

Certification Inspection Report

BRITISH COLUMBIA PROGRAM

at

CANADA QINGDAO SECONDARY SCHOOL

QINGDAO, SHANDONG PROVINCE

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

OCTOBER 16 – 17, 2023

INTRODUCTION

On October 16 and 17, a certification inspection was completed on Canada Qingdao Secondary School (CQSS) in Qingdao, Shandong province, People's Republic of China, referred to as the School in this report. This was the first onsite inspection conducted on this program since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. 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 James Christopher and Edward Noot, who served as Chair for this inspection.

The School's BC program has an enrolment of 178 students, in grades 10 – 12. The BC program is housed within Shandong Province Qingdao No. 9 High School which is a well-known Chinese secondary school established in 1900. The entire student population is around 2,300 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, host school Principal, Offshore School Representative (OSR), BC Principal, BC Vice-Principal and BC teachers, and the program's International Director and Program Manager. Informal interactions with other staff and students occurred during the on-site inspection.

The Owner/Operator, Mr. John Zhu, representative of Canadian-Sino Education Exchange Centre (CSEEC), is responsible for the BC program. CSEEC operates three other BC offshore schools in China, all located in Shandong Province. The Owner/Operator has an additional company based out of Vancouver that owns and operates one Group 4 independent school.



The BC program’s philosophy, objectives and special features include a mission statement which describes the School’s focus as, “creating global citizens who are focused on high academic achievement. By working in a safe and caring environment, students can find success in all aspects of life.” The School emphasizes clear rules and guidelines for all students to promote consistency across all domains of the School, both in and out of the classroom. The School commits to embracing two educational curricula: the Chinese high school system and the BC graduation program, with the goal of students achieving success in both programs and being prepared for future studies outside of China.

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

The School has satisfactorily addressed requirements contained in the previous inspection report.			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requirement Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Not Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
<p>Comment:</p> <p>The School’s previous inspection report contained no requirements. The inspection team offered several suggestions, some of which have been acted on by administration, while others are still under consideration. The School has offered a thoughtful response to all suggestions.</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>Comment:</p> <p>The School has submitted a business plan that meets all required elements. The Team noted that enrolment is higher this year due to the increased intake of grade 10 students. This bodes well for future program growth and school sustainability, particularly coming out of the difficult years impacted by the global COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>The School is tracking limited student performance data, using this to plan for continuous improvement primarily in English language acquisition. At this time sample sizes have been small, but with growing numbers in grade 10 future data should prove useful to the administration and teachers in addressing continuous improvement.</p>		

Another key focus for the School is to enhance a sense of belonging and community. The School has implemented a 'house system' that provides time for daily physical activity and other team building opportunities, in the hopes of enhancing student community and connectedness, thereby elevating commitment, diligence and learning.

Commendation:

The School is commended for implementing the 'house system', intentionally developing community and a sense of belonging which will result in higher student commitment, satisfaction, diligence and learning.

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 meets the requirements set forth in the Agreement and demonstrates a strong commitment to the ongoing success of the School. His presence during the school inspection is evidence of his active involvement and interest in supporting school success.

The Owner/Operator works constructively with the School's leadership team, along with the Offshore School Representative (OSR) and other staff.

Commendation:

The Owner/Operator is commended for hiring a superintendent for his schools in China and Canada, allowing for more focused leadership support and teacher professional development.

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 Team verified that the School has a letter on file from the Qingdao Education Bureau that authorizes Canadian-Sino Education Centre (CSEEC), in conjunction with Qingdao No. 9 School to operate a British Columbia offshore school program, leading to graduation with a BC Dogwood Certificate. The letter is dated December 2022, and is effective for five years.

The BC program is operated in accordance with the requirements set out in the Agreement. The letter references no objections to the three items noted in section 5.03 of the Agreement; namely that the program will operate in accordance with the Agreement, the program will lead to a BC graduation certificate, and the program will be taught by teachers certified by the BC Teacher Regulation Branch.

The approval letter has been translated as per Ministry guidelines.

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 School is situated on a modern, spacious, attractive and well-equipped campus. CQSS is located in the international building of a new campus of the host school (Qingdao No. 9 High School). The campus has sports facilities, science labs, art rooms, computer labs, a library, auditorium, etc. CQSS has access upon request to use any of the host school's facilities.

CQSS has the exclusive use of seven classrooms with smart boards in the international building, two staffrooms, an administration office, a CQSS library (which was not functional at the time of the inspection), and a computer lab. All but five students at CQSS live in the dormitories on campus and eat three meals a day at the school cafeteria.

The Team verified that the school facilities are entirely suitable to support the BC program. The Team notes that school community has been greatly enhanced by consolidating the entire BC program on one floor.

Certified translations of building, safety and cafeteria compliance documents are in order. The School is in compliance with local regulations and all inspections are up to date.

