

# K-12 International Education Regional Roundtables



BRITISH COLUMBIA  
MINISTRY of EDUCATION

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*The Ministry of Education would like to acknowledge Peter Drescher for his assistance in the facilitation and drafting of the Regional Roundtables Summary Report.*

# Purpose, Scope & Approach

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All BC school districts and independent schools were invited to participate in the roundtables. A total of 125 participants attended roundtables in the following locations:

**PRINCE GEORGE, March 13, 2013**

**VANCOUVER, March 14, 2013**

**COURTENAY, April 9, 2013**

**VERNON, April 11, 2013**

**VANCOUVER, April 16, 2013**

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British Columbia's Government, through its Jobs Plan and International Education Strategy, has recognized the increasing importance of international education to the province's education system and economy. In support of these plans, the Ministry of Education developed a strategic framework for the K-12 education system that lays out a series of actions for achieving these goals. This framework suggests that BC's goals in this sector are only achievable and sustainable if BC schools continue to deliver world class education and life-experiences for international and resident British Columbia students.

Tangible benefits exist to internationalizing BC's schools and curriculum, and in seeking opportunities to grow, but this also comes with tangible risks and liabilities. Strengthening the current policy and regulatory frameworks that govern the sector is timely to both sustain and advance the K-12 international education sector.

The Ministry of Education recognizes the expertise that school districts and schools have developed in this sector and the excellent work that has contributed to British Columbia's enviable reputation and international market-share. The Ministry also recognizes that, with continued growth in the size and complexity of the sector, there is a need to create the right types of policies and regulations that will mitigate risk without impeding the sector's entrepreneurialism. Therefore, in order to seek broad sector input into proposed future policy directions for onshore K-12 International Education programs, the Ministry held five regional roundtables during March and April of 2013.



Two consultations were held in Vancouver with the intention of providing participants from across BC with several options for participation in a location with convenient access to transportation.

Participation represented a range of stakeholders engaged in various aspects of the administration and oversight of K-12 international education, including public school trustees, superintendents, international education managers, teachers union representatives and representatives from independent schools including directors and school administrators. The Ministry of Education was represented by staff, including the Assistant Deputy Minister, Governance, Legislation and Regulation Division, which has responsibility at the ministry-level for international education, and the Director, International Education Branch. A facilitator was contracted to conduct discussions and to produce this summary report.

The regional roundtables targeted the participation of individuals with a role in the administration and/or oversight of K-12 international education. The benefit to this approach was that it collected a high number of individuals with significant expertise and experience in the administration and promotion of international education who were able to comment specifically on the impact that potential government policy directions could have on a vibrant and successful sector.

A variety of groups with other types of expertise in the sector were either not represented or represented by just a few participants. This included actual service providers such as teachers, counsellors, and homestay coordinators as well as academics, researchers, and private companies, such as companies providing homestay and guardianship services.



### The roundtables followed a set format that included:

- Ministry of Education presentation.
- Question and answer session.
- Small group discussions of four broad areas:
  - Current situation: strengths and challenges.
  - Quality assurance and policy directions.
  - Financial considerations.
  - Other topics, including alignment with BC offshore schools.

Participants were sent an agenda and discussion questions in advance. A number of draft documents were circulated for discussion purposes. [ [THESE ARE APPENDED TO THIS REPORT](#) ]

During the roundtables, each small group was asked to record their conversation and to submit notes to the facilitator. The facilitator has conducted a content analysis and synthesis to identify themes, sometimes mutually exclusive, and to capture the breadth of responses by forum participants.

[ [SEE SECTION: SUMMARY OF REGIONAL ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS](#) ]



# Overview of British Columbia's K-12 International Education Sector

British Columbia's K-12 International Education sector serves approximately 13,000 international students. Forty-seven out of sixty school districts and sixty-three out of three hundred and fifty-six independent schools are involved in the International Education sector. The ten largest public school programs, nine of which are located in the Lower Mainland/ Fraser Valley and the other on southern Vancouver Island, capture approximately 66% of the 10,000 international students enrolled in public schools and 52% of the more than 13,000 enrolled in public and independent schools combined. International Education in British Columbia is a highly complex sector involving methods of operation that can be both similar and different, depending on the contextual variables or circumstances that need to be taken into account.

Programs vary greatly in size ranging from a few students to more than one thousand. Programs located in urban centres and rural locations share some similarities with one another but also have many differences. Public and independent schools vary in terms of governance structures and matters of oversight. School communities are different, ranging from relative cultural homogeneity to multi-ethnic learning environments. They also differ greatly in the number of English Language Learners to whom they provide service. The number of available homestays varies from abundance to scarcity and the socio-economic status of each school community has a significant impact on the capacity to place international students. More recently, the growth of the program has brought with it an increase in the number of international education students with social/emotional issues or learning challenges, which are often masked by language and cultural barriers. All of these elements contribute to a great variation in terms of school and community capacity to offer rich and varied linguistic and cultural learning and life experiences to international students. Participation is further enlarged by the involvement of a network of recruiting agents, homestay agencies, and other service providers who offer after school programs and assorted excursions. With so many participants in the sector, issues of quality assurance and risk management become everyone's mutual concern, as does the need for some measure of coherence.

The K-12 international education sector is a competitive environment with some level of cooperation among programs. Larger, well established programs bring years of experience to managing, marketing and growing international programs, while smaller, newer programs try to find their way in becoming sustainable and adding educational value to all of their programs and services. Much of what has been established thus far is the result of local initiative, a spirit of entrepreneurship and, to some extent, mutual support. That support may have been through informal networking, or coordinated through such organizations as the International Public School Education Association (IPSEA) and the BC Council for International Education (BCCIE).

Large school districts have the advantage of economies of scale, expertise, location, and recognition (brand recognition in their own right). They also demonstrate pride of ownership and accomplishment, and value the entrepreneurial nature of the work. Small, more rural programs find it much more difficult to attract students and, with lower volume, incur higher costs and lower margins. In order to be competitive they try to promote the uniqueness of their communities and look for ways to add more value to the educational experience.



In 2011/12, international student tuition, which averages just over \$12,000 per year for international students, generated \$139M in the public system and an additional estimate of \$29M for independent schools. School districts utilize revenue earned by international programs to support international students and to supplement operating funds, and these additional funds are deployed in support of a variety of services for resident students.

School districts and independent schools participate in the international education sector for a variety of reasons. They could be summarized as follows:

- ▶ To provide a more global perspective and a cultural experience for resident students through academic and social interaction with their international peers. This is especially true in communities that are not culturally and ethnically diverse.
- ▶ To provide a source of revenue that supplements ministry grants in order to maintain or add value to district/school programs and services.
- ▶ To increase enrolment numbers so that smaller schools can effectively offer viable course and program choices to both resident and international students.

It is with this context that the Ministry of Education is perceived to be a relative latecomer to a well established sector in terms of contribution to the growth and development of viable, quality international education programs across BC. In recent years, the provincial focus has been on the development of offshore schools delivering BC curriculum. Participants indicated that support for the onshore sector would be welcomed in some areas, but were concerned about the potential for unnecessary interference with highly successful programs. They expressed concern that a sector that has been built on carefully cultivated relationships will be harmed by the introduction of highly regulated processes.

The Ministry of Education's proposed direction for the future of K-12 international education identified six goals in its Strategic Framework and Plan. They can largely be condensed into two key priorities:

1

Provide Quality Assurance through development of standards of practice.

2

Support government's objective to increase international student enrolment significantly (50% by 2015/16).

