

# Certification Inspection Report

BRITISH COLUMBIA PROGRAM

*at*

TCS EXPERIMENTAL EDUCATION

NEW TAIPEI CITY

TAIWAN

NOVEMBER 27 – 28, 2023

## INTRODUCTION

On November 27 and 28, a certification inspection was completed on TCS Experimental Education in New Taipei City, Taiwan, 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 Inspector, 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, was Alan Schroeder.

The School's BC program, in its second year of operation, has an enrolment of 30 students in grades 10-11. The Owner/Operator also operates a middle school program on the campus with an enrolment of 42 students that aims to prepare students for success in the BC high school program. The entire school, offering education for students between grades 7-11, enrolls 72 students.

During the visit to the School, the Inspector reviewed all standards required in the *BC Offshore School Program Certification Agreement* and *Operating Manual* and met with the School's Owner/Operator, Board representative, BC Principal, Offshore School Representative (OSR), middle school principal, BC teachers, students, and administrative support team members.

The Owner/Operator, Infinite Education, is responsible for the BC program.

The BC program's mission is to create an inclusive, fair and diverse educational community. It has a vision to develop multilingual, responsible, and competitive global citizens.



The Inspector would like to thank TCS Experimental Education 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
<p>Comment:</p> <p>There were no requirements identified in the previous inspection. The School responded positively to suggestions made by the previous inspector.</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 developed a comprehensive business plan that supports the long-term sustainability of the program.</p> <p>The School has capacity for 200 students between grades 7 and 12. The capacity was set according to Taiwan’s experimental education legislation. In the 2024/25 school year, the School will add grade 12 and its current cohort of grade 11 students is expected to graduate in June 2025.</p> <p>The School feels that it is positioned for continued strong enrolment due to key factors such as its effective marketing efforts and a growing reputation for its unique and innovative, high quality education program in which students develop competencies that are aimed to support their future success.</p> <p>The School reported a number of significant accomplishments from the previous school year including strong enrolment growth; expanded range of extracurricular and experiential learning activities; positive results on the Offshore Student Learning Survey; and outstanding performance of students on the BC provincial graduation literacy and numeracy assessments.</p> <p>The School has established multi-year educational goals that are aimed to enhance student learning. Focus areas for 2023/24 include academic achievement, measured by internal and external assessments; student accomplishment, measured by graduation rate and post-secondary admissions rates; school attendance and safety, measured by student attendance; and student attitudes, wellbeing and satisfaction, measured by stakeholder surveys.</p>		



## 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:</p> <p>The Owner/Operator meets the requirements and criteria outlined in the Certification Agreement.</p> <p>The Owner/Operator is fully engaged, supportive and committed to the success of the School and its students. A representative of the School’s board is regularly present at the School, providing a helping hand at the growing school and maintaining a collaborative professional relationship with the Principal.</p> <p>The Inspector met with the Owner/Operator to hear about her vision for the School and plans for future growth.</p>		
<p>Commendation:</p> <p>The Inspector commends the Owner/Operator for their investment in the School, for creating a modern facility full of technology, equipment and features that supports the development of a school environment that allows students and teachers to excel.</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:</p> <p>The Inspector confirmed that the Owner/Operator has written approval to operate the School as outlined in Section 5.03 of the Agreement.</p> <p>The Inspector reviewed a document from the Education Department of the New Taipei City government dated July 30, 2021 that authorizes the Owner/Operator to operate the School following the “Enforcement Act for School-based Experimental Education” of Taiwan’s Ministry of Education.</p>		

**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 Inspector reviewed the following documents to verify that the School meets local building inspection/safety, food preparation/cafeteria and fire safety related regulations:

- a Building Interior Decoration Conformity Certificate from the New Taipei City Public Works Department dated September 28, 2022 confirming compliance with relevant regulations.
- a certificate from the New Taipei City Fire Department dated July 27, 2022 confirming that the facility meets its requirements for the “Standard for Installation of Fire Safety Equipment, Based on Use and Occupancy”.
- a certificate confirming that the School’s lunch provider is a member of the Taoyuan City Lunch Box Food Business Association with validity until December 31, 2023.
- a certificate from the China Food Safety Control System dated March 19, 2023 confirming that the head of the School’s lunch provider has completed continuing education and training.

Both the student/parent handbook and the teacher handbook contain information about safety at the School. The Inspector reviewed the School’s Emergency Preparedness Plan, which has been vetted by the Offshore School Representative (OSR) for accuracy and functionality, that contains instructions related to fire drills, earthquake drills, and lockdown as well as an overview of the safety equipment that is available throughout the School and the School’s Communicable Disease Policy.

**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 School has been supported by its Offshore School Representative (OSR) since its inception. The OSR is an experienced educator with more than 10 years of experience as an educator at BC offshore schools. In addition, he has more than 10 years of experience working in the field of international education at the post-secondary level in BC.

The Inspector confirmed that the OSR meets all of the requirements as set out in Schedule B, Part II of the Agreement. The Inspector confirmed that the OSR is aware of their obligation to

report critical information related to changes in the operation of the School or ownership structure that could significantly impact the School's operations.