The School has a written emergency plan for natural disasters (i.e., fire, earthquake) and holds regular drills for students to practice these protocols. The documentation includes a protocol for the unplanned temporary or permanent closure of the School. The School's emergency plan is annually vetted for accuracy and functionality by the Offshore School Representative (OSR) and detailed in the 2023 Annual Report.

An ad hoc contingency planning committee remains in place to address any urgent health or safety concerns that may arise. All response planning will be coordinated with Qingdao No. 9 School.

Commendation:

The Team commends the School for consolidating the BC program to one floor, which has created increased feelings of cohesion and community for BC program students.

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

The OSR's contract began in 2013 and is a continuing contract. The OSR is instrumental in hiring staff and in supporting ongoing professional development and support to school staff. The OSR was on site for this inspection.

The Team 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. He 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 operation.

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 a BC administrator who meets the experience and training requirements for this role. He is in his second year in this role, having previously served in administration at another BC offshore school. Collaboration with CSEEC administrators to generate system-wide resources, policies, and training supports his leadership at CQSS. In addition, he is assisted by the newly appointed CSEEC Superintendent, who is based in BC.

The Principal's job description outlines the expected role in compliance with the Certification Agreement. The contract is comprehensive and complies with all requirements under the Agreement.

The Principal possesses a valid Certificate of Qualification from the BC Teacher Regulation Branch (TRB) which meets the requirements outlined in the Agreement.

The School is currently understaffed as they seek to hire another qualified teacher. This necessitates the Principal taking on an increased teaching role, which in turn leaves little time for administrative leadership, teacher evaluation and the like.

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 School meets the requirements for administrative support as outlined in section 2.08 of the Annual Report. Along with support from the Offshore School Representative (OSR) and Owner/Operator, the School has a full complement of administrative support staff that work directly with the BC Principal.

An experienced English-speaking Administrative Assistant has responsibility for maintaining student records, data collection and daily administrative needs within the School. She is also responsible for the translation of documents and acts as an interpreter between the parents and the School. In addition, she manages web based TESS (Windsor) - the student information system used to store and transmit school and student data to the Ministry. Along with her administrative work, the Administrative Assistant acts as a liaison between CQSS and Qingdao No. 9 High School and between the School, Principal and parents.

The School employs academic advisors to assist with arranging visits by Canadian universities and to support the graduating class with university and study visa applications.

The Chinese International Director, who is an advocate of the BC program, is also a link with the host school.

A newly appointed CSEEC Superintendent, based in Vancouver, works to support leaders and offers professional development for teachers and administrators.

Commendation:

The School is commended for appointing a Superintendent with oversight of professional development for teachers and administrators, as noted in section 2.02 of this report.

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 verified that student files are securely stored, properly backed up and can be reproduced if necessary. Student records are carefully maintained by the Administrative Assistant, overseen by the Principal, and contain all required elements.

The School uses web based TESS (Windsor) 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 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, as confirmed by the Teacher Regulation Branch (TRB) verification response file dated September 30, 2023, along with a list of teachers who have been granted Letters of Exemption by the Director of the Offshore School Program.

One teacher has an unrestricted Certificate of Qualification (COQ), three have subject restricted certificates and three are teaching on valid Letters of Exemption (LOE). The Team confirms that subject restricted teachers have appropriate teaching assignments. The Team confirms that the School has a process for monitoring the certification application status of teachers on Letters of Exemption. Each teacher on a Letter of Exemption has restrictions listed and the Team noted that current teaching assignments do not align with listed restrictions. The School is required to ensure that all teachers' assignments align with the specifics of their LOE.

All locally certified teachers have evidence of valid certification and local criminal record checks (CRC) on file.

Staff contracts were reviewed and found to be comprehensive, addressing all the required areas. All teachers are employed under proper work permits and appropriate visas.

Teacher files are in order, although evidence of teacher evaluations as per school policy is lacking. A principal evaluation did not occur last year due to travel restrictions, but an evaluation is planned for the second semester of this year as per school policy.

Requirement:

The School is required to ensure that all teachers' assignments align with the specifics of their Letter of Exemption.

Ministry update

As of November 24, 2023, 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:

CQSS has been working to fully implement all aspects of BC's curriculum. As the School only includes grades 10, 11, and 12, the focus has been on providing as comprehensive a course selection as possible, given the small student population, to ensure that students are able to graduate with a Dogwood Diploma with a diverse selection of options in order to keep the doors open for a broad range of post-secondary opportunities. In addition to BC's curriculum, students are also enrolled in Mandarin language courses offered by the host school under an agreement with the Ministry.

Commendation:

The Team commends the School for establishing an excellent teaching and learning relationship and natural rapport between teachers and students. Classes are relaxed but productive and students are actively engaged in the learning process.

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 School screens and tests all new applicants to ensure that they have an adequate level of English Language facility to be effective in the program.

CQSS requires students to complete two English courses each year to improve their language facility as much as possible and does regular assessments on the progress of their fluency.