It is a challenge to address what could easily become two competing priorities. The pursuit of one may hamper success with the other. To what extent will significant growth compromise the quality of the programs and services that are provided? To what extent might increased regulation inhibit growth? To what extent is growth possible given existing capacity? To what extent will regulation discourage smaller programs from expanding or even continuing? Finding an appropriate balance between pursuing growth and increasing regulation would be of paramount importance.



# Summary of Regional Roundtable Discussions

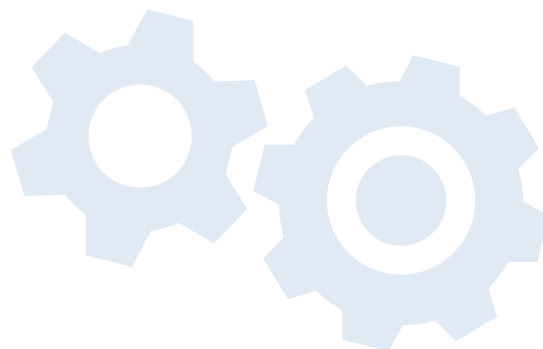
## [ Methodology ]

Content analysis and synthesis has, by nature, a subjective component. This paper attempts to identify themes that are sometimes mutually exclusive and capture the breadth of responses by forum participants. The goal is to represent the big picture and avoid overemphasizing what appear to be singularly unique or outlying statements. The paper also offers a number of observations and questions to help bring clarity to some issues where appropriate. To this end, the synthesis captures the responses that were provided and organizes them into dominant themes.

### Themes

- The relative strengths and key issues currently facing international education across the province.
- Identification of opportunities to work together and ways in which the province can offer support.
- Challenges and possible strategies for increasing K-12 international education enrolment by 50% by 2015/16.
- Exploring the development of quality assurance standards for international education.
- The financial means for supporting province-wide initiatives.
- Offshore/Onshore alignment - the feasibility of twinning offshore and onshore schools and having offshore students attend school in BC for at least one semester.
- Marketing and recruitment.
- Homestay issues.
- Distributed learning for offshore and onshore international students.

For the purposes of discussion, unless otherwise specified, public school districts and independent schools are referred to as districts and schools or districts/schools.



## [ Program Strengths & Major Challenges ]

### Strengths

Participants identified many strengths. Large programs cited the advantage of economies of scale in terms of marketing, recruitment costs and education service delivery. The availability of multiple amenities, services, and attractions in the lower mainland makes recruiting efforts that much easier. Access to contracted services pertaining to homestays, after school learning opportunities, recruitment, and field trips were also cited as advantages. The outdoor opportunities available in many interior regions were also seen to be an advantage in recruitment efforts.

Smaller programs, especially in rural communities described advantages in having many people getting to know the students and homestay families well, and in having greater ability to gain the support of community partners. Participants also indicated the value of secondary economic benefits accruing to small communities. Summer and winter short stay programs were said to have value in the recruitment of students for a longer term.

### Challenges

A number of challenges were identified that merited attention in some way, whether it be through engaging in self help, seeking support from other international programs or involving the Ministry of Education.

The issue of equitable access to and benefits from participation in international education was identified as significant, especially for small rural programs. Participants indicated that competition for students between urban and rural districts/schools or large and small programs does not take place on a level playing field. Small programs face higher cost pressures in terms of recruiting and marketing as well as in providing English Language Learners support, and rural programs find it necessary to have higher agent fees and/or discount their tuition compared to urban centres in order to compensate for having fewer attractions and amenities and higher transportation costs. There is a belief that international student and parent decisions about where to study come down to value-added activities, unique location, and homestay availability, because a quality education delivered under provincial standards is available throughout the province. Many participants were also of the opinion that Asian families preferred to stay in larger communities, whereas Europeans did not necessarily have a preference.





## Other challenges that were identified included the following:

- There continue to be difficulties surrounding the issuance of study permits by the Federal government. This was the most frequently identified challenge. Participants encouraged the Ministry to work with the Federal government to address this problem.
- There is the challenge of being too dependent on two major offshore markets – China and Korea. Programs are actively seeking ways to diversify.
- There are capacity limitations pertaining to availability of homestays, qualified English Language Learner support or classroom space experienced by a significant number of programs.
- The economic and cultural benefits of hosting international students are not clear to communities. These need better promotion and may serve to help increase the availability of quality homestays.
- There are challenges in getting programs started or growing small programs to the point of cost recovery.
- There are the optical challenges of focussing on international student recruitment versus resident student concerns and reducing costs to balance budgets while at the same time incurring expenses to grow international education revenues.
- Parent and student expectations around desired courses are often higher than the student's mastery of the English language will allow in order to experience success. This leads to challenges in the appropriate placement of students.
- There is a perception that international students are taking away seats from resident students and thus contributing to the potential for eroding community support. Although the sector would state this to be untrue, it would be prudent to determine if any behaviours that programs engage in fuel this perception, and to consider how this perception can be managed or corrected.



# Opportunities to Work Together *and* Areas Where the Ministry Can Provide Support

Participants acknowledged that there is competition among districts and between the public and independent school sectors. They value their autonomy and their ability to market the uniqueness of their communities. They also appeared to express a willingness to cooperatively share effective practices. Newer, smaller programs attempting to grow expressed a desire to learn from their larger, more established counterparts. Participants reported some limited activity involving the pooling of resources in an effort to reduce costs, especially around marketing and recruitment. Participants from public sector international programs cited networking opportunities provided through IPSEA as a way to gain access to expertise.

There was discussion around the Ministry's role in helping smaller programs outside the Lower Mainland. The cost of recruiting is significant and difficult for small districts to afford. Provincial branding, along with incorporating the unique opportunities available within a region could be of value in marketing and recruitment.

Newer programs, seeking to get established face the challenge of having insufficient revenues to cover startup costs in the early years of the program. It was suggested that the Ministry provide seed money in the form of a loan (based on a sound business plan) to help programs get established.

Current marketing and recruitment strategies appear to focus on academic university entrance programs. A number of participants suggested that more aggressive marketing of educational opportunities in the trades might have potential in recruiting international students. This would also create opportunities for communities and industry to become more actively involved in the sector.

Participants indicated that the relationship between the K-12 international education sector and post-secondary in terms of marketing international education could be improved. Some programs described a good working relationship with their post-secondary partners while others describe cooperation as being non-existent. The promotion of secondary to post-secondary pathways that include all of the province's universities and colleges (not just the major universities) as quality pathways should be given attention.

Some other possible areas where the province could add value were suggested:

- Assistance with risk management and liability issues.
- A greater offshore presence (including overseas offices).
- Coordinating marketing efforts.
- Providing guiding principles for the operation of effective programs.
- Coordinating resources for language translation assistance.
- Supporting cost savings strategies for schools/districts (especially travel costs).
- Assistance for districts/schools that are starting up a program.
- Facilitating more networking opportunities around effective practice and possible shared services.
- Obtaining provincial licensing for resources for English language acquisition.



# Increasing K-12 International Student Enrolment

Government has proposed to increase the enrolment of K-12 international students by 50% or 6000 students by 2015/16. The ministry's capacity survey (Fall 2012) reported that the sector's anticipated enrolment growth over that same period is approximately 19%. Availability of homestays, educational support services and school space were cited as putting limitations on capacity. A significant number of participants indicated that their programs had self-imposed limits on international student enrolment based on capacity issues and, more importantly, a desire to ensure the provision of a high quality experience for their students. Roundtable participants suggested that there is greater capacity for growth in rural communities and some support in addressing the challenges of recruiting students to rural communities would be helpful.

It is suggested that a more thorough technical review of school districts' and independent schools' capacity to take more international students should be undertaken.

