

# Calgary Board of Education

## South Mandarin Bilingual Expression of Interest

Report of Findings  
February 28, 2017

Prepared by:  
CBE Communications &  
Community Engagement



**Calgary Board  
of Education**

# Background

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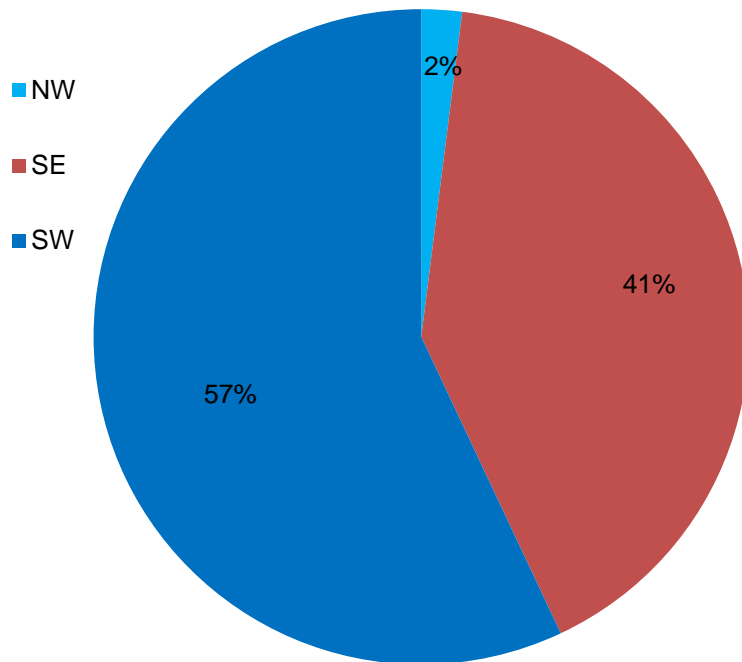
- ❖ To determine if it might be possible to offer a Mandarin Program at Harold Panabaker School in future, the CBE hosted an information session on Feb. 8, 2017 and made an online survey available to parents Jan. 30 - Feb. 24, 2017. Session participants were also able to complete the survey in writing.
- ❖ This report summarizes the interest expressed through these opportunities.
- ❖ The survey was partially completed online by a total of 492 people and fully completed by 392 people. Six additional people completed surveys at the Feb. 8 information session.

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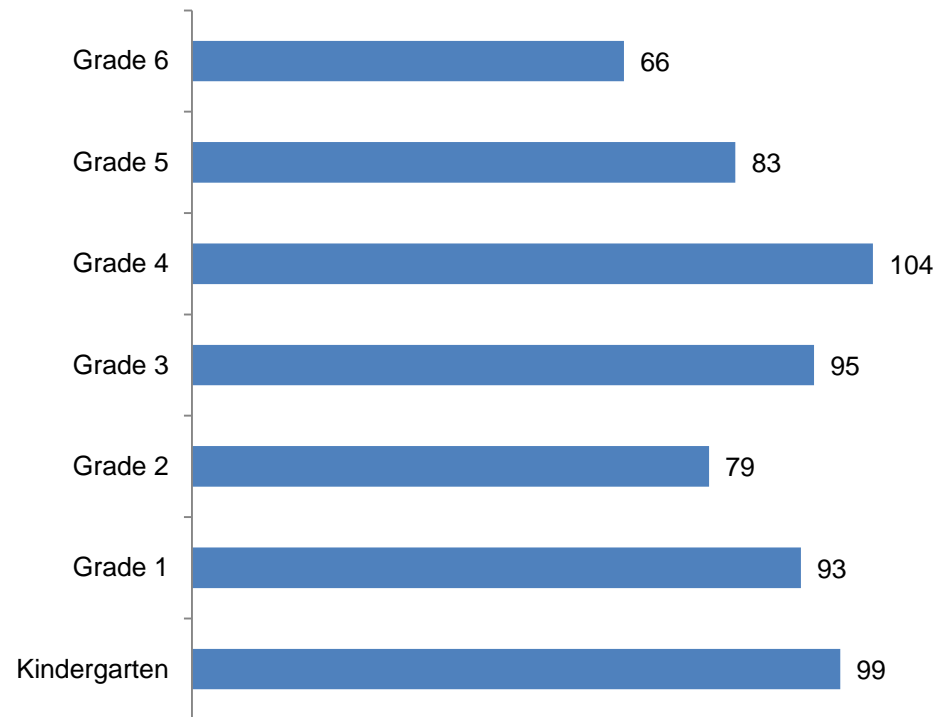
# About the Participants

