



January 28, 2016

Dear Students and Parents/Guardians,

**Re: Designation of Students Attending Spanish Bilingual Program**

We have been working with parents to address the challenge of trying to accommodate students living in the Dalhousie attendance area registering for the Spanish Bilingual program at Dalhousie School. You are receiving this letter because you have a child currently in grades K-2 at Dalhousie School who is designated, based on residential community, to attend W. O Mitchell School and you were not able to attend a parent meeting at Dalhousie School on January 21, 2016. Like the parents at this meeting, we are hoping you can assist us in the student accommodation process.

The Calgary Board of Education recognizes the importance of programs of choice and the interest in Spanish Bilingual programming. In working to accommodate interest in the program, in 2014 the CBE began offering Spanish Bilingual programming at W.O. Mitchell School. The program began as Kindergarten and Grade 1, and has been expanding by an additional grade each year. Next year W.O. Mitchell School will offer a K-3 Spanish Bilingual. It is anticipated that the school will be K-4 in 2017-2018 and expand to K-5 programming in the 2018-2019 school year.

When the program opened at W.O. Mitchell School, students from several communities attending Dalhousie School were re-designated to W.O. Mitchell School. While every effort has been made to continue to accommodate out of attendance area students at Dalhousie School, the school is now approaching capacity. To ensure that there is space available at Dalhousie School for students residing in the school attendance area we need to limit “out of boundary” student enrolment.

Families of students eligible for kindergarten in 2016-2017, living in the communities listed below and wishing to access Spanish Bilingual programming are requested to register at W.O. Mitchell School.

<i>Bowness</i>	<i>Varsity</i>	<i>Crestmont</i>	<i>Valley Ridge</i>
<i>Parkdale</i>	<i>Rocky Ridge</i>	<i>Royal Oak</i>	<i>West Hillhurst*</i>
<i>Tuscany</i>	<i>Scenic Acres</i>	<i>Silver Springs</i>	<i>(*west of Crowchild)</i>

At the parent engagement meeting held at Dalhousie School January 21, 2016 the Area I Director, supported by school principals and staff from the CBE planning department explained that the Calgary Board of Education is facing space and resource constraints regarding Spanish Bilingual Programs. We recognize that students in grades 4 and 5 from the above mentioned communities must attend Dalhousie School until the program at W.O. Mitchell is fully expanded. We also recognize that having children in different schools can be a challenge.

We need your help! We are asking parents with students currently in grades K, 1 and 2 living in the above mentioned communities, to consider moving their children to their designated school of W.O. Mitchell. This will help ensure that new students who live in the Dalhousie attendance area are more likely to be able to attend their designated Spanish Bilingual school.

As a large organization, the CBE is committed to working with families to make decisions in the best interest of their child's learning. If families with siblings do intend to register at W.O. Mitchell School, the CBE is needing to know this so that allowances can be made for those families making this move in the 2016-2017 school year. It is important for parents to know that current students in grades K-2 who are eligible to attend W.O. Mitchell School will need to make the change this year. **Parents should be aware that it is unlikely there will be space and resources available to accommodate student moves to W.O. Mitchell School after this year.**

If parents wish their child(ren) to remain at Dalhousie School, they do so as an 'out of boundary' student, remaining at Dalhousie School for the duration of the schools' grade configuration. This decision has implications for transportation as well as the standing of future siblings in the lottery process.

Students are eligible for transportation to their designated school if they live beyond the walk zone. "Out of boundary" students may be able to access transportation services as a "Conditional Rider". Conditional Rider status is not a guarantee from year to year. It is worth noting that charter bus service to the above listed communities will be discontinued as of June 30, 2018. Criteria for Conditional Riders includes:

- Must access an existing stop
- Must be room on an existing bus. Note: As fewer buses are required to transport fewer students in grades 4 and 5, there will be limited spaces for Conditional Riders.
- Must pay transportation fees. **Note:** fees will not be waived for Conditional Riders
- Must wait for written approval from transportation services before starting to ride the bus. Note: Approval may take until mid-October so alternative arrangements must be in place prior to approval or in the event that approval is not granted.

The CBE recognizes that all family situations are unique. If you are currently a family with an "out of boundary" student and were unable to attend the January 21, 2016 engagement session please contact Shelly Pynoo at Dalhousie School by Wednesday February 3, 2016 should you have questions. **Please complete the attached expression of interest and return this to the office at Dalhousie School by Wednesday, February 3, 2016 at 4:00 pm.**

**If you currently live in one of the communities listed above and you have students at Dalhousie in grades K-2, we would appreciate you considering having them attend W.O. Mitchell School.**

**For new student registration, if you do not return the Expression of Interest form by the above date it will be assumed that you are registering your kindergarten student elsewhere. Deadline for Kindergarten and Grade 1 registration at W.O. Mitchell and Dalhousie Schools is at noon on February 29, 2016.**

Thank you for continuing to work with us as we strive to accommodate families within the current reality. If you have questions or require additional information, please contact Shelly Pynoo, Principal or [accommodation@cbe.ab.ca](mailto:accommodation@cbe.ab.ca).

Sincerely

*Carrie Edwards*

Carrie Edwards  
Director, Planning & Transportation

*Brant Parker*

Brant Parker  
Area I Director