



Calgary Board of Education

CHINESE (MANDARIN) BILINGUAL PROGRAM

South School

The Calgary Board of Education is considering the expansion of the Chinese (Mandarin) Bilingual Program in a south location, beginning in September 2011, for students in Kindergarten and grade one. This location would increase accessibility of the Chinese (Mandarin) Bilingual Program for students living in Areas IV and Area V. The location of the program will be determined once the demand for the program has been established.

The Chinese (Mandarin) Bilingual Program is designed for students who have no previous knowledge of the Mandarin language and no previous experience with the culture. The program emphasizes the communicative approach to language and offers integrated and content-based instruction. Developing cultural understanding is an integral part of this language learning opportunity.

As with the Chinese (Mandarin) Bilingual Program at King George School, the beginning entry points would be Kindergarten and grade one, with the program expanded by one grade each year up to grade six.

The Chinese (Mandarin) Bilingual Program teaches the Hanyu Pinyin phonetic system and Simplified Chinese Script beginning in Kindergarten. Traditional Script will be introduced on a recognition basis to enhance cultural and historic understanding in grade three. This program will provide 50% of the instruction in Mandarin and 50% of the instruction in English.

The student who has a curiosity for the culture and a passion for learning Chinese (Mandarin) is an ideal candidate for the Chinese (Mandarin) Bilingual Program. Characteristics of successful candidates include: a strong first language foundation, a high degree of motivation, willingness to take risks and a tolerance for ambiguity. Ongoing involvement of parents is integral to each child's learning, but there is no need for parents to have any background in Chinese (Mandarin).

As students participate in the Chinese (Mandarin) Bilingual Program, Calgary Board of Education intends that each child achieve the goals of developing functional bilingualism, self esteem and confidence as a learner and critical thinker, responsible citizenship, and an appreciation of multilingualism and multiculturalism which, in the future, could provide career opportunities and offer a wider range of educational choices.