

Certification Inspection Report

BRITISH COLUMBIA PROGRAM

at

GRAND CANADIAN ACADEMY (JIAXING)

TONGXIANG, ZHEJIANG PROVINCE

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

NOVEMBER 9-10, 2023

INTRODUCTION

On November 9 and 10, a certification inspection was completed on Grand Canadian Academy (Jiaxing), in Tongxiang, Zhejiang Province, People's Republic of China, referred to as the School or GCA 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 Agreement, consisted of Dave Beeke and Dan Miles who served as Chair for this inspection.

The School's BC program has an enrolment of 56 students, in grades 10-12. The BC program is hosted by Mao Dun High School. The entire school, which houses the BC program, enrolls 2,348 students.

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, BC teachers, host school Principal, homeroom teachers, the Director of the International Department and students.

The Owner/Operator, Grand Canadian Academy (Asia) Ltd. is responsible for the BC program and is based in Hong Kong and has offices in Greater Vancouver.

The BC program's philosophy, objectives and special features include:

- a mission to offer first-rate educational options to Chinese high school students to help them successfully gain acceptance to and complete a post-secondary education.
- core values of respect, honesty, and diligence.
- goals in 2023/24 to increase student achievement on provincial assessments and on the school honor roll.



The Team would like to thank Grand Canadian Academy (Jiaxing) for its cooperation and preparedness for the inspection.

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:</p> <p>The School had no requirements from last year's report. The Team acknowledges the work put into responding to the suggestions from last year's report.</p>			

BUSINESS PLAN 1.0

The Owner/Operator has submitted a business plan to the BC Ministry of Education and Child Care, confirming the sustainability of the program.		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requirement Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Not Met
<p>The Owner/Operator has submitted a detailed business plan, and the Team, after meeting in person with the Owner, confirms the information in the plan.</p> <p>There has been a decline in enrolment since 2018/19, with a slight increase into the 2023/2024 school year which provides some optimism for the future. The School has indicated reasons for the decline including COVID-19 concerns, competition from nearby international schools, and less parent interest in sending students to overseas western universities. The current increase in enrolment is a positive trend.</p> <p>The School is in Tongxiang, in the northeast corner of Zhejiang province, and is a short train ride from the large cities of Jiaying, Shanghai, Suzhou, and Hangzhou. Within this large market there are many competing international schools. Tongxiang has a population of 1.5 million. The BC program is a day school for approximately one-third of the students, while the other two-thirds stay in the dormitory during the week.</p> <p>The School has undertaken several recruitment strategies to increase enrolment. Strategies include print, broadcast and social media advertising campaigns, visits to middle schools, an education fair, and a meet-and-greet dinner with staff from a feeder school. The School is starting to build more of a presence on social media to encourage recruitment by word-of-mouth from families, students, and alumni.</p> <p>The Team observed the quality of the physical space provided by the host school. It has done extensive renovations to the physical space used by the BC program, including floors, ceilings, walls, classroom furniture, a computer lab, new teacher workrooms, and large classroom TV</p>		



monitors. The renovations have made classrooms and other workspaces attractive and modernized. The Team also noted the high-quality facilities shared with the host school such as the art room, the gym and the auditorium.

While low enrolment influences the number of staff available, the BC and Chinese staff in the School all demonstrate a high commitment to the success of all students. Extra support is consistently provided from the caring adults at the School to assist them in their success. This family-like atmosphere has contributed to strong post-secondary transitions with a 100% transition rate to post-secondary in 2022/23. Of these graduates, five transitioned to universities in Australia. The remaining six students transitioned to universities in China – some of which are affiliated with western universities. The School indicates that graduates have had success at both domestic and international universities.

Commendation:

The Team wishes to recognize the Owner/Operator of Grand Canadian Academy (Jiaying) for providing high quality facilities to support student learning and to encourage enrolment.

The Team commends the Owner/Operator for their ongoing support and vision from the to continue implementing the BC program.

INSPECTION CATALOGUE 2.0

2.02 The Owner/Operator meets all requirements as set forth in the Agreement.

Requirement Met Requirement Partially Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Owner/Operator, with the Province's approval, retains an Offshore School Representative (OSR) in accordance with the requirements set out in Part II of Schedule B. The Owner/Operator is aware that it must advise the Province if the OSR is acting in a manner that is inappropriate or gives rise, either directly or indirectly, to any conflict of interest or the perception of a conflict of interest, in relation to the performance of their obligations to the Owner/Operator.



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.

Requirement Met Requirement Partially Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Owner/Operator submitted several documents with the Annual Report that indicate the School has appropriate permissions from various government entities to operate the BC program at Grand Canadian Academy (Jiaxing). These include:

- a license for the establishment of private schools in the People's Republic of China.
- a Certificate of Approval for operation of Chinese-foreign cooperatively run educational projects in the People's Republic of China.
- an Approval of the Change of Administrative License Decision, valid until December 31, 2027.

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.

Requirement Met Requirement Partially Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Team toured the School which is located on the 35 acre campus of the host school, and shares some facilities with the host school, such as the playing fields, cafeteria, gymnasium, arts center (with theatre), science labs, auditorium, and library.