It was noted, however, that currently this assessment data is not being effectively used to target academic interventions for individual students to improve their language skills. The School encourages teachers to incorporate English language learning (ELL) strategies into their teaching, but this tends to vary in effectiveness.

In addition, the School has assigned two teaching assistants (TAs) to each grade level to support student progress. They provide a liaison between families and the School and individual coaching to students. These supports tend to be reactive, based upon parent or teacher concerns, rather than proactive teaching and learning supports in the classroom.

Although improvement is significant from grade 10 to 12 as measured on the BC Literacy Graduation Assessments, the results still fall far below the provincial average.

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 meets course credit requirements and does not currently award any credits through exemptions, challenge or Board/Authority Authorized (BAA) courses.

The School has approval to grant equivalency credits for Mandarin 10, 11 and 12 under the terms of the Agreement.

This year, the School is fulfilling the Indigenous-focused graduation requirement through offering English First Peoples Literary Studies and Writing 11 in the second semester.

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:

BC's curriculum is well documented, with attention paid to the main required components of the program. However, the teaching staff needs further support to deepen their understanding of how to effectively integrate, assess, and report on such facets of the curriculum such as: Big Ideas, Core and Curricular Competencies and First Peoples Principles of Learning. As the School is one of four affiliated BC offshore schools in the region, there is

room for collaboration and peer support in this process to undertake a more systematic approach to curriculum enhancement and implementation.

In addition, implementation of BC's curriculum at the School has been somewhat hindered by both staff turnover and the lack of targeted teacher and student resources, both print and electronic, that have been developed in the last few years to support the specific goals and requirements of BC's curriculum.

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:

Instructional time allotments comply with Ministry requirements. Students receive 882 hours of instruction per year plus an additional 189 hours of second language instruction in Mandarin provided by the faculty at the host school.

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:

Teachers use a wide range of assessment methods and rubrics and provide opportunities for student reflection and self-assessment. It was not clear to the Team the extent to which assessment results informed classroom instructional practice. In addition, some internal sharing of assessment strategies would be beneficial to those teachers who have been slower to adapt their teaching/assessment practices.

Required graduation assessments are conducted in the School's computer lab under the appropriate exam conditions with diligent proctoring protocols.

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:

Classrooms at the School are each equipped with SMART boards and the teachers are quite skilled at integrating this technology into their teaching.

At the grade 11 and 12 levels, students are encouraged to bring their own devices and there is a seamless sharing of resources, assignments, etc. between teachers and students and among the students themselves. Currently grade 10 students are not permitted to bring devices to class.

The students have access to library materials from the host school but there is no library of English-language materials in the BC offshore school itself.

BC program students use the sports facilities of the host school and have access to science labs but teachers report that the challenges in booking lab time discourage them from using this option.

Commendation:

The Team commends the teaching staff for their effective and seamless integration of technology into their daily classroom instruction.

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:

School reporting protocols are in compliance with BC reporting requirements and include four written reports and four opportunities for parent conferences in person or virtually.

The school year is based on a two semester and four term system. There are four formal report cards, one at the end of each term (November, January, March, and June). Parent-teacher conferences occur after each report where parents of students of concern are required to come in, and any other parents who wish to speak to the teachers may also make an appointment.

This year, students are writing self-reflections on a regular basis, which are stored in the students' files. The School has always asked teachers to provide at least one comment for

each student in each course and the administrative team is looking into possibilities for adding a graduation status update to the end-of-year report card.

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 reviewed the well-developed bilingual parent/student handbook. It includes school vision and goals, student code of conduct, Ministry of Education and Child Care policies, appeals process, school calendar, pathways to graduation and other required information.

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 comprehensive teacher handbook details the school organization, mission statement, marking and grading procedures, professional development, dispute resolution protocol, computer and internet usage, emergency procedures, student discipline, progress reporting, grading appeal procedures, and the learning assessment policy.

The Team noted that the handbook contained a very useful section on Qingdao which includes history, transportation, restaurants, shopping and the like.

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 does not currently offer any courses 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.			
<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 currently offer any courses via Remote Instruction.			

CONCLUSION

Commendations

The Inspection Team wishes to recognize the Owner/Operator, Principal, staff and Offshore School Representative of Canada Qingdao Secondary School for:

- implementing the ‘house system’ to intentionally develop community and a sense of belonging which will result in higher student commitment, satisfaction, diligence and learning.
- appointing a superintendent with oversight for professional development for teachers and administrators.
- consolidating the BC program to one floor, which has created increased feelings of cohesion and community for BC program students.
- establishing an excellent teaching and learning relationship and natural rapport between teachers and students.
- the effective and seamless integration, by staff, of technology into their daily classroom instruction.

Requirements

In order to meet the requirements of the BC Offshore School Program Certification Agreement, the Team requires that by November 24, 2023, 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 teachers’ assignments (for both semesters) align with the specifics of their Letters of Exemption.
 - As of November 24, 2023, 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 Canada Qingdao Secondary School continues to be recognized as a British Columbia-certified school.