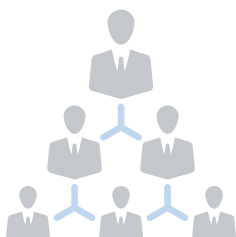
## Quality Assurance

There was general agreement among participants that a quality assurance framework which describes effective practice would be helpful. However, participants cautioned against being too prescriptive. The many contextual variables in play around the province need to be given full consideration in the development of provincial guidelines. It was suggested that the province develop broad parameters while encouraging districts/schools to establish more restrictive guidelines based on their local circumstances. Existing district/school policies and guidelines that are deemed to be appropriate can be used to inform provincial policy.

Participants stated that they did not see the value in increased reporting as they felt it would do little to ensure quality, and would add unnecessarily to the burden of existing provincial reporting requirements. Participants representing smaller programs indicated that too much prescription and reporting could result in higher costs, discourage participation by districts, schools and teachers, and possibly cause programs to be discontinued.

There were questions about where existing provincial policy and guidelines and accountability measures and practices were similar or different between public and independent schools, and what the implications would be for developing a quality assurance framework for international education.

A number of participants indicated that market forces provide quality assurance to some degree as recruiting agents are not likely to send students to programs that they believe are not offering educational services adequately.



## [ Student Achievement ]

Participants maintained that access to a quality education applies to all learners and the provision of appropriate English Language Learner supports impacts both BC resident and international students. It follows that the same standards would apply. This leads to questions seeking answers beyond the international education sector. Existing quality assurance practices include; provincial assessments, access to grades through BCESIS, achievement contracts, superintendent's reports, independent school inspections, audits, and provincial curriculum. To what extent do these help ensure a quality education for both international and BC resident students. Are existing quality assurance practices effective and appropriate in addressing current and emerging trends and policy directions in international education?

There was discussion around the appropriateness of including international students in certain achievement data samples, such as the graduation rate. International students come to BC for different purposes, different lengths of time, and have different motivations or personal goals. These may include, earning a dogwood diploma, learning English, or taking a short term program. It was also noted that language acquisition takes time. Programs that are able to retain students for several years are more likely to have their students demonstrate higher levels of achievement. One suggested criteria for including international students in data collection was their declared intention to earn a dogwood diploma.

## [ Program Administration ]

Matters pertaining to risk management and risk mitigation surfaced in conversations about a wide range of international education issues. There were questions as to whether various administrative practices were legally sound to mitigate against financial liability.

They might best be summarized in the form of a series of questions:

Have our application forms, contracts, waivers, and other documents received the appropriate legal vetting to ensure risk mitigation? Are they as thorough as they need to be?

What are our legal responsibilities when we engage with contractors for homestay placements and cultural experiences? Are we making accurate assumptions about our legal standing when we use contractors?

To what degree are business companies providing protection when engaged in onshore and offshore activities. Are they genuinely operating at arm's length?

Is the role of custodianship undertaken by district/school employees or others clearly defined and understood by the appointed guardian, homestays, and parents/legal guardians?



Although participants cited the sharing of documents through networking as a commonly used risk mitigating strategy, the involvement of 47 districts and 63 independent schools in the sector potentially leads to a variety of approaches and the possibility that some programs are legally vulnerable. Participants indicated that Ministry assistance in bringing some coherence and regulatory oversight to this area would be helpful.

Participants were not supportive of restricting the maximum number of students to a fixed percentage of enrolment. It could be argued that a school with a low English Language Learner population has more capacity to provide a linguistic and cultural experience and can absorb more international students than another school with different demographics. A judgement needs to be made as to what maximum is appropriate for each school site depending on the composition of the student body. A more general guideline that describes the variables that should be taken into consideration in determining a reasonable maximum would be more appropriate.

With regard to financial reporting, participants questioned why another layer of reporting would be necessary. There is a perception that accounting for international education revenues and expenses are adequately covered by existing reporting requirements.

## [ Complaint Resolution ]

Participants maintained that complaints are best handled locally and that, in general, current practices are effective. They did not see value in providing a summary of complaints and resolutions. The standard should be that the district/school has a clear policy regarding complaint resolution in place and that it is clearly communicated to parents and students. Districts already have complaint resolution policies or appeals procedures that cover all students as required by the School Act. Independent schools have Procedural Fairness: Best Practice Guidelines developed by FISA (Federation of Independent School Associations) in consultation with the inspector of independent schools.

In light of the increasing number of international students with personal/social issues or learning challenges, and recent events, it is appropriate to offer the following observation. A foundational principle upon which to base effective complaint resolution practices is the creation of an environment where, despite potential language and cultural barriers and the absence of parents/guardians, students feel comfortable in advocating for themselves when issues arise. A positive working relationship between the student and a designated employee of the school or district with regular and frequent communication is of paramount importance.

Many programs have exemplary practices in this regard and it would be in the sector's best interests to ensure that these practices are pervasive across the sector.



## [ Marketing, Recruitment, Enrolment ]

Participants expressed the need to be sensitive to the relationships that have been built up with agents over time, and the concern about having them eroded as a result of new regulatory requirements. It was suggested that a standard, legally vetted agent contract template with some flexibility for local customization could be helpful. The notion of fixed agent fees was not perceived to be workable. Rural districts/schools reported the need to provide higher commissions in order to compete with the larger, urban programs.

There was concern expressed over having fixed province-wide tuition rates. Smaller programs, especially those in rural areas, have cited the need to have a competitive advantage with a lower tuition rate to offset the appeal of more urban settings. They also cited the added costs associated with travelling to districts outside the lower mainland as being a competitive disadvantage.

## [ Life Experiences ]

Participants saw value in providing clarity around guidelines and effective practices pertaining to homestays. These guidelines could be informed by the experience of established international education programs and descriptions of good practices available through IPSEA. Participants commented further on the following areas:

- There was a general agreement that there should be a minimum age at which unaccompanied minors are accepted, and it should be based on what we know about child development. There appeared to be little consensus as to what that age should be (grade 6, 7, or 8). Reference was made to a clash of Canadian values and cultural norms with those of other cultures where parents may believe that sending young children abroad is the very best thing they can do for their children.
- Participants advocated for having some discretion in terms of limiting the number of international students in a homestay. It would be helpful to identify the contextual variables that would be considered in establishing the number of students assigned to a particular homestay.

[ THE TOPIC OF QUALITY HOMESTAYS IS GIVEN FURTHER TREATMENT LATER IN THE REPORT ]



## [ Student Supports ]

Participants cautioned against prescribing specific English Language Learner support levels for international students. Support models for all English Language Learner students vary across the province but should follow the provincial policy and guidelines for English Language Learner service already in place (ESL Policy & Guidelines 2009; English Language Learner standards 2001). It would be expected that international students would receive the same appropriate level of service as their BC resident peers.

Participants commented on the variation in the use of language proficiency assessments in districts and schools, and the variation in terms of assessment quality. They expressed concern around the granting of equivalencies in lieu of appropriate entry level assessments. They expressed interest in identifying a short list of high quality language proficiency assessments for use across the province to help ensure appropriate screening and placement for English language development. This would also leave them better positioned to communicate the reasons for placement recommendations to students and their parents, whose expectations around course selection often exceed the student's abilities in terms of language proficiency. It would also make it easier to be more candid in advising students and their parents that their quest to obtain a graduation diploma may take longer than planned. It is noted here that the Ministry's language policies and English Language Learner standards are undergoing revision and may serve to address the issues raised.

