

# Certification Inspection Report

BRITISH COLUMBIA PROGRAM

*at*

SINO CANADA SCHOOL

SUZHOU, JIANGSU PROVINCE

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

NOVEMBER 29-30, 2023

## INTRODUCTION

On November 29 and 30, a certification inspection was completed on Sino Canada School (SCS) in Suzhou, Jiangsu, People's Republic of China, referred to as the School in this report. The purpose of this inspection was to determine if the requirements for the British Columbia (BC) education program have been met, according to the *BC Offshore School Program Certification Agreement* (the Agreement). The inspection team (the Team), appointed by the Executive Director of the Independent Schools and International Education Branch, British Columbia Ministry of Education and Child Care (the Ministry) in accordance with the Agreement, consisted of Trish Smillie and David Loewen, who served as Chair for this inspection.

The School's BC program has an enrolment of 360 students, in grades 10-12. The BC program is housed within the larger campus of a Chinese K-12 school of about 2,000 students as well as both a Japanese language school and a secondary A-levels program.

During the visit to the School, the Team reviewed all standards required in the *BC Offshore School Program Certification Agreement* and *Operating Manual* and met with the School's Owner/Operator, Offshore School Representative (OSR), BC Principal, Vice-Principal, BC teachers, and the Principal of the local high school program.

The Owner/Operator, Shanghai Fengying Education Technology Co. Inc. is responsible for the BC program. The BC program's philosophy, objectives and special features include providing students with a "powerful and diverse set of skills that will ensure success in an unpredictable and rapidly changing future." Upon graduation the School hopes to instill the following attributes in its students: an appreciation of learning, respect & caring for self, respect and caring for others, social responsibility, and a sense of belonging.

The Team would like to thank Sino Canada School for its hospitality, cooperation and preparedness for the inspection visit.



<b>The School has satisfactorily addressed requirements contained in the previous inspection report.</b>			
<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 has no requirements from the previous report.			
Commendation: The School is commended for actively engaging the suggestions noted in the last report in order to maintain culture of ongoing improvement.			

### BUSINESS PLAN 1.0

<b>The Owner/Operator has submitted a business plan to the BC Ministry of Education and Child Care, confirming the sustainability of the program.</b>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requirement Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Not Met
Comment: The School has submitted a detailed business plan with clear enrolment goals. The School was successful in recruiting students from the now departed Maple Leaf BC program and was able to capture 100 students this way for the 2023/24 school year. The School is on track to show an increase in enrolment for the first time in the last several years after having been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.  The School has developed comprehensive plans for recruitment of new students including a social media campaign, strong word of mouth referrals, use of the new brochures and animated videos provided by the BC Ministry of Education and Child Care, highlighting students who receive offers from top 10 universities and world renown programs, open houses, and expanding the geographic range of student recruitment conference attended. The School has fully embraced a strong model of continuous improvement with monthly reviews of student progress with specific attention to addressing arising themes of low performance and identifying students at risk academically. Enabling at risk students' success is a core focus of the School and includes providing academic and mental health supports.		
Commendation: The School is commended for strengthening its student recruitment drive and for implementing a wide variety of recruitment strategies.		



## INSPECTION CATALOGUE 2.0

<b>2.02 The Owner/Operator meets all requirements as set forth in the Agreement.</b>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requirement Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Not Met
<p>Comment: The Team confirmed the Owner/Operator, Shanghai Fengying Education Technology Co Ltd. meets all requirements as set forth in the Agreement.</p>		
<p>Commendation: The School is commended for the Owner/Operator's strong support of the BC program and for the positive working relationship between the host school and the BC program.</p>		

<b>2.03 The Owner/Operator has written approval from the appropriate government entity to operate the School, as outlined in section 5.03 of the Agreement.</b>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requirement Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Not Met
<p>Comment: The Team confirmed the Owner/Operator has letters of approval to operate a BC offshore school on file dated May 22, 2018 and July 1, 2023. All translations of these letters were verified.</p>		