The Inspector appreciated the assistance of the OSR ahead of and onsite during the inspection.

**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 the founding principal of the School. Prior to that, he served as a principal in other BC offshore schools and has additional experience as a teacher and administrator at schools in China, Colombia and Canada. He is a strong, caring and visionary leader who has high standards and models those to teachers. In support of the development of this new school, the Principal has prepared numerous policies, procedures and templates; it is clear that he has considered the needs of the new School from a broad range of perspectives.

The Principal's job description contains all elements required in the Agreement. The School has a principal evaluation that is based on the leadership standards established by the BC Principals and Vice Principals Association (BCPVPA).

The School has appointed a vice-principal to provide additional leadership support.

**Commendation:**

The Inspector commends the Principal for his strong leadership and vision to support and build the TCS community.

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

The School's BC high school and middle school BC-prep programs are supported by an energetic and dedicated team of professionals who are focussed on the goal of creating a great school with the best possible learning environment for students. There are staff with responsibilities for administration, school promotions and student recruitment, student affairs, facilities, security, human resources and admissions.



The School employs Windsor/TESS to meet the Ministry's requirement for the submission of transcript and examination data. The School reports network bandwidth capacity of up to 1000 mbps.

**Commendation:**

The Inspector commends the administrative support team that are all focussed on the shared goal of creating a great school with the best possible learning environment for students.

**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 Inspector 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 presence of up-to-date student and parent consent forms.

Student records at the School are managed by the Principal. As student enrolment continues to grow, the Principal may consider delegating the responsibility to a colleague in the School's Administration Department.

**Commendation:**

The Inspector commends the School's impeccably organized student files.

**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 all Authorized Persons under the Agreement possess valid and current certification under the Ministry of Education and Child Care.

The School currently does not have any locally certified teachers teaching BC curriculum or any teacher assistants engaging with students in the BC program.

Teacher files contain all required elements listed in the Annual Report.

The School has been able to attract and retain a strong cohort of teachers from BC and other Canadian provinces due to its unique position as the only Canadian school in Taiwan, its



modern, high quality facilities, and its growing reputation for its high quality educational program and learning environment.

The Principal has prepared a professional development menu for the 2023/24 school year that is being delivered during several days of orientation prior to the start of the school year and weekly during its Experiential Learning Fridays. The menu contains a variety of items that touch on administrative and educational matters.

**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 Inspector verified through a review of planning materials, interviews with teachers, and through lesson observations that teachers are fully implementing BC's education program. Teachers personalize their unit and lesson plans to suit the particular needs of their students. Curricular planning templates used by teachers are standardized and contain all essential elements of BC's curricular framework including Big Ideas, Core Competencies and curricular competencies, content, First Peoples Principles of Learning, and in addition, helpful additional elements on lesson objectives, formative and summative assessment techniques, English language learning (ELL) strategies, differentiation, and teacher reflection/notes following each lesson.

The Inspector observed a variety of ways by which students were engaged in learning inside the classroom and outside through its weekly experimental education blocks.

The First People Principles of Learning were embedded into teacher planning and efforts to make connections to these in classroom activities were observed by the Inspector.

The School reported that it will offer Contemporary Indigenous Studies 12 to meet the Indigenous-focused graduation requirement. The Principal noted that the School plans to engage with local Indigenous community members in relation to the course to provide students with an opportunity to develop a deeper understanding and respect for the people and their way of life.

The School provides several popular extracurricular activities that serve as a further enhancement to their BC school experience.

The School is currently focussed on building a student government, which provides important leadership opportunities for students and has contributed to enhancing the School's learning environment and student experience.

**Commendation:**

The Inspector commends the School for following through on its mission to create an environment of experiential learning.

**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 Inspector confirms that the School meets the requirements for English language assessment and acquisition.

The School described how given the large number of applicants for a limited number of positions in the School, it is in an advantageous position in which it is able to select students with a level of English language proficiency necessary to succeed in the BC program.

The Principal administers an English language assessment to all students who apply to enter BC program and makes the final decision on admission. The assessment contains written and verbal components. Each student completes an individual placement test, which helps to determine students' language proficiency levels and to inform instruction and support for individual students. The School makes use of the Ministry's ELL Planning Tool to create an individualized instructional support plan for each student that needs assistance.

The Principal described how the School uses results from provincial graduation assessments and classroom assessments to monitor students' progress in development of English language proficiency and to inform instruction and necessary supports for individual students.

The School provides professional development to teachers aimed at enhancing students' English language proficiency.

**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 Inspector confirmed that the School has an equivalency policy and procedure, which has been applied in the case of students that have transferred into the School, and will be used to grant credit to students who have taken online learning courses from the approved online learning service provider in the future.





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

The School currently does not offer any courses that are delivered by locally certified teachers for which an exemption from the Ministry is required.

**2.21(f-g) The School meets the course overview/course planning requirements as outlined in Schedule B Part I, 2. € 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:

Through a review of course overview and planning documents and in interviews with teachers, the Inspector verified that the School meets the course overview and planning requirements outlined in the Agreement.

