

# Certification Inspection Report

BRITISH COLUMBIA PROGRAM

*at*

CANADA YANTAI SECONDARY SCHOOL

YANTAI, SHANDONG PROVINCE

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

OCTOBER 19-20, 2023

## INTRODUCTION

On October 19 and 20, a certification inspection was completed on Canada Yantai Secondary School (CYSS) in Yantai, 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 91 students, in grades 10 – 12. The BC program is hosted on the campus of Yantai No. 1 Middle School (the host school). The entire school, which houses the BC program, serves 6000 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 and BC teachers. Informal interactions with other staff and students occurred during the onsite 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 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, “dedicated to preparing our students for success in a rapidly changing world by providing a supportive learning environment that recognizes and respects individual differences, encourages students to challenge personal limits and promotes excellence.” The School seeks to help students develop critical thinking skills, a global perspective, and a respect for core values of honesty, perseverance, and compassion. The School commits to embracing two educational curriculums: the Chinese high school system and the BC graduation program, with the goal of students achieving success in both curricula and being prepared for future studies outside of China.

The Team would like to thank Canada Yantai Secondary 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 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 took specific and sustained action to respond positively to the recommendations regarding curriculum planning.</p> <p>The inspection team offered several suggestions, some of which have been acted on by administration, while others are still under consideration.</p>			

### 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
<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 several 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 physical activity and other team building opportunities, in the hopes of enhancing student community and connectedness, thereby enhancing 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, dated October 2023, from the Shandong Education Department that affirms ongoing authorization for Canadian-Sino Education Exchange Centre (CSEEC), in conjunction with Yantai No. 1 Middle School, to operate a Canadian High School Program.

The letter specifically states that the Shandong Education Department understands and has no objection to the fact the program leads to a BC graduation certificate, is taught by



teachers certified with by the BC Ministry's Teacher Regulation Branch and is operated in accordance with the Agreement.

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 spacious, historic and well-equipped campus. Yantai No. 1 Middle School has a rich and well documented history in Yantai. CYSS is located in a classroom building, occupying the first and second floors. The campus has sports facilities, science labs, art rooms, computer labs, a library, an auditorium, etc. CYSS has access upon request to use these facilities. CYSS has the regular use of classrooms with interactive whiteboards, an administration office, a staff room and a computer lab. The School has set up a small learning commons that functions as student gathering and multi-purpose space.

The Team verifies that the facilities at the School are entirely suitable to support the BC program.

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. Any further pandemic response that is required is actioned in collaboration with the host school and local health authorities. The documentation includes a protocol for 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.



**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 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.

**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 as principal of CYSS, having previously served as a teacher and administrator at other BC offshore schools. Collaboration with CSEEC administrators to generate system-wide resources, policies, and training supports his leadership at CYSS. In addition, the Principal is supported by the 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 Ministry's Teacher Regulation Branch (TRB) which meets the requirements outlined in the Agreement.



**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. He is also responsible for the translation of documents and acts as an interpreter between the parents and the School.

The School employs an Academic Advisor to assist the School by 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.

**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 and the Principal and contain all required elements.

The School utilizes 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 from the Director of the Offshore School Program.

Two teachers have unrestricted Certificate of Qualifications (COQ), one has a subject restricted certificate and two are teaching on valid Letters of Exemption (LOE). The Team confirms that the School has a process for monitoring the certification application status of teachers on Letters of Exemption.

The School is understaffed, particularly in the area of humanities, making it challenging to meet all required course offerings. The Team noted that some teaching assignments do not align with stated restrictions. The School is required to ensure that all teachers' assignments align with any listed subject restrictions.

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 due to specific challenges last year. A principal 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:**

CYSS 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.

The timetable is organized by semester and each academic day follows the same block rotation.

**Commendation:**

The Team commends the School for the creation of a distinctive CYSS learning environment and culture through its use of high-quality signage, decorated classrooms, the establishment of a student house system, the provision of a welcoming and well-used learning commons, and the scheduling of schoolwide daily physical activity time.

**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.

Students are provided English classes above the required minimum credits. In grade 10 students are given double the required class hours for each English language arts course, to give the teacher more flexibility and the students more opportunity to practice English. At the grade 11 level, 12 credits in English language arts are being provided to students for both semesters to boost their English proficiency.

This selection process and time and attention to English language instruction appears to be quite effective and the Team was impressed with the high degree of English fluency among the students.

**Commendation:**

The Team commends the School for the high quality of the students selected for the BC program and their excellent facility in written and spoken English.





**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 fully meets all course credit requirements following BC's curriculum. There are no challenge, exemptions or Board/Authority Authorized (BAA) courses.

CYSS offers a comprehensive program which allows all students to meet the graduation requirements to attain a Dogwood Diploma.

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

This year, the School plans to fulfil the Indigenous-focused graduation requirement through offering BC First Peoples 12 in the second semester once the timetable is finalized.

**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 clearly documented, with a consistent template and attention paid to the main required components of the program. However, the curriculum documents tend to be general without much substance and complexity. The teaching staff needs further support in order to deepen their understanding of how to effectively integrate, assess, and report on such facets of the curriculum 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.

**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 the Ministry requirements. Students receive 887 hours of instruction per year plus additional blocks of second language instruction in Mandarin provided by the faculty of 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. In conversation with the teaching staff, it was clear that regular formative assessment was a key component of their classroom routines to ensure that students had a clear understanding of materials taught prior to moving on to the next topic in each course.

The School has structured its computer lab with individual carrells and a dedicated secure server to ensure effective proctored completion of required Ministry graduation assessments.

Commendation:

The Team commends the teaching staff for their systematic and effective use of formative assessment in the teaching and learning process.

**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 interactive whiteboards and the teachers are quite skilled at integrating this technology into their teaching.

There are two computer labs available for student use and students often bring personal devices to school, when requested by the teacher, for specific classroom use (such as using phones to film presentations).



The students have access to library materials from the host school and there is a highly used learning commons stocked with books, games and musical instruments.

In addition, the School uses the sports facilities of the host school and has access to science labs when needed.

**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:**

The School is in compliance with BC reporting requirements. Four formal reports are shared with parents each year. Two formal progress reports are issued per semester, including a mid-term report and an end-of-semester report. In addition, formal parent/teacher/student meetings are scheduled for each mid-term.

The School's open-door policy encourages parents and teachers to request meetings about student progress at any time. WeChat communication is a common form of informal communication between the School and parents.

The School has initiated a pilot project to include student reflection on the Core Competencies in the interim reports which will be formalized for the final reports each semester.

**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 bi-lingual 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, 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 Yantai 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.**

Requirement Met       Requirement Partially Met       Requirement Not Met       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 Yantai 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.



- hiring a superintendent which allows for more focused leadership support and teacher professional development.
- its creation of a distinctive CYSS learning environment and culture through its use of high-quality signage, decorated classrooms, the establishment of a student house system, the provision of a welcoming and well used learning commons, and the scheduling of schoolwide daily physical activity time.
- the high quality of the students selected for the program and their excellent facility in written and spoken English.
- their systematic and effective use of formative assessment in the teaching and learning process.

## Requirements

**In order to meet the requirements of the BC Offshore School Program Certification Agreement, the Team requires that by November 30, 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 Yantai Secondary School continues to be recognized as a British Columbia-certified school.**