<b>2.04-2.05 The School meets building inspection/safety, food preparation/cafeteria and fire safety codes/regulations. Facilities are deemed to be suitable to support the BC program.</b>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requirement Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Not Met
<p>Comment: The School exists on over 230 acres of what was once a theme park called Frobel Land. The BC program is housed in its own building that contains 50 classrooms, five computer labs, physics, biology and chemistry labs, music room, drama room, dance studio, cafeteria, administrative offices, and a lecture theatre. Separate from this main building are a large gymnasium, equestrian centre, aquatics center, and a theatre.</p> <p>The Team reviewed the following documents that serve to fulfill the building inspection/safety, fire safety codes and regulations and deems the buildings ideal to support the BC program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fire safety inspection results – December 31, 2023</li> <li>• License of Catering Services – April 2, 2018</li> <li>• School Real Estate Certificate – July 28, 2017</li> </ul>		



- emergency plans – September 1, 2020

The Team also reviewed critical response plans, emergency evacuation plans, documented fire and lockdowns drills as well as the additional safety measures that were implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic. All these plans have been vetted by the Offshore School Representative (OSR).

The School is in the midst of a significant plan to renew the grounds and facilities. This will serve to increase the School's appeal to new parents as well as further facilitate student learning.

**2.06 Offshore School Representative (OSR) - The Owner/Operator must appoint an individual to act as an OSR. This individual must be confirmed by the Province and must meet all the requirements set out in Schedule B, Part II of the Agreement.**

Requirement Met       Requirement Partially Met       Requirement Not Met

**Comment:**

The Team observed that the Owner/Operator has appointed an individual to act as Offshore School Representative (OSR) who meets all the requirements set out in Schedule B, Part II of the Agreement and has been confirmed by the BC Ministry of Education and Child Care as suitable for this position.

The OSR is in his second year with the School but served the School as Principal prior to his appointment as OSR. He also has other offshore experience and is both knowledgeable of the offshore program and committed to the success of the School. The OSR has also served as a school principal in a BC offshore program.

The OSR is 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 operations.

**Commendation:**

The School is commended for hiring an OSR who has both BC offshore and onshore leadership experience.



**2.07 The Principal meets the requirements as outlined in Schedule B, Part III of the Agreement and Section 2.07 (b) of the Annual Report.**

Requirement Met       Requirement Partially Met       Requirement Not Met

**Comment:**

The Principal is in his third year as principal of the School after having both taught at the School and attended the School as a student. He speaks articulately and passionately about the program and its purpose. The Principal is highly engaged in the business plan of the School and is working hard to see the School grow.

The job description provided by the School fulfills the requirements as outlined in Schedule B, Part III of the Agreement and Section 2.07 (b) of the Annual Report.

The Principal holds a valid Certificate of Qualification from the BC Teacher Regulation Branch (TRB).

The Principal is supported by a part time Vice-Principal, the Offshore School Representative (OSR) and a BC program Administrative Assistant. The OSR meets online with both the Principal and Vice-Principal in a mentoring/leadership development relationship.

**Commendation:**

The School is commended for hiring a principal who is passionate about the BC program and dedicated to its success.

**2.08 The School meets the administrative support requirements as outlined in Section 2.08 of the Annual Report.**

Requirement Met       Requirement Partially Met       Requirement Not Met

**Comment:**

The BC program is supported by the Administrative Assistant, two academic advisors and HR support shared with the Chinese school. Their main responsibilities include maintaining staff and student records, managing the student information system, assisting new staff with transitioning to China, providing translation service, and inspection preparation.



**2.09 The School meets the Student Record requirements as outlined in Section 2.09 of the Annual Report.**

Requirement Met       Requirement Partially Met       Requirement Not Met

**Comment:**

The Team confirmed that the student records are well organized and stored in a secure location and updated and monitored by a senior academic advisor. The files observed during the inspection contained all the required elements. The School has transitioned to the PowerSchool student information system. The updated version of the student and parent consent forms are complete for the 2023/24 school year.

