

2018 Interview with BC Offshore School Superintendent for Japan, Margaret Compo

1) Please tell us about your background and educational history.

COMPO: I have been a BC educator for over 45 years. I have taught every grade from kindergarten to university in the BC public school system. I have been a BC principal onshore for 15 years, and a BC offshore principal and consultant for the last 15 years.

My field is brain research. The interesting thing about my research is that it has been steered towards understanding how the brain works and how that translates into classroom strategies for students.

2) What kind of school are you aiming to create here at OGCIS (Osaka Gakugei Canadian International School)?

COMPO: The OGCIS program will be based on the new BC curriculum and is planned to develop Content, Core Competencies and Major Concepts. The program has students involved in asking questions; "What are my career-life choices?" "What are my career-life decisions?" "How do I cultivate networks and build relationships?" "How do I become a lifelong learner?" As we are all expected to have at least three to four different careers in our lives, it is seen as very important. We need to have curious, flexible, lifelong learners who can change and learn as they need and as the world changes. In Grade 10, OGCIS students will travel to BC, Canada and go to Belmont High School in the Sooke School District. They will be fully immersed in an English-language public school experience. Students will earn their BC Social Studies 10 credits and will be engaged in outdoor recreation activities. This five-week travel abroad program builds confidence and maturity in a safe, English speaking environment.

3) What kind of students are you hoping to attract?

COMPO: We want students who are academically strong, but that alone is not enough. We are looking for those students who are adventuresome and may be thinking about going abroad to international universities. We are looking for those students who have a strong commitment. It is more about work ethic, a willingness to be challenged, and overcoming those challenges. They need to have both the ability and the drive required to become a native-level English speaker.

4) What are the educational policies and ideals of the BC program?

COMPO: BC education has always been ranked at the top of the international education community. We need students in the future who are inquiring, creative, thoughtful and active learners. We need future global citizens who will be informed and involved in the challenges we face. The BC Offshore School program is based on the ideals of creating active, twenty-first-century learners.

5) Lastly, what are your feelings, philosophies, and aspirations on education?

COMPO: My personal philosophy is embedded in the new BC curriculum. We need the next generation to be inquiring, researching, questioning and active in helping the world succeed.

We know the Japanese students and curriculum are also rated near the top of the international rankings. Japanese students are already successful and well-prepared. So what do we bring that is new? The new BC program and OGCIS will offer strategies and experiences in critical thinking, challenging activities, enquiry based learning and building research skills. Our hope is to work together and offer even greater learning opportunities for our Japanese students.