Offshore Schools Certification Agreement*. The inspector, 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), was Edward Noot.

The School's BC program has an enrolment of 27 students, in grades 11 - 12. Students are enrolled in a dual credit program that will lead to graduation from both the Chinese and BC programs. The BC program shares this facility with some 500 students enrolled in a Chinese elementary and middle school.

During this virtual inspection of the School, the Inspector, to the best of his ability, reviewed all standards required in the *BC Global Education Program – Offshore Schools Certification Agreement* and *Operating Manual* and met with the School's Superintendent, BC Principal, BC teachers along with some students.

The Owner/Operator, China Maple Leaf Educational Systems (CMLES) is responsible for the BC program. Maple Leaf International School - Yancheng is one of fourteen China Maple Leaf Educational Systems Schools in China offering the BC program and enrolling over 8000 students. CMLES operates over 60 additional Chinese program schools in China, as well as some international programs in other countries.



The philosophy or the BC program is articulated as follows:

The MLES educational philosophy 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 internationalized society.

MLES schools promote appreciation for the diversity of people and cultures, provides an optimal environment for learning and teaching, and offers a globally respected curriculum that inspires in its students the spirit and ideals of global citizenship.

MLES schools seek to develop students to their best potential and to provide them with a world of opportunity.

The Inspector would like to thank Maple Leaf International School - Yancheng for its hospitality, cooperation and preparedness for the inspection visit.

The School has satisfactorily addressed requirements contained in the previous inspection report.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Not Met	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
<p>Comment: The previous inspection report contained no requirements, and the suggestions were reviewed during the School's follow-up check-in on September 24, 2020.</p>			

BUSINESS PLAN 1.0

The Owner/Operator has submitted a business plan to the BC Ministry of Education, confirming the sustainability of the program.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Met	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requirement Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Not Met
<p>Comment: The Owner/Operator has submitted a business plan to the BC Ministry of Education. The School is in its third year of operation and enrolment remains disappointingly low. Startup projections are proving to be overly optimistic for this campus.</p> <p>These is hope that increased marketing, including on social media, along with intentional recruitment in the middle school housed on campus could net more enrolment. The middle school on campus is itself a small school and BC program growth may take some time.</p>		



The current worldwide COVID-19 pandemic has been a significant factor, negatively impacting enrolment in private schools across China, and beyond. Although challenging, CMLES is well situated to weather this storm, and leaders are optimistic about rebounding enrolment once the pandemic is past. The School's current programming and staffing levels are only sustainable because they are part of CMLES.

MLIS-Ya is on the cusp of graduating its first class in June 2021. This milestone event could prove pivotal in securing increased enrolment. A graduating class gives the school added credibility and sustainability in the eyes of potential parents. It will also demonstrate a track record of graduates' acceptance into reputable universities worldwide. The importance of this milestone event cannot be underestimated in the future success of this school.

Commendation:

The strong commitment by the Owner/Operator and the School to their remaining BC students, assuring them of securing their Dogwood Diploma in this school with a sufficient variety of course options.

INSPECTION CATALOGUE 2.0

2.02 The Owner/Operator meets all requirements as set forth in the BC Global Education Program Offshore Schools Certification Agreement (the Agreement).

Requirement
Met

Requirement
Partially Met

Requirement
Not Met

Comment:

The Inspector confirms that the Owner/Operator meets all requirements set forth in the Agreement.

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.

Requirement
Met

Requirement
Partially Met

Requirement
Not Met

Comment:

The School was able to provide documentation indicating support and approval of the BC program by the appropriate governmental authority in Jiangsu Province; however, the approval letter does not fully comply with the requirements outlined in section 5.03 of the Agreement. The School indicated that they have been granted an extension to meet this



requirement. Once proper documentation is obtained it should be immediately forwarded to the MoE.

The School should note that the BC MoE will also be requiring certified translations of school approval letters in the future.

2.04-2.05 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 Partially Met

Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Inspector viewed photos and videos of this impressive new campus that included an academic building, a cafeteria, gymnasium, student dorms, teacher apartments and outside track and playing fields.

The Inspector viewed written local government authority to operate the buildings at the school as well as a license from the local authority to provide cafeteria food services. The Inspector also viewed a fire safety compliance certificate.

The Inspector reviewed the School's comprehensive emergency preparedness plans for fire or any natural disaster requiring a school evacuation.

The Inspector confirms that China Maple Leaf Education Systems has a plan in place for Maple Leaf schools in the event any of their schools face a temporary or permanent closure due to an unforeseen event. The plan has been signed off by the Offshore School Representative (OSR) for Maple Leaf and the Superintendent. In addition, the Principal of Maple Leaf International School - Yancheng has an emergency evacuation plan and has supplemented the Maple Leaf plan with specifics regarding the location of his staff and students in the event of an unforeseen closure of the School.

The Inspector confirmed that the school is in compliance with all national, provincial and municipal COVID-19 safety protocols.



2.06 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
Partially Met

Requirement
Not Met

Comment:

The Owner/Operator has appointed an experienced individual to act as Offshore School Representative (OSR). The OSR meets the requirements set out in section 1 of the Agreement and has been confirmed by the BC MoE as suitable for this position.