# Respondent Profile

Please select the part of the city in which you live.  
Answered: 407



Grades of children (answered by 440):



How many children do you have currently attending a Mandarin Bilingual Program?  
Answered: 459

**209 students**

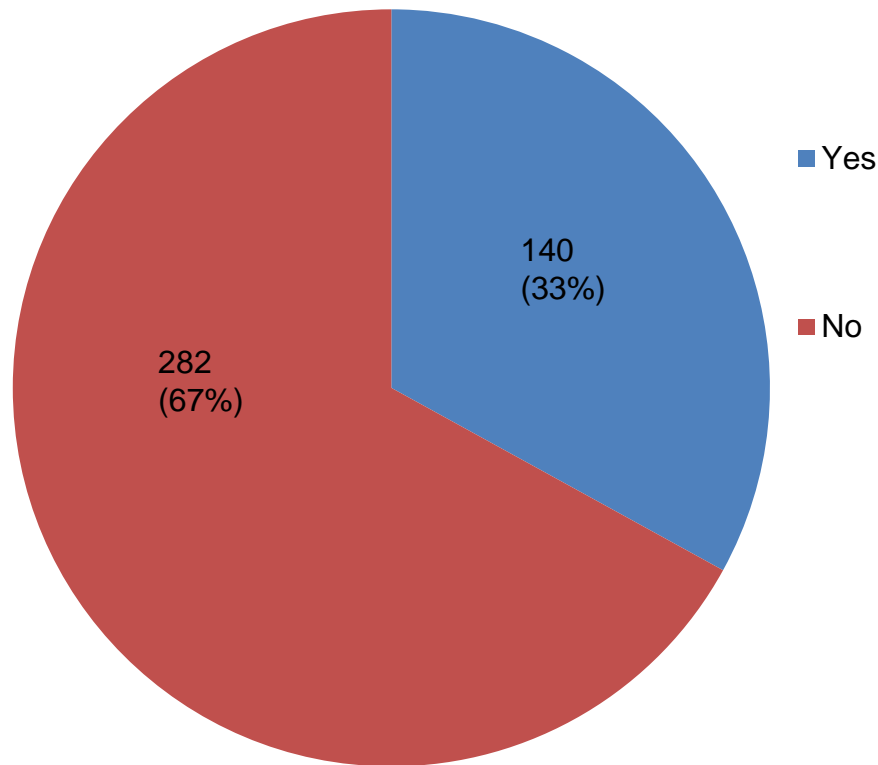
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# Main Findings

# Interest in Attending in 2017-18

*If the South Mandarin Bilingual Program was expanded to Grades 5-7 at Harold Panabaker School for 2017-18, would you register your children in the program for the 2017-18 school year?*