The BC program has five classrooms, a meeting room, a library, computer lab, and offices. The Team reviewed local building, safety and cafeteria documents and permits with translations and confirms that local requirements are being met.

The Inspector verified that emergency drills are conducted as required, including earthquake drills. The School has policies and procedures to respond to a variety of emergency situations including any event that would cause an unplanned temporary or permanent closure of the School. These are included in the teacher handbook and in the GCA Emergency Response Manual, which is a comprehensive guide to a variety of emergency situations. Health and safety protocols were implemented due to COVID-19 and were managed by the host school and shared in the parent/student handbook.

GCA also has written plans to manage the School through a temporary or permanent closure of the School. These plans have been vetted by the Offshore School Representative (OSR) for accuracy and functionality.



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 Offshore School Representative (OSR) is in his third year in this role at Grand Canadian Academy (Jiaxing) and is also a full-time math teacher in White Rock, BC.

Prior to this, he was the Principal of the School, and has detailed knowledge and experience in the operation of an offshore school. The OSR is confirmed by the Province and meets all requirements in Section 14 of the Agreement. The Team appreciated the OSR's cooperation and participation in the inspection.

The OSR is aware of the 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.

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 Team confirms that the Principal meets all requirements as outlined in Section 2.07 of the Annual Report.

The Principal is serving in his fourth year as principal of the School. He has previously served as Vice-Principal and teacher at the School since 2014. He is a BC-trained teacher and has a long history as a teacher in BC public schools and international schools.



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 Team confirms that the School meets the administrative support requirements as outlined in Section 2.08 of the Annual Report for offshore schools.

The BC program has a teaching Principal supported by an Administrative Assistant, and a program Librarian. The host school supports the School with a Director for International Programs, the IT department, and other administrative and operational supports for the School which are shared with the Owner/Operator.

Commendation:

The Inspection Team wishes to recognize the joint efforts of all staff – homeroom teachers and BC teachers working collaboratively to ensure the success of each individual student.

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 reviewed a sampling of student records and confirmed the presence of all required elements as outlined in Section 2.09 of the Annual Report for offshore schools, including the English language entrance assessment. Hard copies of student files are secured in a locked filing cabinet in the BC office, and digital student records are managed securely within Windsor TESS, the School's student information system.



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 Inspector confirms that two out of three Authorized Persons under the Agreement are eligible and possess valid and current BC certification or a Letter of Exemption (LOE) under the BC Ministry of Education and Child Care.

One teacher is currently being supported to complete their BC teacher certification requirements.

The Team confirms that locally certified teachers have valid certification and criminal record checks as per local regulations.

Professional development (pro-d) opportunities continue to be planned for new BC staff individually as they join the School. The Principal told the Team that pro-d will be a focus for the upcoming year. Topics will include an overall introduction to BC's curriculum, assessment in the classroom and Core Competencies. The Principal will continue to look at ways to work with teachers to connect with other BC curriculum specialists for subject-specific and overall professional development.

Requirement:

The Offshore School Representative (OSR) and the Principal are required to submit a detailed plan to the Ministry describing how they have arranged coverage for the teacher who is awaiting BC certification to ensure continuity of learning for students.

Ministry update

As of February 14, 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 participated in conversations with the Principal, teachers, and students. During the interviews, the teaching staff demonstrated a range of understanding of the key components of BC's curriculum. Teachers new to the School are provided with sample course overviews and learning activities connected to BC's curriculum. The Principal serves the role of learning leader and conducts classroom observations and provides feedback.

Teaching staff were observed to be barely meeting the standards required for full BC curriculum implementation. Based on lesson observations, planning documents and personal conversations, the teaching staff were at the very early stages of personalizing BC's curriculum to demonstrate full comprehension and implementation of all aspects of the curriculum.

Requirement:

The Team requires the School, with guidance from the Offshore School Representative (OSR), to orient staff new to the BC's curriculum with professional development focused on the key components of the Know-Do-Understand model, Core Competencies, and First Peoples Principles of Learning.

The Team requires the School, with guidance from the Offshore School Representative (OSR), to ensure that this year's professional development is focused on understanding and implementing BC's curriculum, ensuring that Core Competencies are included as a core component.

The Team requires the School, with guidance from the Offshore School Representative (OSR), to ensure that the curriculum documentation for all BC teachers aligns with the Core Competencies, Big Ideas, Curricular Competencies, content, and First Peoples Principles of Learning, as well as the planning for course learning experiences.



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:

GCA holds one assessment per semester for all students to assess their English language proficiency and numeracy skills, using the practice sample assessments and rubrics on the Ministry website. The Principal tracks the students' results from grade 10 until graduation. These assessments occur four weeks before the BC Graduation Literacy and Numeracy Assessments.

The bilingual homeroom teachers provide relevant listening, writing, speaking, and reading activities prior to the start of each school day. These activities are provided in audio and video form by the homeroom teachers. Two homeroom teachers also provide English language learning (ELL) classes for all students in the School's timetable.