Participants indicated that provision of language support in the mother tongue is unrealistic as a universal standard. Small programs would have difficulty finding the capacity to provide it. It was suggested that access to a provincial help line for languages or assistance through organizations funded by the federal government (i.e. Mosaic) be made available.

A number of programs indicated that they do solicit feedback from international students on their homestay and educational experiences through exit surveys and interviews. There are likely well developed instruments and processes that could be shared across the sector.

## Funding Province-Wide Initiatives

Participants were asked to comment on the notion of a per student levy or surcharge to fund various province-wide initiatives around branding/marketing, internationalization and training, among others. It comes as no surprise that there was significant opposition to the idea of a per student levy and participants cited a number of reasons:

- If the levy were to come from passing the cost on to students and parents, programs would be put at a greater competitive disadvantage compared to other provinces and countries. Several participants indicated that current tuitions are already among the highest in Canada.
- Districts or schools are not in a position to absorb the additional costs during a period where they are already having to reduce expenditures in order to balance operating budgets.
- Government already derives significant tax revenue resulting from the multiplier effect of expenditures on tuition fees, homestay fees, and consumer spending by international students and their families. Participants maintained that this should be the primary source of funding of province-wide international education activities.



There was some support for a levy if the ministry could demonstrate that it was adding value to the marketability of international education, resulting in increased program registrations and, as a minimum, recovery of the costs incurred. There was also some support from smaller programs for funding provincial or regional initiatives that could result in cost savings through economies of scale.

## Alignment of Offshore and Onshore Programs

### [ Semester In BC ]

The purpose in requiring that offshore students attend school in BC for at least one semester was described as follows:

- 1. Education:** Language development and cultural immersion.
- 2. Quality Assurance:** Ensuring that offshore students are functioning at the same level as BC students.
- 3. Pathways:** Connecting offshore students with BC's education systems and job market.



Based on current offshore student enrolment, it is estimated that once the initiative were to attain full implementation, up to 2,500 students per year would attend BC schools.

Participants were asked to comment on the implications of requiring that offshore students spend at least one semester attending school in British Columbia. The conversation was coloured somewhat by a perception that academic standards in offshore schools are not as high as in BC, and that student demonstrations of proficiency, especially in English are not always legitimate (grade inflation was cited as an issue). There was also no clear understanding of the purpose of operating offshore schools or of its benefits to British Columbia. Participants expressed a reluctance to be part of a solution to the offshore school program challenges in having to educate students with poor language skills. They expressed the concern that these students would find themselves performing below their (and their parents') expectations.





### A number of other concerns were raised:

- Participants questioned that, if our first obligation is to serve the needs of students residing in BC, how would this initiative positively impact on those efforts? How would this initiative enhance the quality of our education system?
- It takes time to learn a language. The Ministry funds English Language Learner service for a student for up to five years. Participants questioned how much of an impact a short stay of 5 months would have on the development of language proficiency. Some participants indicated that if this was to move forward, the stay should be at least one year.
- Who has the primary responsibility for ensuring that students meet graduation requirements (BC school or offshore school)? Who “takes the heat” if they don’t? Students and parents will face considerable disappointment if their performance is not at least as high as in the offshore school.
- With enrolment capacity estimated to be less than government’s target for international student enrolment growth, there is concern that offshore students that attend for one semester will take up space for students who have committed to BC for one, two, or three years. Recruitment fees are commonly only paid once.
- A significant number of districts/schools have linear timetables (courses run from September to June). Scheduling a semester in BC in these schools would be problematic.
- Programming – Determining student course requests, the building of school timetables, and staffing are activities that normally take place in the January –July time frame. Scheduling what could conceivably be a large influx of offshore students in the second semester, providing them with the courses they want and adding staff mid-year are problematic. It would likely create staffing inefficiencies and add unnecessarily to district/school costs for salaries and benefits.
- Homestay capacity – With the availability of quality homestays at a premium, there is a reluctance to utilize them for a semester rather than a full year.
- International Education programs recognize that there is value in having diverse enrolment of international students from many countries and they attempt to reduce dependency on one or two markets. Eighty percent of offshore students attend school in China. The semester in BC initiative would undermine efforts to achieve enrolment diversity.
- Students require time to adjust to their new environment, new living arrangements, new community, and a different culture. Some participants opined that this adjustment period could take up to 4 months and have a negative effective on their achievement.
- There were many questions about the placement of offshore students. Would students be assigned or would they have a choice as to which school or district? Who would coordinate placement? Would we have the capacity to accept them? Would districts with capacity be the preferred choice of students who are assigned? Would English 12 be a requirement when attending in BC? Would the English speaking children of Canadian and American expats who might be attending BC offshore schools also be required to attend a BC school for one semester?
- What happens if a study permit application is rejected? Given the number of students under consideration, and the current issues surrounding the granting of permits, this chronic problem is very likely to emerge.



A number of participants questioned whether this was a useful or practical way to address quality assurance issues in offshore schools. The Ministry was encouraged to continue its present efforts to revise its quality assurance strategy for offshore schools. It would be prudent to have offshore schools provide evidence of meeting the new more rigorous standards around curriculum, instruction and assessment before considering this initiative.

## [ Twinning Schools ]

The pairing of offshore and onshore schools was seen to be a sound and reasonable strategy for internationalizing education. There are already examples of this across the province, often initiated by classroom teachers or schools. Participants did not see mandating this as a way to achieve desired results. In order for the relationship to work, it had to be mutually beneficial and had to have two willing partners prepared to take full advantage of the educational possibilities that pairing could offer. Integrated joint learning activities (writing, research), communication using technology, joint professional development and student/teacher exchanges or visits, were identified as possibilities.

The value of twinning of schools can be further enhanced if there is also a sister city relationship, which has the potential to encourage greater support for international education by communities and local businesses.

## Marketing *and* Recruitment

Participants were of the general opinion that the province could play a greater role in the marketing of international education. There is a perception that BC does not have the same “provincial” presence in the marketing of international education as do other provinces. Alberta was cited by several participants as an exemplar. It was suggested that provincial leadership in developing and participating in a broad, thoughtful, cohesive marketing strategy would benefit programs in all regions of the province, particularly smaller programs. Promoting the uniqueness of each region could serve to attract international students across the province. The strategy should still leave room for the marketing/recruitment efforts of individual programs.

The notion of matching student interests and career goals with local industry was seen as a possible means to attract students to smaller communities. For example, the aspiring chemical engineer might find living, studying, and having a work experience in a community with a pulp mill or operating mine to be a good match. Furthermore, ties to industry may provide opportunities to attract international students interested in the trades or technical careers.

Additional suggestions were offered as follows:

- Ensure that the province has a major presence at recruitment fairs and other international events.
- Provide a provincial web presence with multiple resources and links to programs around the province.
- Draw on the experience of established programs (large and small) in developing a provincial marketing strategy.
- Assist smaller programs with marketing and recruitment costs by promoting shared services where it is appropriate.



- Arrange education trade missions to other countries and have sector participants opt in.
- Encourage larger more established programs to assist smaller ones.
- Improve partnerships with post secondary institutions with a view to establishing joint marketing and recruitment strategies. Market alternative post-secondary pathways.
- Engage in a province-wide media campaign promoting the value and benefits of being a homestay parent (without placing too much emphasis on the monetary benefits).
- The need to work with the Federal government in an effort to streamline the visa granting process was reiterated.

## Homestays

Participants frequently commented on the importance of a quality homestay as being paramount to students having a successful academic experience. It is also the area in which the international education sector finds itself most vulnerable in terms of having to respond to issues. There are variations in the manner in which homestays are managed, including:

- Direct management of homestays by districts/schools.
- Contracting with homestay service providers.
- Recommending one or more homestay providers to prospective students and their parents.
- Homestays arranged by recruiting agents.
- Private custodial living arrangements made by international students and their families.