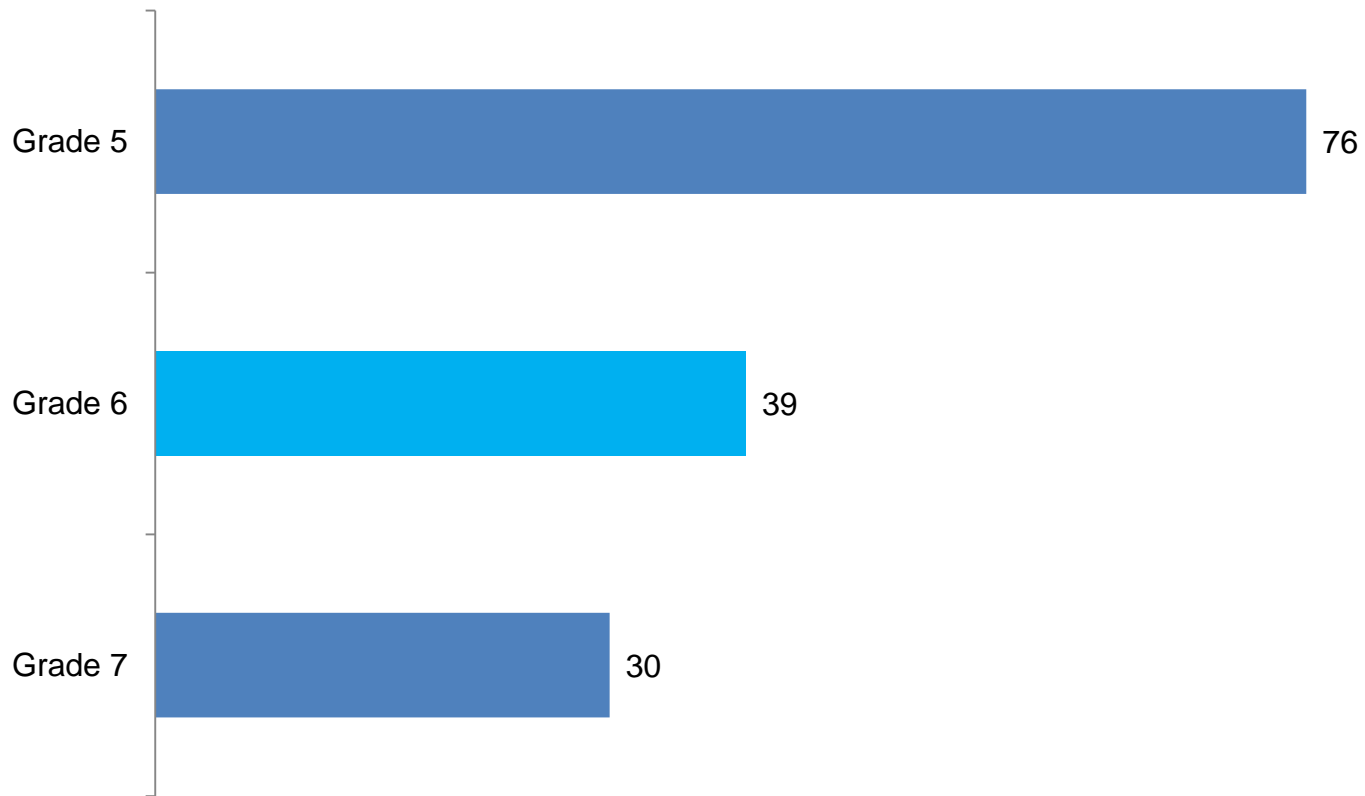
*Answered: 422*



# Grades of Interest for 2017-18

Please indicate the grades you would register your children in for the Mandarin Bilingual Program at Harold Panabaker for the 2017-18 school year (Grades 5-7)?

Answered: 133



# Interest for Future

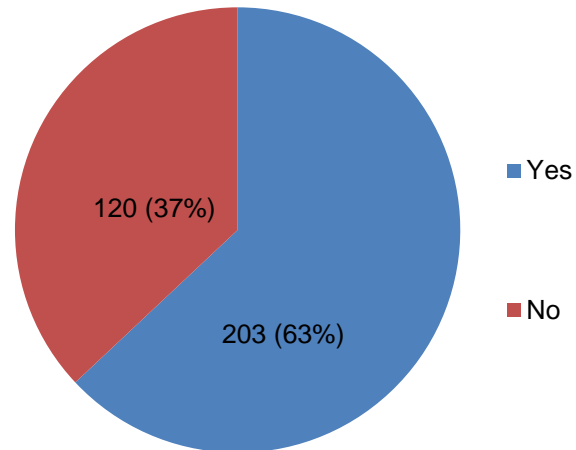
*How many of your children would you expect to attend the South Mandarin Program in future years if it was offered for Grades 7-9?*

*Answered: 395*

348 students

*If your children are currently enrolled in the Mandarin Bilingual Program, do you intend for them to continue in the program beyond Grade 6 (continue Mandarin Bilingual Program in Grades 7-9)?*

*Answered: 323*





# Survey Comments

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- ❖ Verbatim comments provided on the survey are included on the following pages. Comments have been edited to ensure anonymity. We also edited or omitted abusive, discriminatory and otherwise inappropriate comments.



## South Mandarin Bilingual Program Expression of Interest Online Survey Comments - Compiled Feb. 27, 2017

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Below you will find all comments provided in the survey as they were written. Comments have been edited to ensure anonymity. We also edited or omitted abusive, discriminatory and otherwise inappropriate comments.