The OSR contract was renewed on September 1, 2018. 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 and that he is fully aware of his obligation to report critical information relating to changes in the operation of the School or ownership structure that could significantly impact the School's operation.

The OSR works closely with the superintendent and deputy superintendent of CMLES. The comprehensive administrative structure of CMLES provides robust support for individual schools in this system.

The annual report indicated that the OSR is aware of his obligation to report, in a timely fashion to the Ministry any critical information relating to any changes in the operation of the School and/or ownership structure that could have a significant impact on the School's operation – including proposed changes to the Owner/Operator's governance structure, financial situation and student and/or teacher safety.

The BC MoE has reviewed the multiple roles filled by the OSR, with respect to Schedule B, Part II (3) of the Offshore Certification Agreement, and provided CMLES with an exemption which allows the current OSR to fill these multiple roles until June 2023.

2.07 The Principal meets the requirements as outlined in section 2.07 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement
Met

Requirement
Partially Met

Requirement
Not Met

Comment:

The Principal is an experienced secondary teacher with two years' experience as a secondary vice principal and is now in his third year as the principal of Maple Leaf International School - Yancheng.



Prior to becoming a vice principal, he participated in CMLES administrative intern program. The Inspector reviewed the Principal's job description and contract, both of which comply with requirements under the Agreement.

He has his valid Certificate of Qualification from the BC Teacher Certification Branch (TCB) and meets the requirements outlined in the Agreement.

The Inspector noted that the Principal was very well prepared for this inspection and was passionate in his support of the BC program.

Commendation:

The BC Principal was exceptionally well prepared for this inspection and demonstrates passionate support of the BC program.

2.08 The School meets the administrative support requirements as outlined in section 2.08 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement
Met

Requirement
Partially Met

Requirement
Not Met

Comment:

The Principal is well supported in his leadership of this school by a full time bilingual secretary, a part time academic advisor and ESL director.

The Chinese headmaster and his staff also provide some program support as does the comprehensive CMLES senior admin team, particularly the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent.

2.09 The School meets the Student Record requirements as outlined in section 2.09 of the Inspection Catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement
Met

Requirement
Partially Met

Requirement
Not Met

Comment:

The School verified that student files are securely stored and properly backed up. The virtual inspection process allowed for the Inspector to view only limited files. They are maintained by the administrative assistant and contain all required elements including the newly developed personal information consent forms for parents and students.

The School utilizes PowerSchool administrative software to manage student data.



2.10-2.18 The School meets the teacher certification requirements as outlined in sections 2.10-2.18 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement Met

Requirement Partially Met

Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused disruptions in learning at MLIS-Ya with the School moving to remote learning in the spring then back to in-class instruction in June. COVID-19 case counts in the Yancheng area are virtually nil, so in-class instruction continues. The pandemic's far-reaching effect on international travel, however, has meant that two teachers cannot currently gain entry to China from South Africa and Canada. These teachers continue to utilize Canvas and Teams to teach their classes remotely. The Principal or a Chinese teaching assistant are in each classroom during virtual lessons to provide for support and structure.

The Inspector confirms that all authorized persons under the Agreement possess valid and current certification under the Ministry of Education.

Three BC program teachers hold valid COQs, while one is awaiting certification and authorized with a letter of exemption. The Principal is supporting the TCB application process and working with the applicant to complete the process. The letter of exemption is valid until March 9, 2021, which should be ample time to complete the certification process, provided that the applicant completes his document submission.

All locally certified teachers have evidence of certification and local criminal records checks on file. Please note that the BC MoE will require certified translations of these certificates in the future.

Staff contracts were reviewed and found to be comprehensive, addressing all the required areas.

Staff turnover at the School is not currently an area of concern. The Inspector appreciated that the staff are highly committed to building a strong program and to maintaining a positive school culture.

The Team confirmed that all teachers are employed, and on premises, are under proper Chinese work permits and Z visas. The teachers who are currently out of country will need to apply for residence and work visas upon arrival in China.

Teacher files are in order and well maintained and include evidence that teacher evaluations are occurring as per school policy. A principal evaluation has been conducted as per school policy.



Commendation:

The Inspector appreciated that the Principal and staff are highly committed to building a strong program and to maintaining a positive school culture.

2.19 The School meets the requirements for curriculum implementation outlined in section 2.19 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement
Met

Requirement
Partially Met

Requirement
Not Met

Comment:

MLIS–Ya benefits from a strong central office offering training, support, resources and ongoing professional development. The School has successfully implemented the new curriculum as is evidenced in planning documents reviewed by the Inspector and in conversations with the Principal and teachers.

The School demonstrated a very strong understanding and utilization of the core competencies and big ideas. They are evident throughout planning documents and the timetable, as the School has developed a cross-graded all-school core competency block and hopes to once again in the second semester.