Each of these arrangements introduces variables in terms of evaluation, selection, monitoring and control. The sector would benefit from guidelines for evaluating, selecting, and monitoring homestays and might include, but not be limited to guidelines around:

- Cleanliness, safety, inclusiveness of living arrangements.
- Family composition and dynamics.
- Supportive conditions for language development and cultural immersion.
- Orientation for homestays and international students.
- Ongoing training and support for homestay providers.

Guidelines should serve to ensure a quality homestay experience for students as well as mitigate risk on the part of districts/schools. Many established programs have effective practices in place, and can provide a basis for developing provincial guidelines. Parents who access the services of private homestay providers either directly or through referral also need to have confidence that the provider is reliable and provides quality homestays. Developing some means of ensuring adherence to guidelines by private providers should be considered.



# Distributed Learning *for* Offshore and Onshore International Students

Participants were asked to comment on what regulatory requirements needed to be in place for distributed learning courses in order to ensure that international students meet learning standards at a high level. Participants indicated that issues of quality assurance, maintaining assessment integrity, and ensuring that high standards are met deserved much broader attention, including the services provided to both international and BC resident students. There was a widespread expression of concern about the authenticity of student work, and about the integrity of assessment practices being compromised by student actions in any number of ways by both resident and international students.

There was also concern that the nature of the learning experiences in distributed learning courses were not the best way to encourage English language development. There was some support for limiting the number and types of distributed learning courses that international students would be permitted to take. It was acknowledged that this could have an impact on smaller schools' capacity to provide programs that meets student needs and interests.

Distributed learning proponents would argue that limiting international student enrolment does little to improve the quality of the program. There are three major issues that need to be addressed:

1. The quality of the learning experience in terms of actively engaging students in learning.
2. The quality of the English language development experience.
3. The effective monitoring of the authenticity of student work.

## Discussion Summary Endnote

This paper began by describing province-wide international education program differences and complexities inherent in the sector. These complexities were magnified by the many issues and challenges raised by roundtable participants. They also identified many opportunities where sector cooperation and ministry support can contribute to the continued growth and effectiveness of international education programs across the province. In what was described as a competitive environment, there are opportunities to work together to address growth inhibitors, ensure that all programs offer a quality learning and life experience, and promote the BC brand internationally.



# Recommendations

The provincial government has identified the international education sector as an importance component of its BC Jobs Plan, and through the Ministries of Education and Advanced Education has identified a number of priorities in its International Education Strategy. Two key priorities stand out:

- 1 Expanded enrolment of international students in the K-12 and post-secondary sectors.
- 2 Increased assurance that educational programs are of high quality.

The five regional roundtables held for the K-12 international education sector revealed the many complexities inherent in the operation of effective programs around the province. It was made clear that there are many challenges associated with finding an appropriate balance between pursuing enrolment growth given the available capacity to accommodate more students, and finding some measure of coherence in the way programs operate given the many contextual differences that exist across the sector. Although there was mixed reaction to the need for additional regulation and oversight, we are reminded of the size and breadth of the sector, involving 47 out of 60 districts, 63 out of 349 independent schools and a large number of contractors and service providers. This in and of itself underscores the need for some measure of coherence and regulatory oversight in order to ensure that international education continues to provide quality programs and services to students across the province and continues to be held in high regard in other countries. The challenge is in how to regulate the sector to ensure quality without unnecessarily limiting opportunity and competition.

Roundtable participants offered a significant number of helpful ideas to promote the continued growth and health of the international education sector as described throughout this report. For purposes of clarity, these were supplemented by the facilitator's observations. Additional observations and recommendations are provided below.

## [ Stakeholder Support ]

There is value in having stakeholder support for the work of the entire sector and to encourage its growth and development. Two organizations currently have some influence over the growth and development of international education in the province. The BC Council for International Education (BCCIE) is a provincial crown corporation whose mandate is established by government. Although it engages in some activity in the K-12 sector, its orientation has historically focussed more on post-secondary. The International Public School Education Association (IPSEA) is comprised of 37 public school districts which provides networking and a sharing of expertise around marketing and effective practices. It would be in the best interests of the entire K-post-secondary International Education sector if these two organizations worked cooperatively, with a view to ensuring that the entire international education sector (all participating post-secondary institutions, districts, and independent schools) is well represented, is aware of, and has access to the programs and services that they might provide.



## [ Managing Enrolment Growth ]

It is suggested that government reconsider its enrolment growth target of 50% by 2015/16. Revised targets should be based on the results of a more thorough review of the capacity for school districts and independent schools to take more international students. Revised targets should also be “cautious” and responsive to:

1. Current enrolment trends which show a dependence on only a few international markets,
2. The increase in the number of students who arrive with a variety of learning challenges that require more services, and,
3. The need to ensure that growth does not compromise quality service delivery.

## [ Building Capacity ]

There are two key capacity issues where the Ministry can directly, or through agency support, be helpful.

### SUPPORT FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Capacity to provide English Language Learner support extends beyond the needs of international students. There has been significant growth in the number of international and resident English Language Learner students in the province over the last two decades. Today, there are almost 65,000 resident English Language Learner students in public and independent schools in BC who require different levels of support. The growth in the number of qualified English Language Learner specialists has not kept pace with this growth, nor has the training of classroom teachers in understanding and responding to the needs of the English Language Learner. If quality service is to be assured, there is a need to attend to this issue much more aggressively than has been the case to date.

### INCREASING HOMESTAY AVAILABILITY

There may be some value in actively promoting the opportunities and benefits of being a homestay parent through various print and electronic media.

It needs to be acknowledged that this too is a competitive marketplace, with private service providers competing with districts, post-secondary institutions, and assorted other endeavors (i.e. junior A hockey). The degree to which competition inhibits or increases availability is worthy of further examination.



## [ Marketing ]

Many roundtable participants commented on the lack of provincial presence in the marketing of international education compared to other jurisdictions. It is suggested that the Ministry work with the sector to establish the role that would be most helpful in promoting growth. A desire to have provincial involvement in resolving study permit issues with the federal government also surfaced repeatedly. The Marketing and Recruitment section of this report offered a number of additional suggestions for Ministry involvement.

## [ Funding Provincial Initiatives ]

Participants provided a number of reasons for being unwilling to support a province wide “levy” to fund initiatives. It is suggested that the Ministry work with the sector to identify areas where programs, especially smaller ones, can be supported by services where economies of scale can be realized. These optional services could be fee based or operate using a shared services model.

## [ Equity ]

The principle of equity in providing programs and services across the province was raised at most of the roundtable sessions. How that translates into action in a competitive environment is another matter. Larger programs have far greater capacity to engage in self-help. In the interest of equity, it would not be unreasonable for the Ministry to target efforts to assist smaller programs who have lower capacity. It would also not be unreasonable to have larger well established programs assist smaller ones that are still trying to find their way.

## [ Quality Assurance ]

### STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT, ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER SUPPORT AND DISTRIBUTED LEARNING

The issue of quality assurance in terms of student achievement, support for English Language Learner and Distributed Learning impacts all international and resident students. It is fuel for conversation at many more tables. The province’s movement toward a recasting of education to be more personalized is an opportune time to address these issues. The questions seeking answers are:

1. How will existing quality assurance approaches need to change for both public and independent schools in order to help ensure that all students are receiving a quality learning experience and that the education system is being responsive to the diverse learning needs of students?
2. How will they need to change to reflect current and emerging trends in education and proposed changes in policy direction for BC’s education system?
3. What will they need to look like in order to serve the twofold purpose of ensuring public confidence in the education system while at the same time helping educators make informed decisions about teaching, learning, programs, and services?