- I think that the CBE should commit to opening the middle/junior high program at Harold Panabaker next year with the current numbers that exist in the Mandarin (south) program. Parents are watching to see what the CBE commitment to this program is. If there are only a few grade 7 students next year it could still work with creative programming. OR open it for the middle school next year (grades 5 and 6) and give the option for the few grade 7 students to go to the English program at Panabaker but be able to take Mandarin language arts as an Option. These grade 7 students are used to being in with the class below them as they have been for many years with split classes.
- I am astounded by what seems to be the CBE's lack of vision for this program. Opening the program in the south next year would show such a good faith commitment and it would make so many families want to STAY in the program and help recruit for the program. Potential recruits for the middle school years are apparently waiting to see whether there will first be a solid, stable program. Makes sense.
- Moving a middle school program to Panabaker for next year opens up space for more k/Gr 1 at Midnapore which should be the pattern if the CBE wants a strong middle school program. With a little advertising this program at the entry levels in the south could grow substantially.
- If the CBE doesn't move the middle program to Panabaker for the upcoming school program or at the very least commit this year that it will do it next year, I will consider pulling my kids from the south program and putting them in the North (cross boundary application or I would move). I live closer to both North schools now.
- I'd like to know the curriculum of the Mandarin program.
- It would be better if all CBE school has the option for multiple Languages.
- My kids learn Mandarin in Yufeng Chinese School every weekend, that school is also in Harold Panabaker School, so if this bilingual program move to Harold Panabaker School, it is very close to my house, so we want switch my kids to this wonderful program! Thank you very much!
- We would like to encourage CBE to have a junior high Chinese bilingual school in southern of Calgary!
- Mandarin program should be kept in Midnapore School.
- China for the development of world economy more and more important, I hope my daughter to master another language
- I believe the mandarin program will be more and more needed in the future.
- I would like myou kid to learn different languages like French should be an asset. And I don't mind him learning more languages Mandarin
- This is an interesting and valuable or program supporting cultural diversity in our city.
- please hire good standing of mandarin programme teachers
- it will be a great program



- I feel that small focus groups (i.e. Mandarin Expression) should not be part of public education. Those who wish to provide their children with extra language education should have to do so at their own expense. Taxpayers should not be shouldering this expense. This would provide more education funding for core subjects.
- I like my children to continue the Manderine bilingual programme
- Second language is very important
- Do you still learn language art even though your in the mandarin program.
- Bilingual education is really good program for young children to learn, more benefit to their bright future.
- Mandarin is a key element in Chinese communit. In south Calgary, there are more and more Chinese families. To have a complete Chinese-English bilingual program in the South is critical for all of the Chinese families!
- I want to keep my child in Midnapore to finish at least grade 5 (2017/2018) before moving to Harold Panabaker school in (2018/2019). So there will be a larger cohort and not be the youngest kid in a 300+ junior school community.
- My daughter is 3 years old, I definitely hope she can go to this program from kindergarten to grade 9.
- Knowing that CBE is thinking to have a school in south to host the Mandarin Program for grade 5 and above is very encouraging.
- Promoting more information to parents.
- Add chinese class in differrent school so children can choose that as second lauguge like french or spinish
- It is important to support future labor market requirement of Canada
- Chinese is one Of the most important languages
- It is important to have the mandarin program available for Grade 6 and beyond located in South Calgary.
- As French is the second official language in Canada I would really like if my children have the opportunity to learn French at school. Thank you
- WE REALLY NEED MANDARIN BILINGUAL SCHOOL IN THE SOUTH AREA FOR OUR KIDS, PLEASE MAKE IT HAPPEN. THANKS!
- I would like to see more than one additional language option, especially European languages.
- As parents, we would like to see our children to go Mandrain bilingual learning until Grade 12.
- Why the expansion for Mandarin and not Spanish
- Non-official language programs should be an alternative, not a default.
- Many people do not know this survey, but will join the program after the program starts.
- A mandarin school in central Calgary since we have so many other alternative schools there already. Why not have a central mandarin school for central Calgary, our designated one is a 40min each way, so we could not go and send our kids, simply put travel time was too much, we would of loved to send our kids if the school was closer.
- None
- Please open the school,I don't want my son stop learning chinese.thank you.
- if grade 5-9 couldnt open ahead, how cbe can expect more kids remain in this prograss ending up no future
- The Mandarin program is crucial for providing our kids the tools to be successful as global leaders of tomorrow.