**2.10-2.18 The School meets the teacher certification requirements as outlined in Sections 2.10-2.18 of the Annual Report.**

Requirement Met       Requirement Partially Met       Requirement Not Met

**Comment:**

The Team confirms that all Authorized Persons under the Agreement possess valid and current certification under the Ministry of Education and Child Care.

There are three teachers with valid, current Letters of Exemption (LOE). The Offshore School Representative (OSR) meets weekly with these teachers to monitor their progress and is working with the TRB and the Ministry of Education and Child Care to update the status of their application files.

The Team also observed that all locally certified teachers have local certification and a criminal record check (CRC) document. All certifications were translated into English for inspection purposes.

The Team observed that one teacher with an Independent School Teaching Certificate—Subject Restricted (ISTC-SR) in science and math is teaching outside of their restriction (Career Life Education).

**Commendation:**

The School is commended for increasing its staff levels to lower the teacher to student ratios and reduce workload stress on the teaching staff.

**Requirement:**

The School is required to ensure that all ISTC-SR holders are teaching within their teachable areas.

**Ministry update**

As of February 23, 2024, this requirement has been met to the satisfaction of the Ministry.



**2.19 The School meets the requirements for curriculum implementation outlined in section 2.19 of the Annual Report for offshore schools.**

Requirement Met                       Requirement Partially Met                       Requirement Not Met

**Comment:**

The Team confirmed that the School has fully implemented BC's curriculum. Unit planning documents examined demonstrated Big Ideas, curricular competencies, learning intentions, Core Competencies, and the First Peoples Principles of Learning (FPPL). Detailed descriptions of teaching methodology and assessment strategies aligned with curriculum implementation. This was determined by reviewing teacher planning materials and through interviews directly with staff. Teachers use templates that include essential curricular elements, including Core Competencies, FPPL and English language acquisition strategies. The Principal reviews unit plans and lesson plans with teachers to ensure alignment to BC's curriculum.

There is ongoing professional development that is provided to teachers in the area of assessment and First Peoples Principles of Learning.

**Commendation:**

The School is commended for the positive relationships between students and teachers. There is ongoing work to engage students in clubs and activities for the purpose of language acquisition and development of Core Competencies. The School is commended for the establishment of the Student Representative Council.

**2.20 The School meets the requirements for English language assessment and acquisition as outlined in Section 2.20 of the Annual Report.**

Requirement Met                       Requirement Partially Met                       Requirement Not Met

**Comment:**

The Team confirms that the School has a formal English language assessment entry test with both written and spoken components. The Team has confirmed that the BC Principal directly manages the student admission processes, including making final decisions with respect to student assessment and admission.

The School requires that classroom teachers commit to language development support and assessment in their instruction. There was evidence of regular and ongoing instruction and assessment of learning focused on language acquisition strategies such as vocabulary development, as well as oral and written language development.

Development of language, both oral and written, is supported through clubs and other student activities. Students appear to be engaged and motivated by instruction and assessment strategies to continue to improve their proficiency.

**Commendation:**

The School is commended for creative approaches to language acquisition instruction that provides a focus on curricular competencies and the Core Competencies.

**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 Annual Report.**

Requirement Met       Requirement Partially Met       Requirement Not Met

**Comment:**

The School does not currently offer any approved Board/Authority Authorized (BAA) courses.

**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 Ministry learning outcomes/learning standards identified in the educational program guides for each course.**

Requirement Met       Requirement Partially Met       Requirement Not Met

**Comment:**

The Team confirms that the School meets the requirements as per course overview/course planning expectations in the Agreement. Course plans document Big Ideas, Core Competencies and various forms of assessment are in place. The School uses the Atlas Rubicon platform for course and lesson planning to support new and existing teaching staff and provide a consistent program year over year.

**Commendation:**

The School is commended for implementing the Atlas Rubicon system as a well-developed platform for use by all teachers.





**2.22 The School meets the instructional time allotment requirements as outlined in Section 2.22 of the Annual Report, 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:

The School exceeds the instructional time allotment requirements. There are 167 instructional days in the 2023/24 school year with six instructional hours per day for a total of 1002 hours of instruction per year.