## HOMESTAY

Participants strongly indicated that a positive homestay experience is fundamental to a student having a successful learning experience. They saw value in providing clarity around guidelines for effective practice. It is suggested that the Ministry work with the sector in developing guidelines for evaluating, selecting, orienting, providing ongoing training and support and monitoring homestays as described earlier in this report. It is further suggested that a self-regulating body for private homestay providers be established. This body should be empowered to grant accreditation to homestay service providers if they meet specific criteria.

## PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

In the interest of mitigating risk, it is suggested that the Ministry work with the sector to ensure that any applications, contracts, waivers, declarations of responsibility with respect to custodianship, and various other documents used with agents, service providers, parents, students or other parties contain the right information, ask the right questions and have been legally vetted where appropriate. The provision of templates may be appropriate in some instances, and province-wide standardization may be appropriate in others. The section on Program Administration and Complaint Resolution provides further advice on this topic.

With regard to financial reporting there is the question of how it would need to differ from or be more than required under existing reporting requirements. The issue is best framed with the following questions:

- To what extent do existing provincial requirements for financial reporting and audits (internal and external) for public and independent schools ensure that treatment of revenues and expenditures for international education adhere to accepted accounting principles and local procurement policies?
- Are schools/districts doing their due diligence in ensuring that international education financial activity is being monitored and reported appropriately?
- Do they adequately capture the true cost of providing the service, including time spent by administration, specialist teachers, and support staff who are not directly assigned to the program?

If current reporting requirements do not adequately capture the true financial picture for international education for both public school districts and independent schools it is suggested that government consider working with the sector to improve current requirements or develop alternate financial reporting practices or mechanisms either at the ministry or school/district level that enable the true financial picture to be captured.





## [ Distributed Learning ]

Limiting the number of distributed learning courses for international students does little to improve the quality of programs. There are a variety of ways in which distributed learning courses are structured, depending on the DL school or service provider. International students and resident English Language Learners would be better served if they were offered distributed learning courses that met certain learning design specifications. These specifications might include, but not be limited to:

- Active engagement through virtual real time interaction with their instructors and their peers.
- Active engagement with their peers under the supervision of a mentor at their host school (where possible).
- Effective monitoring and verification of the authenticity of student work.
- A focus on English language development (becoming proficient in using the technical or proprietary language of each curriculum, orally and in writing).

Restricting international students to enrolment in courses that meet such design specifications would be a better solution than limiting the number of courses outright.

## [ Semester in BC ]

Roundtable participants identified a significant number of issues in having offshore students attend school in BC for one semester. The stay is seen to be too brief in order to ensure student success and introduces a myriad of capacity and logistical problems that are very difficult to resolve. It also would exacerbate an existing problem of being too dependent on one or two markets, which is something that programs are trying to remedy. It is suggested that the notion of requiring offshore students to attend school in BC for one semester should not be pursued.

## [ Internationalization - Twinning Schools ]

The notion of twinning schools with an offshore counterpart should be encouraged. Twinning does not necessarily need to be with a BC offshore school. An “internationalized” curriculum can open the door to many creative and innovative learning activities that can be of benefit to students in both schools, supported by technology that provides for both real time (synchronous) and asynchronous communication. Student/teacher exchanges or visits and offshore student recruitment have the potential to become natural by-products of such relationships. It is recognized that such relationships already exist. It is a matter of creating the conditions where the number of twinned relationships can grow and flourish.

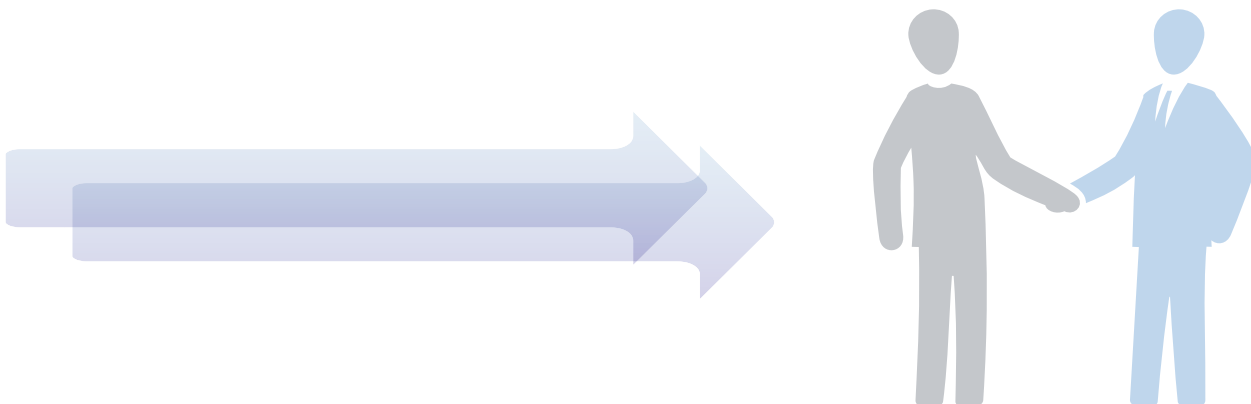


## [ Policy - Key Guiding Principles ]

In recognition of the complex nature of the sector in terms of its composition, its context, and the manner in which it operates, the following are offered as possible guiding principles in the development of policy and guidelines:

- Our obligation is to provide a quality education program to all students who attend school in British Columbia. Standards promote a system which is responsive to the diverse needs of learners.
- Contextual Variables need to be given full consideration in the development of provincial international education policy. There is no “best” practice. There is “effective” practice in response to the circumstances that need to be addressed. Effective practice may not necessarily be a uniform standard. Districts and schools need to have some discretion to adapt standards to their own situation.
- Well established current practices can inform policy development.
- Policy should therefore be expressed in terms of broad parameters that encourage districts/schools to be more restrictive or more specific based on local context.

The roundtable discussions and this paper have described the high degree of complexity and the myriad of challenges and other issues that can enable or restrict the future growth and health of the international education sector. There is much to gain in having government and the international education sector build a collaborative working relationship that ensures the continued growth and effectiveness of its programs. It is also important to acknowledge that the K-12 international education sector is a thriving enterprise, created and nurtured through the efforts of many individuals, schools, districts and support organizations. In what has been described as a competitive environment, there are many examples of effective practice, developed through experience and a sharing of expertise. Many participants expressed their appreciation for having had the opportunity to network with and learn from their colleagues as well as make new connections at the regional roundtables.



# Appendix - DISTRIBUTED MATERIALS

## K-12 INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION REGIONAL ROUNDTABLES

### Purpose

Engage K-12 international education sector in the development of an action plan to improve and better support onshore international education activities and international distributed learning.

### Agenda Items

TIME	ITEM	
9:30 – 10:00	Coffee	
10:00 – 10:15	Welcoming Remarks	FACILITATOR
10:15 – 10:45	Ministry Presentation and Q&A	ADM
10:45 – 11:45	Table Talk I: Getting Our Bearings	ALL
11:45 – 12:30	Table Talk II: Strategic Direction & Quality Assurance	ALL
12:30 – 1:00	Lunch	
1:00-1:45	Table Talk III: Financial Models	ALL
1:45 – 2:45	Table Talk IV: Onshore Semester & Other Issues	ALL
2:45 – 2:55	Ministry Summary and Next Steps	ADM
2:55 – 3:00	Closing	FACILITATOR

### Attachments

- BC's International Education Strategy
- Table Talk Discussion Questions
- Strategic Framework and Plan
- Discussion Diagrams:
  - *Options for a Quality Assurance Model (DRAFT)*
  - *Financial Models (DRAFT)*
  - *Options for Semester in BC Requirement (DRAFT)*



BRITISH  
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Education



# K-12 INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION REGIONAL ROUNDTABLES

## *Table Talk Discussion Questions*

### Table Talk I: Getting Our Bearings

#### **International Education - What is your Reality?**

- What things are working well in your International Education Program?
- What are the key issues that confront international education in your school/district?