- If the school can provide IB program, that will be better.
- I do really hope there is Madarin Bilingual program for Grade 7 - 9 in South Calgary because my family living in Auburn Bay & Seton. I appreciate your consideration and kindness for our children.
- We do not need this programm
- No
- My children already have the foundation of Mandarin. It would be a waste and shame that they have no option to continue Manearin in south part of Calgary as CBE started this program back in 5 years ago.
- Please ensure the teacher is responsible, with above average experience. Please watch closely with the PAT in 2017 for Midnapore.
- I strongly believe that more and more children will attend Mandarin program in future.
- If mandarine is wanted, it should be a paid for by the family just like extra curricular, like music kessonns, or hockey. Cbe should not be funding this.
- Actually we prefer our kids stay in Midnapore school until Grade 6. Then they can move to another school for Junior high. Thanks a lot
- CBR is supposed to advertise this program to make more people be aware of it.
- To grow up Mandarin program, the expansion for grade 5-9 is necessary, while the original numbers of students should be negotiated.
- school bus route
- We need one Mandarin Bilingual middle school in South
- I was hoping the French would have stayed
- I would love my kids to learn French rather than mandarin.
- Hire qualified teachers that are good at teaching elementary aged children.
- It would be nice to have French offered in some capacity starting in kindergarten. Everywhere!
- They should move the mandarin program to Col Macleod more central for everyone.
- We should move to colonel Macleod and have a school that supports k-9 Mandarin program. It will help the program to have a school that can plant roots and grow
- This is not important for us at all.
- In order to keep current k-6 student in the Mandarian program, I'd like to have CBE to give us a clear path forward to have this program continued until grade 9.
- I know lots of parents want to send their children to this bilingual program as much as they can
- I don't see the need for Mandarin in public schools. We can have private programs for this if people are interested.
- Before we register our children to Mandarin bilingual program in grade 7 to 9, they suppose to have foundation of the language in elementary school.
- I think this is a waste of resources and puts un-needed pressure on the rest of the CBE schools. If parents want their kids to learn mandarin they should be paying for it at a private school.
- None
- I think the should focus on bringing indigenous language to schools
- It is good to learn Chinesse language because we get a lot of influence from Chinesse
- MANDARIN CLASS DURING GRADE 5-12 IS GOOD FOR STUDENTS



# dialogue)))

- Learning any additional language is beneficial for children. I highly recommend this program.
- Not interested in the program.
- It's great that this is an available option for those who are interested.
- The students in the affected grades being transferred currently at Panabaker have already been subject to at least three CBE re-zoning shuffles between kindergarten and Grade 7. The CBE should instead introduce the Mandarin program at Woodman and give the Panabaker children some semblance of stability and consistency in their CBE education.
- We believe a Spanish or French program to be far more beneficial than Mandarin. Especially if the children need to "qualify" to attend.
- No thank you
- If the school is closer to my home, we may send our kid to the mandarin bilingual school. It's 30 minutes just driving. I don't want the kid to be on the school bus for 45 minutes to 1 hour each way every day.
- I think that the Calgary Board of Education should focus on making the public school system the best it can be. If families want their children to learn mandarin, they should pursue extra-curricular language classes. I am very much against a publicly funded mandarine program.
- We await a unique single-track program for French Immersion in SE Calgary.
- This should be a language option open to earlier grades .
- If parents want their kids to learn mandarin they should hire a tutor. I prefer focus regular curriculum.
- I think it's important to continue the program for students who lives in the south.
- 1. The numbers for the expansion, the number of registrants is too high given the realistic number of students in the current program.
  2. CBE has not accounted for the natural language attrition rate at an elementary school level between kindergarten and grade 6 as well as the current students enrolled. The numbers are unjust. The expectation is more than double current enrollment.
  3. CBE has not provided any other logical alternatives to study Mandarin in the south side of Calgary either. No other Jr or Middle school even offers Mandarin courses.
  4. Schools in Edmonton that run the bilingual program along side other programs, offer late entry and language courses for students starting later eg. grade 4,5,7 starts. They also do not teach math in Mandarin which makes it attractive to families that may already be struggling in math and then trying to learn the most difficult language.
  5. Junior high Bilingual schools are still given the 70/30 split however it is options and Mandarin Language Arts that fill the 30% instruction in Mandarin.  
The program should be allowed to expand regardless of the number of registrants as long as there is enough for a class and Principle is willing to work with program. The following groups of kids will increase number given time.
  6. Harold Panabaker school needs also to increase their numbers to make things cost effective and the school more productive.
  7. If CBE does not expand it sept 2017, it shows little faith in the program and leaves many families with uncertainty & frustration.
  8. Just because this is a small group to begin with does not mean they are irrelevant students and opportunity to continue their mandarin program should suffer. Even the north program had started off their first class with less than 20 students in grade 7. Edmonton program as well back in the 80's.