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 currently provides the Board/Authority Authorized (BAA) courses Chinese Culture and Geography 10 and Chinese History 11. The School offers Physical Health Education 10 (PHE10) and Mandarin 10-12 taught by locally certified teachers. Mandarin courses have English course outlines. PHE10 is co-delivered by a BC-certified teacher responsible for delivering the health components of the course within science courses. The local instructor is under the supervision of the BC Principal.

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 School supplied the team with overviews for each of the courses currently offered in the BC graduation program. The Team reviewed the course overview documents. Some elements of BC's curriculum were evident in the course overviews, and the School is encouraged to require teachers to align the BC curriculum components with planned learning experiences.



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 Team had the opportunity to examine both the annual school calendar and the daily schedule. The School is in session for a total of 185 days this year. The Team verifies that the cumulative instructional time in the School amounts to 1175 hours, surpassing the stipulated minimum requirement of 850 instructional hours outlined in section 2.22 of the Annual Report.

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:

The Team observed that course overviews included grading schedules assigning appropriate assessment types and weightings. Speeches, oral quizzes, journaling, essays, projects, and tests listed show a variety of evaluation tools.

The Principal is tracking the students' three results on the Literacy 10, Literacy 12 and Numeracy 10 BC Graduation Assessments. This tracking instrument includes students' scores on the Zhongkao Exam and the School's entrance exam. The Principal tracks the number of courses students fail and IELTS exam scores. One of the Schools' goals for the Literacy 10 and 12 assessments is that all students achieve a level 2 (Developing), and at least one-third of students achieve a level 3 (Proficient) before graduation.

The School maintains a rigorous security and invigilation procedure for the BC Graduation Numeracy and Literacy Assessments. This includes a dedicated exam room for assessment purposes. For end-of-semester exams, at least two invigilators are present in the room. The teacher secures assessments and locked drawers are available for assessment security. Offices are locked if teachers are not present. End-of-semester exam scripts are bundled and boxed for storage in the School's secured book room. Prior to the BC provincial assessments, the Principal reviews with the staff the procedures set by the Ministry for conducting and invigilating an electronic exam. The exam room and washrooms are checked by staff prior to the exam. Students are screened prior to entering the exam room for any forbidden materials.



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 that educational resources available to the students meet the required standard. The Team observed teachers using interactive whiteboard technology in each classroom. The School has a library supported by a local librarian and has a collection of approximately 3,300 books, 215 videos, as well as magazines. The School has its own computer lab with 30 computers available. The lab enables the School to administer the BC provincial assessments in its own facility. Computer labs are also available in the host school.

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:

Throughout the school year, each grade 12 student's graduation status is checked by the Principal and homeroom teacher every term to ensure students are on track to meet graduation requirements. Before entering grade 12, the Principal and grade 11 homeroom teachers will independently check each student's potential to graduate in their senior year.

There are four formal report cards at the end of each ten-week term, two interim reports for students at risk of failing within the first four weeks of each semester, and two parent/student/teacher conferences after the Term 1 and Term 3 report cards.

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 was able to review the School's parent/student handbook which meets the requirements as outlined in section 2.26 of the Annual Report.



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 Team was able to review the School's teacher handbook, which meets the requirements as outlined in section 2.27 of the Annual Report.

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 plans to offer Fashion Industry 12 via Online Learning in the second semester. The School will use the approved Online Learning service provider - Global Education – School District 73 Business Company. The Principal plans to facilitate the course.

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 offer courses via Remote Instruction.

CONCLUSION

Commendations

The Inspection Team wishes to recognize the Owner/Operator, Principal, staff and Offshore School Representative (OSR) of Grand Canadian Academy (Jiaxing) for:

- providing high quality facilities to support student learning and to encourage enrolment.
- the ongoing support and vision from the Owner/Operator to continue implementing the BC program.



- the joint efforts of all staff – homeroom teachers and BC teachers - working collaboratively to ensure the success of each individual student.

Requirements

In order to meet the requirements of the BC Offshore School Program Certification Agreement, the Team requires that by March 4, 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:

- Ensure that all elements of BC’s curriculum are fully integrated in all BC classes taught at the School by:
 - orienting staff new to BC’s curriculum with professional development focused on the key components of the Know-Do-Understand model, Core Competencies, and First Peoples Principles of Learning.
 - ensuring that this year’s professional development is focused on understanding and implementing BC’s curriculum and ensuring that the Core Competencies are included as a core component.
 - ensuring the curriculum documentation for all BC teachers aligns with the Core Competencies, Big Ideas, Curricular Competencies, content, and First Peoples Principles of Learning and the planning for course learning experiences.
- The OSR and the Principal are to submit a detailed plan describing how they have arranged coverage for the teacher who is awaiting BC certification to ensure continuity of learning for students.
 - As of February 14, 2024, this requirement has been met to the satisfaction of the Ministry.

SUMMATIVE RECOMMENDATION

The Offshore 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 Grand Canadian Academy (Jiaxing) continues to be recognized as a British Columbia-certified school.