Each course has a detailed overview that reflects the BC curricular framework. Planning materials include key elements such as Big Ideas, Core Competencies and curricular competencies, content, First Peoples Principles of Learning, and in addition, helpful additional elements on lesson objectives, formative and summative assessment techniques, English language learning (ELL) strategies, differentiation, and teacher reflection/notes following each lesson.

The Inspector heard that teachers in the BC-prep middle school program are working to align their instruction with the BC program.

**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 requirement of 850 hours per year.

The School reported that it provides 6 hours of instruction daily and 180 instructional days per year for a total of 1,080 instructional hours annually.



**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:**

In reviewing planning materials, in interviews with teachers and through class observations, the Inspector confirmed that both formative and summative assessment methods are employed by teachers at the School. These ranged from ongoing checks for understanding to reflection exercises to more formalized assessments based on rubrics to ensure consistent evaluation practices.

The School began to engage students in self-assessment of their learning and of the Core Competencies in the 2022/23 school year, ahead of the required implementation of the new Student Reporting Policy in the 2023/24 school year.

The School provides professional development in support of developing assessment techniques. This is evident through the variety of techniques listed in planning materials and the rubrics that teachers described that they employ.

Students participate in provincial assessments at the grade 10 level and will offer the grade 12 graduation literacy assessment from the 2024/25 school year. Assessment results are analyzed and are compared to classroom performance to confirm consistent evaluation practices.

The School's security and invigilation procedures for BC provincial assessments meet Ministry requirements.

**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:**

In observation throughout the inspection and in interviews with teachers, the School's learning resources appear to suitably meet requirements to effectively deliver BC's curriculum.

The School has a modern and spacious learning commons that is centrally located in the middle of its corridor of classrooms and acts as a popular hub activity for learning and collaborating. The learning commons contains almost 1,000 fiction and non-fiction books that are managed through a library management system. There are also several high-end workstations and recording equipment with which students can make digital productions.



Classrooms are modern, bright, spacious and each contains technology to support learning including a smartboard and Wi-Fi access point to which students and teachers connect their school-issued Chromebooks.

The Inspector observed extensive use of devices for classroom work, research, projects, group work and assignments. Technology is used extensively by teachers in support of learning and to communicate individually with students regarding assignments and to respond to questions.

The School has a resource acquisition policy that contains an annual budget for building its collection of learning resources, and once established, a fixed annual allocation for the continued growth and maintenance of the School's collection of learning resources. Budget allocations are made based on the needs of students and classes with teachers' input.

The School also has a technology plan that aims to align with its educational vision, enhance student learning, ensure that teachers are trained to leverage technology in their roles, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the plan.

The School reports a robust internet bandwidth capacity of 1,000 mbps.

### **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 Inspector reviewed progress reports from a sampling of student files and noted the presence of all required elements.

The School provides one interim and one summary of learning report each semester. Informal reporting is offered throughout the semester. The School offers parent-teacher interviews following the issuance of the interim reports each semester.

The School began implementation of the new Student Reporting Policy in the 2022/23 school year. The Principal has provided teachers with training on its key elements as well as samples of progress reports he has prepared for students in classes he teaches for teachers to emulate.

The School uses the WebTess student information system to transmit student data to the Ministry.



**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 School has a parent/student handbook that meets the requirements as outlined in Section 2.26 of the Annual Report. It is comprehensive and includes information about the School's mission, its educational program, extracurricular activities, student/parent code of conduct and a variety of school policies including discipline, assessment and evaluation, attendance, academic integrity, inclusivity, school safety, uniforms, and dispute resolution.

**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 Inspector confirmed that the teacher handbook meets the requirements as outlined in Section 2.27 of the Annual Report for offshore schools. The handbook includes information on the School's mission, culture and values, educational program, professional development, school policies, school safety, and teacher contact information. Separate to the teacher handbook, there is a document that details the School's policy and procedure for teacher evaluation.

**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 currently offers three Online Learning courses through Global Education, the approved Online Learning service provider: Career Life Education 10, English Language Arts 10, and Foundation of Mathematics 10.

BC certified teachers provide students with onsite support.

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.



<b>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.</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Not Met	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
<b>Comment:</b> The School currently does not offer any courses via Remote Instruction.			

## CONCLUSION

### Commendations

**The Inspector wishes to recognize the Owner/Operator, Principal, staff and Offshore School Representative (OSR) of TCS Experimental Education for:**

- their investment in the School, for creating a modern facility full of technology, equipment and features that supports the development of a school environment that allows students and teachers to excel.
- the Principal's strong leadership and vision to support and build the TCS community.
- the administrative support team's shared goal of creating a great school with the best possible learning environment for students.
- the School's impeccably organized student files.
- following through on its mission to create an environment of experiential learning.

### SUMMATIVE RECOMMENDATION

**The Inspector recommends to the Executive Director of the Independent Schools and International Education Branch that the British Columbia education program offered at TCS Experimental Education continues to be recognized as a British Columbia-certified school.**