9. This is a language program that is difficult and can not be just left out and considered later on, students progress would decline significantly. Mandarin is not a phonetic based language. No continuity in the immediate future would cripple the kids language development completely.

- I am curious if they could attend not having any previous exposure to mandarin?
- I think the CBE needs to stop overspending on diversified education. And sharpen the focus to retooling education so that all children have teachers that can accommodate their learning styles. Kids don't request all these special programs.
- the systems works in edmonton for 30 years
- The current school year there are over 50 students enrolled in the kindergarten grade, many of us believe expansion of the Mandarin Bilingual program in the south continued to increase the enrollment in the future year.
- He will only continue in the bilingual program if there is a school in the south.
- I would like my kid attend English Mandarin Bilingual Program but it really depend on the school location.
- It is really hard to get 40 students for grade 5 and grade 6 for school year 2017 - 2018. Thanks for the hard work to identify Harold Panabaker school but I hope the CBE can continue this program for grade 5 and grade 6 and 7 regardless the student no. This will give hope to the mandarin students
- this demand will keep growing in the future considering the expansion of new communities in the south
- I strongly expect to expanded the South Mandarin Program to Grades 7-9 at Midnapore school in future.
- It would be great if mandarin would be taught in our school, but not as a bilingual program.
- We think it's great to have a bilingual-school. The reason I chose not to register is because the school is far away from our house and I don't want the kids spend so much time on the way everyday. So I hope that Mandarin bilingual program can be expanded to more schools.
- I would prefer my children (Woodlands) to go to Woodman.
- Stop multilingual programs
- Not interested
- I think we our taxes and resources are spread to thin to add another bilingual program
- I don't think mandarin is important for my kids. No need to register for .
- We are not interested in this program. However, we wish our elementary school provided basic French programming in the school. As it currently does not.
- I just wish it was offered sooner at my daughters school so she could have attended - I think this is a great opportunity and a language very worthwhile learning, especially for future business.
- Concentrate efforts and resources on French and English.
- Not interested in my children learning Mandarin, I'd rather focus them towards French.
- I do NOT agree with the CBE offering bilingual education in any language that is not an official language of Canada. If people want their kids to learn other languages, they should be putting them in private education for that.
- The CBE is trying to be too many things to too many people. I think you should focus on providing better quality core programs before you expand.



# dialogue)))

- In this day and age with limited monies for school activities, teacher time, etc we should be focusing resources on basic education, amenities and activites (including sports, libraries, books, supplies and other activities)
- I just feel like there are other languages that should be learned first
- Not interested in this at all
- This is why the CBE charges me over \$300/child for bus fees, because of inefficiencies in bussing kids to "special" schools all over Calgary.
- Keep Mandrain program forever.
- I do not believe the school board should be putting resources towards this program. The monies for this program should be put toward already thinning resources and used for the "greater good "
- It is a good chance to learn mandarin at school other than at home. They have more chances to speak or writing which is good.
- My son is on grade 3 now and wish to continue the program to at least grade 6.
- Focus on english.
- If my child learns other language I think good to him to know and learn something new.
- My kid is currently in Haysboro community school. I am wondering if I can get any home school material to teaching him mandarin at home on the side? Thanks!
- It is very important to us that our children study and learn any given subject at an advanced enough level that they are proficient in that subject. We enrolled our children in the Mandarin program with the intent for our children to learn Mandarin as their second language. We do not consider learning only up to grade 6 Mandarin sufficient and although there may be the option to continue into the Junior High Mandarin program located centrally in Calgary I do not consider this fair opportunity for my children. In order for us to attend a school so far away we would absolutely need to cut our after school activities. Had I known that the South Mandarin Elementary school would not continue with a South Mandarin Junior high school I would not have enrolled my children in the South Mandarin program. I feel very disheartened knowing that we could have gone to FFCA or TLC or even a private school and that we cannot get that time that we invested into the Mandarin program back.
- I would kindly ask you to reconsider your requirements for student enrolment. Though I understand that you do need to look at student enrolment and financial feasibility I stress that this is the education of our children and not a business. (Even so, 90% of businesses in their infant years will be at a loss for the first 3 years before they become a viable and profitable business.) The want and need for Mandarin as a second language is growing and our enrolment in the younger grades will absolutely support the program in the future. HOWEVER, if you choose to limit the South Mandarin program growth now, our program will lose it's strength and support from existing parents with the uncertainty of their children's educational future. In turn, you will be left with a program that will not grow leading to a failing model that does not support the goals that the CBE had set forth for all students. Again, I urge you to dismiss your enrolment requirements as this does not seem right for the students who want the opportunity to continue in the Mandarin program.
- The student numbers for the high school to be began cannot be the key factor to be considered. It was limit the beginning K- numbers( 50), so it is very normal to have the current 8 students situation.
- thank you for this great program