**2.23 The School meets the assessment methods requirements as outlined in Section 2.23 of the Annual Report.**

Requirement Met       Requirement Partially Met       Requirement Not Met

Comment:

Examination of course outlines, and unit and lesson plans show evidence that the teachers use a wide variety of teaching strategies and assessments. Detailed descriptions of the teaching strategies and assessments are included in all documents.

The student and parent handbook and teacher handbook provide information on how reliable and valid assessment data is collected. Teachers collect and record assessment data on a regular basis. Staff are expected to constantly monitor each lesson and use consistent assessment to ensure students have achieved the desired learning intentions before moving on.

Teacher assessment practices are monitored through PowerSchool as online gradebooks for each BC class. Students and administrators monitor assessment practices and identify students who are at risk of not being successful and follow-up as necessary.

The School has completed fair assessment professional development to encourage the use of both formative and summative assessment. The School has set a consistent guideline for the weighting of summative assessments and departments further define this. They also give opportunities for students to retest and redo assignments. Teachers use cross-grade exams and common assessments to reduce discrepancies in grading. All teachers post the reassessment procedures in their classrooms.

Provincial literacy and numeracy assessments are electronically administered. Instructions and passwords are retained and secured by the Principal until the exam date. Electronic assessments are not opened until the time the exams are to be written. Electronic literacy and numeracy assessments are administered in a controlled environment and are monitored



by BC teachers. All locally written assessments are monitored by teachers to ensure exams rules are followed.

Commendation:

The School is commended for maintaining a focus on consistency and professional learning in assessment practices.

## 2.24 The School meets the learning resources requirements as outlined in Section 2.24 of the Annual Report.

Requirement Met

Requirement Partially Met

Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Team confirms the learning resources meet requirements to effectively deliver the BC program, both in variety and quantity. It is evident in classrooms that there are a variety of resources used, including Indigenous-focused resources. There are approximately 200 print materials in the library, along with magazines. Learning resources are reviewed by the library assistants. The School is currently looking for a full-time librarian. The Principal does not review resources.

Students and staff use technology to support learning. The School uses a Moodle server that does not rely on internet to access, which reduces the burden on the Wi-Fi. There is a large library of digital resources and textbooks available. The teachers also have access to two printers for resources and a 3D printer.

The School has been expanding access to Wi-Fi, although it does not pose a barrier to learning. A new school is being built, and the School anticipates the building will have sufficient access to Wi-Fi. Each classroom has a projector.

The School uses PowerSchool for online student information and record keeping as a standardized online gradebook system. Staff, parents, and students can access this.

Students and staff have access to their own mobile devices for learning. Students have access to a computer lab for literacy and numeracy assessments. There are approximately 90 computers in the computer lab.

Requirement:

The School is required to develop a process by which the Principal approves the purchase of learning resources.

### **Ministry update**

As of February 23, 2024, this requirement has been met to the satisfaction of the Ministry.



**2.25 The School meets the student progress report requirements as outlined in Section 2.25 of the Annual Report.**

Requirement Met       Requirement Partially Met       Requirement Not Met

**Comment:**

Student progress reports are issued six times a year (formal reports in mid-November, late-January, mid-April, and at the end of June, and two additional informal reports). Two written student progress reports with teachers' comments are issued each semester. Parent meetings are held after each reporting period to provide parents with any important information about student assessment. The School uses PowerSchool as a standard gradebook system. All students have accounts to access their marks and any teacher-posted resources online. An example of a student progress report was provided. Every parent is given a login ID for the PowerSchool parent portal so they can check on their child's grades at any time. Parents communicate with homeroom teachers frequently.

Parent meetings are organized several times a year at reporting periods to provide parents with any updated information regarding the implementation of BC's curriculum and graduation assessments. Students act as translators during the conferences.

The School has provided professional development on the new Student Reporting Policy for teachers. The School is working with a PowerSchool expert to develop the learning updates. The School is developing an electronic portfolio option for students to reflect on their learning and set goals.