#### **Capitalizing on our Collective Strengths**

- Based on your experiences and taking a provincial view, what aspects of international education in BC are working well?
- What are the opportunities to work together as a province that we should be exploring and how might the province support your efforts?

#### **Enrolment Growth**

The provincial strategy calls for increasing the number of international education students by 50% over the next 4 years. Feedback and a recent international education capacity survey pointed out some challenges including homestay, physical space, and student supports among others.

- What ideas do you have for addressing these challenges and how might the province provide assistance?

### Table Talk II: Quality Assurance

Describe the key elements of a quality international education program at the school and district level? In your experience, what would you expect to see in terms of high quality programs, services and supports?

The draft Quality Assurance Model is a first attempt at identifying possible areas where provincial quality assurance standards might be developed.

- What elements of the model point us in the right direction?
- What elements of the model should be reconsidered?



## Table Talk Discussion Questions (CONTINUED)

### Table Talk III: Financial Models – Funding & Disbursement

- What international education and internationalization activities should be supported through province wide funding of the K-12 sector?
- If funding for K-12 international education is to come from the sector itself, what type of revenue generation principles or mechanisms would be the most equitable?
- If a surcharge were placed on international students, what level would your institution support?
- Are there other ways to consider securing funding to support the broader international education sector?

### Table Talk IV: Other Key Issues

#### Alignment with Offshore Program (Onshore Semester)

- What factors should be considered in requiring offshore school students to spend at least one semester in BC?

#### Distributed Learning for Offshore Students

- In the interest of:
  - providing quality assurance,
  - ensuring that learning standards are being met at a high level,
  - strategically aligning onshore, offshore and DL int. education,What regulatory requirements do you believe are necessary?

#### Homestay

- Are there any changes or regulatory tweaks that would help to better protect international homestay students in BC and that would improve their overall experiences?

#### Marketing & Recruitment

- Other jurisdictions collaborate on marketing and recruitment, should this model be considered in BC and how might this look?
- What strategies could be implemented provincially to assist in recruiting international students generally and to rural areas in particular?



# K-12 International Education Strategic Framework & Plan

<b>Vision</b>	A high quality K-12 international education system in BC that provides global learning experiences for students and teachers				
<b>Objectives</b>	<b>(A) Primary</b> Enrich education experiences for BC students	<b>(B) Primary</b> Increase number of skilled workers who study and then remain in BC (Jobs Plan)			<b>(C) Secondary</b> Provide cultural and economic benefits to BC communities
<b>Goals</b>	<b>A1</b> K-12 education system is globally oriented	<b>B1</b> K-12 international students have quality learning experiences	<b>B2</b> K-12 international students have quality living experiences	<b>B3</b> High quality K-12 international education brand	<b>C1</b> Schools and communities gain economic/social/cultural benefits
	<b>Ministry Actions</b>	<b>Ministry Actions</b>	<b>Ministry Actions</b>	<b>Ministry Actions</b>	<b>Ministry Actions</b>
<b>Overarching</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement regulatory framework (see side bar)</li> <li>Promote benefits of international education to BC public</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement regulatory framework (see side bar)</li> <li>Develop and promote best practices based on research and consultation with the sector</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement regulatory framework (see side bar)</li> <li>Develop, implement and promote best practices</li> <li>Work with federal government and provinces on behalf of K-12 sector</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement regulatory framework (see side bar)</li> <li>Develop, implement and promote best practices</li> <li>Develop and implement an international education brand and marketing strategy</li> <li>Improve K-12 web presence and linkages within sector</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement regulatory framework (see side bar)</li> </ul>
<b>Offshore</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offshore schools encouraged to form partnerships with BC schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement strategic application criteria</li> <li>Update requirements within agreements (e.g. DL/ student outcomes)</li> <li>Identify opportunities for an onshore semester</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Administer annual survey and feedback process for students/ parents</li> <li>Develop communications materials for offshore program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve K-12 web presence and linkages within sector</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fund K-12 international education initiatives from offshore program funding</li> </ul>
<b>Onshore</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote student and teacher exchanges</li> <li>Consider developing scholarships for exchanges</li> <li>Promote "global orientation" through curriculum</li> <li>Encourage school partnerships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish and implement educational criteria for offering international education programs</li> <li>Require partnerships with post-secondary institutions</li> <li>Improve IE student collection and data utilization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop homestay criteria</li> <li>Administer annual survey</li> <li>Consider setting maximum/minimum tuition fees and expenses</li> <li>Establish guidelines for role of agents in recruiting students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote BC as a K-12 education destination</li> <li>Work with other ministries to develop or gain sector access to BC marketing material</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify opportunities for all regions of the province to build capacity in International Education</li> <li>Promote K-12 sector engagement with communities to understand and respond to community needs</li> </ul>
<b>Distributed Learning</b>	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limit number of "For-credit" DL courses that off/onshore international students may take</li> <li>Develop educational criteria for DL courses (e.g. In-vigilated and supervised)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Not-for-credit" DL courses to prepare students for BC education experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop consistent policy regarding course credit and equivalency</li> </ul>	N/A

**Assumptions**

- A high quality product is the key success factor. This means:
  - high quality education for BC and intl students;
  - safe, supportive living situations for intl. students
- A high quality product requires government regulation (legislation, policy, and monitoring), funding, capacity, and standards of all K-12 international education initiatives.
- Economic benefits to any single school district are inextricably linked to the value of the provincial brand and provincial objectives
- SD involvement in international education will be limited to those already providing excellent programs to resident BC students.

**Regulatory Framework**

<p><b>Legislation and Policy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>International Education Act</li> <li>Establish K-12 IE policy</li> <li>Standards, guidelines, and criteria (eg. home stay/agents/offshore)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Oversight /Self-Regulation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor offshore programs and onshore international education to ensure quality</li> </ul>
<p><b>Funding</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offshore fees to be used in part to fund:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Oversight</li> <li>Marketing</li> <li>Research</li> <li>Scholarships</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Quality Assurance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student data/analysis surveys</li> <li>Feedback (including complaint) processes</li> <li>Business Plans</li> <li>Evaluation/metrics</li> </ul>
<p><b>Information</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Province to work with sector to have clear, easy-to-use web presence</li> <li>Publicly accessible IE tools and data</li> </ul>	<p><b>Sectoral Consultation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provincial Advisory representatives to guide strategy development and implementation</li> </ul>



# [ DRAFT ] K-12 International Education

## Options for a Quality Assurance Model

### Student Achievement

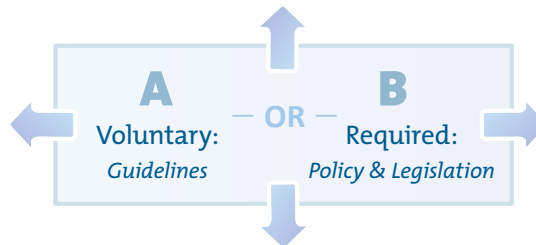
Standards	Measures & Practices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Programs will provide international students a high quality education</li> <li>International students will be placed in a level of study appropriate to their ability to speak English or French</li> <li>BC resident students will have international learning opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Academic achievement: e.g.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Course completion</li> <li>Attendance</li> <li>Course &amp; exam mark</li> <li>FSA scores</li> </ul> </li> <li>Pre &amp; post ELL testing (e.g. IELTS)</li> <li>Track # of Exchange / Twinning programs recorded by districts and authorities</li> </ul>