# dialogue)))

- We need to continue a Mandarin Immersion program in the south and advertise it's availability to the public. About 95% of the population I speak to DO NOT KNOW THERE IS A MANDARIN IMMERSION SCHOOL IN SOUTH CALGARY. Often they do not know there is a Mandarin Immersion school AT ALL.
- hope Panabaker school to offer good extra curriculum or enhanced programs between 3-5 pm during week days, if possible.
- CBE needs to commit to the program regardless of enrollment in order for more families to make their commitments.
- Besides French, I would like my kid to learn Mandarin. However, I would like him to learn the traditional Chinese (those used in Taiwan and Hong Kong) rather than simplified Chinese.
- The current mandarin school is too far but we would seriously consider the new location.
- My children will only continue in the Mandarin Bilingual program if there is a south middle school. If there is not one, I will pull them out of the program as I refuse to put them on the bus to drive 45 minutes to 2 hours(dependent on traffic and weather ) each way to attend the north middle Mandarin biligual school.
- It is important for my child to continue with Mandarin in a middle school/ junior high level, even if it is no longer bilingual, but rather a mandarin language arts class.
- Mandarin options should be available to more cbe junior highs and elementary schools
- It is really important for the program that a commitment is made so parents can feel confidence that it will continue and be able to make decisions based on certainty and not unceratainty.
- Our children are in French Immersion and we see great value in a variety of language programs being offered. We would have been interested in this Mandarin program if we had known more about it and if it was more centrally located.
- You need to focus on French. If parents want their kids to learn other languages then they should pay outside of the current curriculum
- Can there please be a late-immersion Mandarin program?
- My concern is that Woodbine and Woodlands is being decided between JW and HP. With this new integration I would be worried that there wouldn't be chance that French or Spanish would be offered as a second language and that the enrollment will be to high after thee Woodcreek debate. I want French offered at both JW and HP (or Spanish)
- I am very interesting in this program for my kids whose age are 2 and 6 now.
- It takes time for child to learn Manderian, they usually speak English at school. Time, effort and patience are important to learn language.
- CBE should focus on providing a quality education for all kids
- I think offering Mandarin is an extremely valuable asset to southwest Calgary.
- Focus money and resources on teaching French and English.
- I already have my grade 5 student taking private mandarin lessons as it's not offered at any schools near me.
- Beside mandarin French should also be taught from grade one and not in French immersion but also in public schools... it's good to be a bilingualism...
- I would like to see the introduction of Mandarin in the TLC program, particularly in Glamorgan school
- Concern about integration between Mandarin Bilingual students and regular program students at HP. Will they be able to speak to each other?





# dialogue)))

- Will continue with program (question7) only if south location committed and launched '17. Otherwise will accept placement for kids at private school to continue learning and language options.
- While my children are too young to attend this school immediately, we are enrolled in the Chinese Academy and would be very eager to have a Chinese-language program closer to our community of Springbank Hill.
- South should have its own middle school
- We believe that mandarin program is highly valuable and there is a large population south of Fish Creek that has great interest in nearby schooling.
- A south Calgary Mandarin Bilingual site is very important to me and my family.
- I would love to see a middle school south of Glenmore Trail. If there is not one, we will not continue in Mandarin bilingual program because I feel the commute is too far for kids in Bridlewood.
- This program is very high quality and is important for the future. More and more kids need to be learning mandarin. I don't want this program to fold or be interrupted as this would be detrimental to their education if they couldn't actually acquire a language proficiently.
- those schools are far from us
- I am concerned that the increasing number of CBE schools with special focus diverts funds and emphasis on regular CBE schools, increased busing costs and is not needed.
- Why are you expanding this when we need more basic services??? You can't be everything to everyone!!!!
- The only uncertainty for us is that whether the program will be extended to grade 8 and 9. We don't want our son to change school again after the program is over in grade 7.
- Please do not spend resources on this program.
- Please don't offer this.
- N/A
- I don't think public money should be used to fund schooling in languages which are not Canada's official languages. The CBE is already unable to provide adequate French Immersion programs (the FI school in my neighbourhood is over capacity and in a lottery situation).
- I am very interested in a Mandarin immersion program for our son (currently 4), however, the location of current schools creates a transportation and logistics challenge. Including Harold Panabaker would certainly be helpful and would improve our feasibility to participate
- there was an error with my earlier comments that were submitted before being completed; apologies, and please accept these comments in replacement.  
The CBE needs to consider the best interests of the children currently attending the south Mandarin Bilingual program, which is a continuing Mandarin Bilingual program in the SW. The CBE's processes relating to the manner in which a continued middle school Mandarin Bilingual program are being evaluated, and the milestones that need to be achieved, are unfair, as access to the program, including promotion of the program, deadlines for expressions of interest and enrollment, are not aligned with those relating to other CBE programs (i.e. TLC, Science, other language programs), all of which the CBE has been far more active in promoting and building. The result is that the CBE is creating a "sure-to-fail" environment for a continuing Mandarin Bilingual south middle school program by requiring parents of children that may have otherwise enrolled in the 5-7 grades for Mandarin bilingual in the south electing to enrol their children in a different program because of the certainty of the other program and the uncertainty of the