The Homeroom Teachers have students self-reflect on Core Competencies and student goal setting. The School is working with PowerSchool to provide student graduation status in the learning updates.

**2.26 The School meets the parent/student handbook requirements as outlined in Section 2.26 of the Annual Report.**

Requirement Met       Requirement Partially Met       Requirement Not Met

**Comment:**

The Team confirms that the parent/student handbook, offered in English and Chinese, has been updated in for the 2023/24 school year. The handbook is detailed and contains a message from the Principal; the School's mission; an overview of BC's curriculum and assessments; admissions policies and practices; the student code of conduct; technology use policy; critical response plan; school/parent/student agreement; and the athletics policy.



**2.27 The School meets the teacher handbook requirements as outlined in Section 2.27 of the Annual Report.**

Requirement Met                       Requirement Partially Met                       Requirement Not Met

**Comment:**

The School has a teacher handbook that includes a variety of content in support of teachers' professional and personal needs. The Team verified that the handbook contains guidelines for teacher evaluation and professional growth.

**2.28 The School meets the Online Learning requirements (formerly Distributed Learning) as outlined in Section 18 of the Agreement and Section 2.28 of the Annual Report.**

Requirement Met                       Requirement Partially Met                       Requirement Not Met                       Not Applicable

**Comment:**

The School offers seven online learning courses through Global Education – School District 73 Business Company. An onsite BC certified teacher serves as the facilitator and mentors and monitors student progress to help ensure their success. The School primarily uses online courses to assist students in completing graduation requirements and has no plans to expand offerings in this area as their ideal is to focus on onsite instruction.

The Principal understands that an equivalency review must be conducted at the end of each course prior to awarding credit as part of the Ministry's requirement for courses offered via Online Learning.

**2.29 The School meets the requirements for offering Remote Instruction under the BC Offshore School Remote Instruction Policy and as outlined in Section 2.29 of the Annual Report.**

Requirement Met                       Requirement Partially Met                       Requirement Not Met                       Not Applicable

**Comment:**

The School does not currently provide Remote Instruction.



## CONCLUSION

### Commendations

**The Inspection Team wishes to recognize the Owner/Operator, Principal, staff, and Offshore School Representative (OSR) of Sino Canada School for:**

- actively engaging the suggestions noted in the last report in order to maintain a culture of ongoing improvement.
- strengthening its student recruitment drive and for implementing a wide variety of recruitment strategies.
- the strong support of the Owner/Operator for the BC program and for the positive working relationship between the host school and the BC program.
- hiring an OSR who has both BC offshore and onshore leadership experience.
- hiring a Principal who is passionate about the BC program and dedicated to its success.
- increasing its staff levels to lower the teacher to student ratios and reduce workload stress on the teaching staff.
- the positive relationships between students and teachers.
- the establishment of the Student Representative Council.
- its creative approaches to language acquisition instruction that provides a focus on curricular competencies and the Core Competencies.
- implementing the Atlas Rubicon system as a well-developed platform for use by all teachers.
- maintaining a focus on consistency and professional learning in assessment practices.

### Requirements

**In order to meet the requirements of the *BC Offshore School Program Certification Agreement*, the Team requires that by March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, the Owner/Operator provide the Executive Director of the Independent Schools and International Education Branch, responsible for the BC Offshore School Program, with a plan and timeline for proposed implementation of the following items:**

- The School is required to ensure that all ISTC-SR holders are teaching within their teachable areas.
  - As of February 23, 2024, this requirement has been met to the satisfaction of the Ministry.



- The School is required to develop a process by which the Principal reviews the purchase of learning resources.
  - As of February 23, 2024, this requirement has been met to the satisfaction of the Ministry.

### **SUMMATIVE RECOMMENDATION**

**The Inspection Team recommends to the Executive Director of the Independent Schools and International Education Branch that, contingent on responding to the above requirements to the satisfaction of the Executive Director, the British Columbia education program offered at Sino Canada School continues to be recognized as a British Columbia-certified school.**