### Life Experiences

Standards	Measures and Practices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Criminal record checks for adults in homestay house</li> <li>Training homestay parents</li> <li>Age restrictions for unaccompanied minors</li> <li>Limited # of non-resident students per homestay</li> <li>Homestay agreement includes potential for home inspection</li> <li>Homestay parent(s) feedback solicited</li> <li>Homestay policies clearly articulated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Homestay organization (e.g. district or company) produces bi-annual reports</li> <li>Homestay organizations subject to government audit / inspection</li> <li>Homestay homes subject to government, district and/or authority inspection</li> <li>Homestay parent survey or focus group conducted</li> <li>Regular means of communication with homestays established</li> </ul>

### Complaint Mechanism

Standards	Practices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The province and IE providers will develop processes to receive and respond to complaints from students and parents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complaints reviewed within specific timeframe</li> <li>Summary of complaints and resolutions included in annual report to province</li> </ul>



### Student Supports

Standards	Measures and Practices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>International Education programs larger than X are expected to provide students supports, including:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One or more ELL specialist</li> <li>Support in students' mother-tongue</li> <li>Timely access to counsellors</li> </ul> </li> <li>Expectation to solicit and respond to intl student voices</li> <li>Teachers to receive information on English capacity of all Intl students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student and Parent Satisfaction Survey and focus groups</li> <li>Teacher and Admin Focus Groups</li> <li>Reporting on student to specialist staff ratios</li> <li>Reporting on intl student access to specialist staff (e.g. counsellors or mother-tongue speaking staff).</li> </ul>

### Program Administration

Standards	Measures and Practices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Program policies will be developed and publicly posted</li> <li>Providers publicly post results, fees and program information</li> <li>Providers maintain clear financial records as per standard business practices</li> <li>Aside from use of existing facilities, international students may not be subsidized through Provincial operating grants</li> <li>International students may not form more than X% of a school's total population</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Districts will report to the Province annually on policies and financial information related to IE programs. Financial report will include:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tuition revenue</li> <li>Program costs</li> <li>Expenditures, including marketing, promotion, and contractors fees</li> <li>Revenue returned to the district or authorities' general operational funding</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

### Marketing, Recruitment, Enrolment

Standards	Measures & Practices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Marketing info, contracts and all fees must be translated into target market languages and displayed in English and market language on provider's website</li> <li>IE agents must sign a standard agreement before working for a BC service provider</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information on marketing practices to be included in an annual report to be submitted by districts and authorities to the province, including:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sample marketing materials and contracts;</li> <li>Translations of contracts and fee schedules into languages of students enrolled.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



# [ DRAFT ] K-12 International Education Financial Models

Non-resident Student Enrolment and Average Tuition		
	Public Schools	Independent Schools
# of non-resident students	10,124	2,904
# new non-resident students per year	5,630	1,219
Average non-resident student tuition	\$12,135	\$10,000

## Option 1: Application Fee Per Student (Paid once)

fee amount X new students

Fee Amount	Public Schools	Independent Schools	Total
\$100	\$563K	\$122K	\$685K
\$150	\$844K	\$183K	\$1M
\$200	\$1.1M	\$244K	\$1.3M
\$250	\$1.4M	\$305K	\$1.7M

## Option 2: Per Student Fee (Annual)

fee amount X total students

Fee Amount	Public Schools	Independent Schools	Total
\$100	\$1M	\$290K	\$1.3M
\$150	\$1.5M	\$436K	\$1.9M
\$200	\$2M	\$581K	\$2.6M
\$250	\$2.5M	\$726K	\$3.2M

## Option 3: Percent of Tuition (Annual)

% X average tuition X total students

% of Tuition	Public Schools	Independent Schools	Total
1%	\$1.2M	\$290K	\$1.5M
1.5%	\$1.8M	\$435K	\$2.2M
2%	\$2.4M	\$581K	\$3M
2.5%	\$3M	\$726K	\$3.7M

Possible Expenditures	Possible %	Option 1 @ \$200	Option 2 @ \$200	Option 3 @ 2%
Student Support Services: E.g. ELL; native-language support; counselling; school activity outreach programs	40%	\$548K	\$1M	\$1.2M
BC Student and Teacher Exchanges E.g. # of \$3,500 grants	15%	\$205K 58	\$391K 111	\$455K 130
International Student Scholarships E.g. # of \$500 scholarships	5%	\$68K 136	\$130K 260	\$152K 303
BC School Partnership Program E.g. # of \$500 grants	4%	\$55K 110	\$104K 208	\$121K 243
Marketing	20%	\$274K	\$521K	\$607K
Research E.g. K-12-specific, priority market briefs for BC providers	1%	\$13K	\$26K	\$30K
Oversight E.g. supports quality assurance such as student / parent surveys	10%	\$137K	\$260K	\$304K
Training Materials/ Capacity Building E.g. school or community workshops; standardized homestay training	5%	\$68K	\$130K	\$152K

## Collection Options:

**A** Directly from Boards and Authorities

**B** Charged to Students Directly

New Zealand's Export Education Levy is set at 4.5% of tuition fees and most resembles Option 3.



BRITISH COLUMBIA | Ministry of Education





# [ DRAFT ] Semester in B.C. Requirement

## I. PURPOSE

1. Education: Linguistic & cultural immersion

2. Quality Assurance: Ensure offshore students functioning at BC level

3. Pathways: Connect offshore students with BC's education system and job market

## II. REQUIREMENT

- Offshore students must study for at least one semester at a BC K-12 school to be eligible to receive a BC Dogwood
- Offshore schools must partner with a "twin" K-12 school in BC to maintain certification

## III. CONSIDERATIONS

1. Capacity challenges
  - a. Ministry
  - b. Schools
  - c. Homestays
2. Support from Offshore Schools
3. Distribution of students across BC?
4. Imbalance of students in schools (e.g. international "ghettos") could:
  - a. Lessen "authenticity" of experience
  - b. Lower BC academic standards
  - c. Negatively impact other international students

## IV. APPROACH

Phased-in approach:

- 25% of offshore student graduates in 15/16
- Add 25% of grads per year (100% by 16/17)

Recommended new policies:

- Set tuition rate across all districts for international students (including offshore)
- International student enrolment in any particular school to be kept below X%
- Within international student population recommended thresholds for same linguistic groups

## V. OPTIONS

Offshore school must arrange students' onshore semester and twinning

- Pros: low administrative onus on sector & ministry
- Cons: may not be well managed; schools may charge extra fees

Central coordination of onshore semester and twinning

- Pros: simpler administration; consistent approach; could include administration of exchanges in contract
- Cons: less recoveries from offshore program for other initiatives

NGO centrally coordinates on a fee-for-service basis

- Pros: no cost to Ministry; coordinated approach
- Cons: challenging optics; twin schools would need to be separate

## VI. OVERSIGHT

- Ministry ensures requirement complete before dogwood issued

## VII. EVALUATION

- Annual reports
- Scheduled program review in year two

# British Columbia Global Education Program

K-12 INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION  
REGIONAL ROUNDTABLES

JULY 2013



Ministry of  
Education