2.20 The School meets the requirements for English language assessment and acquisition as outlined in section 2.20 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement
Met

Requirement
Partially Met

Requirement
Not Met

Comment:

The BC Principal, in conjunction with the headmaster, assesses the students who are interested in the BC program and the final decision on admission to the BC program rests with the BC Principal.

Students who pass the entrance exam are admitted into the BC program and those who are unable to pass the exam are admitted into an ESL foundations program. All MLIS–Ya students take extra English/Language Arts courses and a systematic program of support is offered for students.

Teachers are supported in their role as English language acquisition facilitators.



2.21(a-e) The School meets the course credit requirements (equivalency, challenge, exemptions and BAA courses) as outlined in section 2.21 (a-e) of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement Met

Requirement Partially Met

Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Inspector confirms Mandarin 11 and 12 and Chinese Social Studies 11 as exempted courses, which are being appropriately employed. The School is offering BAA Psych 12 and Teacher Assistant 12 this year, and they have completed the updated BC MoE course template.

2.21(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 Partially Met

Requirement Not Met

Comment:

CMLES curriculum teams, under the direction of the Deputy Superintendent, have prepared course overviews, along with unit and lesson planning templates that incorporate all the elements of the new curriculum. The Inspector confirms that course overviews for all courses offered from grades 11 -12 are in compliance with the BC curriculum. These overviews and accompanying lesson plan templates are a valuable instructional planning support for teachers, particularly those new to the BC curriculum.

MLIS-Ya teachers use the course overview, unit planning and lesson planning templates, but have personalized them to meet the specific learning needs of their students.

The CMLES overview, unit and lesson planning templates identify the big ideas, First Peoples Principles of Learning, core and curricular competencies, and key ESL learning strategies for each lesson.

The School maintains a schedule of ongoing professional development to continue to support teachers in their implementation of the BC curriculum.



2.22 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 Partially Met

Requirement Not Met

Comment:

MLIS-Ya students are in session for a total of 1,040 hours per year, exceeding the 850 hours per year required by the Educational Standards Order.

The Inspector noted that the School coordinates a limited club program that sees a high level of student engagement. Compulsory early evening study blocks are also scheduled.

2.23 The School meets the assessment methods requirements as outlined in section 2.23 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement Met

Requirement Partially Met

Requirement Not Met

Comment:

Conversations with the Principal and staff indicate that the School is utilizing a variety of formative and summative assessment strategies, along with rubrics and the BC MoE Performance Standards thus meeting the requirements outlined in this section of the inspection catalogue.

2.24 The School meets the learning resources requirements as outlined in section 2.24 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement Met

Requirement Partially Met

Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The catalogue outlines an impressive array of digital resources available to the students at MLIS-Ya. As a relatively new school they are acquiring print resources as they are able. The assistance of the CMLES central office expedites the acquisition of print resources when they are requested.

During the pandemic CMLES acquired the Canvas learning management system, which has proven to be a very effective platform for MLIS-Ya.



2.25 The School meets the student progress report requirements as outlined in section 2.25 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement
Met

Requirement
Partially Met

Requirement
Not Met

Comment:

MLIS-Ya parents receive six reports per year; two formal and one informal report card per semester. Report cards are issued at parent meetings and translators are available for teachers if needed.

Parents are also able to monitor their child's progress online through the PowerSchool parent portal.

2.26 The School meets the parent/student handbook requirements as outlined in section 2.26 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement
Met

Requirement
Partially Met

Requirement
Not Met

Comment:

The parent/student handbook is produced by the Maple Leaf central office and contains the necessary policies on parent/student dispute resolution, a student code of conduct and assessment. The Principal has also supplemented the handbook with policies on attendance, withdrawal, course changes and a policy on "I" reports. The parent/student handbook meets the requirements outlined in the inspection catalogue.

2.27 The School meets the teacher handbook requirements as outlined in section 2.27 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement
Met

Requirement
Partially Met

Requirement
Not Met

Comment:

The teacher handbook meets the requirements as outlined in sections 2.25 of the inspection catalogue. It contains the requisite policies on staff dispute resolution, teacher evaluation, principal/vice principal evaluation, human resources policies, student supervision, and student admissions. China Maple Leaf Educational Systems has defined the employment relationship for all authorized staff as directed by the BC Ministry of Education. The Principal has also supplemented the handbook with policies on field trip procedures and a professional development plan.



2.28 The School meets the distributed learning requirements as outlined in section 18 of the Agreement and section 2.28 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Not Met	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
Comment: The School does not offer distributed learning courses.			

CONCLUSION

Commendations

The Inspection Team wishes to recognize the Owner/Operator, Principal, staff and Offshore School Representative of Maple Leaf International School - Yancheng for:

- the strong commitment by the Owner/Operator and the School to their remaining BC students, assuring them of securing their Dogwood Diploma in this school with a sufficient variety of course options;
- the Principal, who was exceptionally well prepared for this inspection and for his passionate support of the BC program; and,
- the Principal and teachers, who are highly committed to building a strong program and to maintaining a positive school culture – even in the unusual circumstances of this current year.

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 – Yancheng continues to be recognized as a British Columbia-certified school.