Mandarin bilingual program in the SW. In that regard, the uncertainty ties directly to the fact that, if there is not a middle grade Mandarin program in the SW, those children interested in continuing with middle grade Mandarin Bilingual schooling will be required to attend in the NW, which is a completing unreasonable proposition that essentially all of the parents of children currently enrolled in the south Mandarin bilingual program vehemently oppose.

- The CBE has created this situation through the course of decisions over the past several years, dating to beginning the south Mandarin Bilingual program with a small number of students. Throughout the life of the program there have been promises of a continuing Mandarin Bilingual program for middle year students at the appropriate time. That time is now. A location has been determined, staff resources are available and there is interest (if, nothing else, among the existing parents and students of the Mandarin Bilingual program). Stop making excuses and designate the program to HP for September, 2017. If the CBE actually committed to this program and showed support for it, the program will continue to blossom and succeed.
- Since my kids have never had a chance to enter a bilingual program, it's unfair to require them to pass a proficiency assessment measuring their language literacy levels in Mandarin.
- If there is no continues Grade 7-9 Mandarin program available, we will not consider to have the younger one go to Grade 1-6 Mandarin program. Please consider better location and resources for providing Mandarin Education in Calgary, especially South Calgary.
- Kids would learn Mandarin more effectively and happily if the Chinese program are more introduced at scholl
- I would only be able to register my child in the Mandarin program in grades 7-9 if there is an south side option.
- Very passionate about our children and this program. There is a great opportunity for the CBE to offer a world class program in Mandarin that's accessible to many throughout the City of Calgary.
- The location of the program is the key in order to reach the desired enrollment. CBE should consider to set the Mandarin Bilingual program at Evergreen Mid-school, instead of Harold Panabaker. Then the required enrollment will not be a problem.
- Our children have started in the French immersion program and so we will be keeping them with their friends. However, if the middle school location had been identified earlier we would have considered registering our children in the mandarin program.
- We want another Traditional School option for our children in the deep south.
- I do not believe we should be offering Mandarin in our schools as a curriculum choice. Spend money on existing programs.
- We want our Children continue to attend at this program
- Why are we spending pecious tax monies...of which the CBE seems to have a never-ending thirst for...on teaching outside the two official languages of this country
- It is essential and traditionally important for us to help our kids to maintain mandarin level to understand the culture we come from and communicate with their extended families in China and here. My parents did not speak English and I am truly worried about my son would lose ability to communicate with them one day.
- Our family has been living overseas for 6 years. When we decided to return to Canada we settled on Calgary because the Mandarin program provided our children the opportunity to continue learning in a Mandarin bilingual setting.
- Focus spending on official languages.



# *dialogue*)))

- Fully support this program - thank you for offering it!!
- Not a necessary taxpayer-funded program
- There is no reason to spend public tax dollars on these kinds of programs.
- Start the program for 5-7 even with a smaller number would be a great push to bring the program to be successful.
- Please continue this great program, do not give up!
- Thank you so much for your work to create a mutually acceptable and sustainable solution for the Mandarin South Program. Thank you for hearing us - proficiency in Mandarin is a privilege for my daughter to be able to obtain.