

Highwood School

**Chinese (Mandarin)
Bilingual Program**

Kindergarten- Grade 4



Calgary Board of Education

Our Program

The Chinese (Mandarin) Bilingual Program provides students with the opportunity to acquire the basic skills in speaking, reading, writing, and listening to be able to communicate in both English and Mandarin at a young age.

This program does not require parents or students to have previous knowledge of the language. Teachers provide many supports so that non-native Mandarin speakers are able to succeed in acquiring the language.





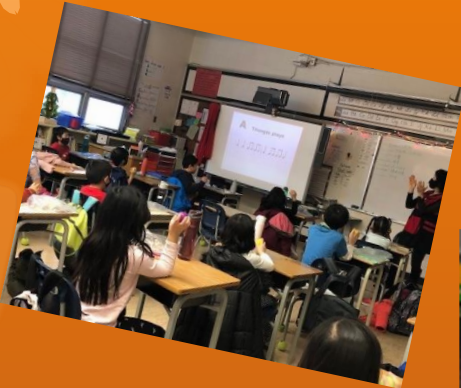
Mandarin/English Content



- **50/50**
 - **Mandarin: Mandarin Language Arts, Math, Science**
 - **English: English Language Arts, Social Studies, Health**
- **Simplified Chinese script is taught to enhance the learner's understanding of the rich culture and history which the language represents.**
- **The Han Yu Pin Yin pronunciation system is taught to accelerate the process in learning the target language.**

Specialists

Music

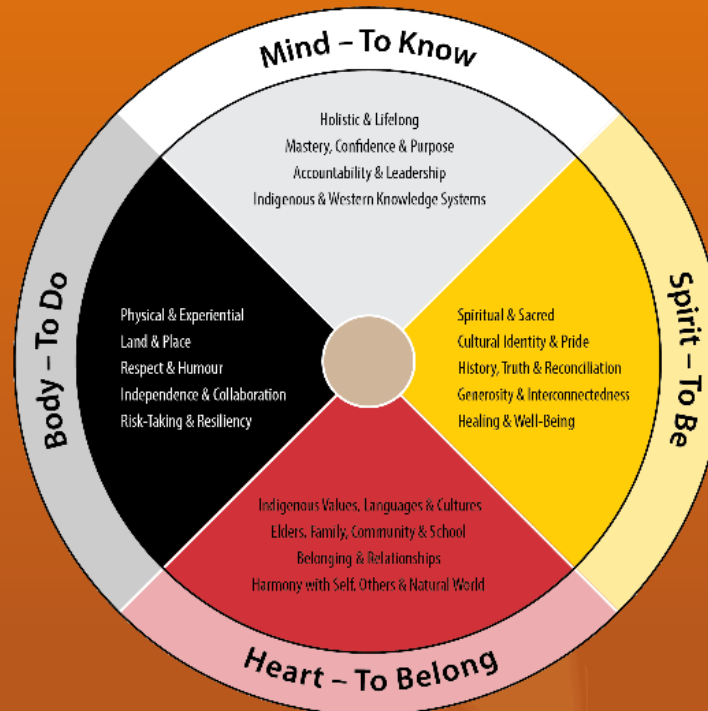


Physical Education



Character Education

Teaching students to be virtuous citizens of the world is just as important as teaching language and academics. We have integrated our Character Education program with Indigenous Education. We have adopted the CBE's Indigenous Holistic Lifelong Learning Framework.



Giving Back



12 Days of Giving



Veterans Food Drive



VETS Canada & Poppy Fund



Terry Fox Run

Spirit Day

Every month we have a Spirit Day where the entire school engages in some fun and school spirit!



Orange & Black Day



**Superhero
Day**



Crazy Hair and Hat Day



Jersey Day



Pajama Day

In School Activities and Field Trips



Fort Calgary



**Telus Spark
Science Centre**



**K-2 Swimming
Lessons**



**Grade 3 & 4
Skating Lessons**



Constable Rich



**Climbing
Centre**

Chinese Cultural Celebrations



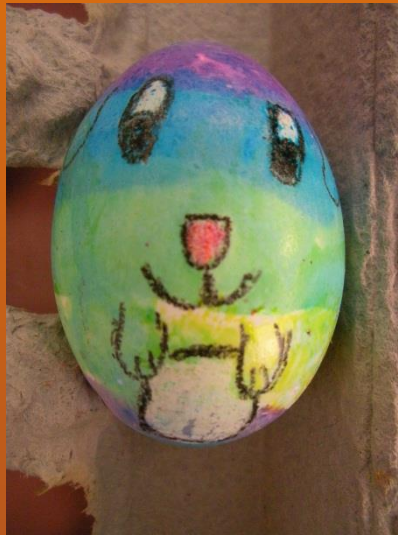
Mid-Autumn Festival



Canadian Celebrations



Halloween



Easter



Christmas

Lunar New Year



Is this program the right fit for your child?

- **Is your child a risk taker and willing to try to speak a new language?**
- **Can your child sit for a prolonged amount of time?**
- **Can your child handle repetition?**
- **Is your child able to memorize Chinese characters where there is no strategy of 'sounding out'?**
- **Is your child able to memorize strokes and stroke order to write Chinese characters?**
- **Does your family have time every night dedicated to homework?**
- **As parents, are you able to provide the time to support your child at home with reading, writing, and homework?**
- **As parents, do you have the time to check Google Classroom with your child every evening?**

Transportation and Program Fees

- **If you are designated to Highwood School, and live outside of the walk zone, bussing will be provided to you. As an alternative program, students will use congregated stops and pay a user fee.**
- **Bus maps and schedules will not be released until summer of 2025. As an alternative program, students will access congregated stops.**
- **Bus routes, times, and stops dependent on the completed forms that they receive. You can only use your home address.**
- **Highwood School shares bussing with Colonel Irvine Jr. High (currently housing Mandarin Bilingual Grade 5-9 program)- as a result, both schools have the same schedules (i.e. days off, start and end times)**

Kids Come First



- **Before and after school care that provides half day kindergarten care for kindergarten students, as well as before and after school care for all K-4 students.**
- **Please contact them at 403-241-3052 or kcf93@telus.net for more information as they lease the space and the program is NOT run by the Calgary Board of Education and Highwood School.**

Registering for Highwood School

If you are interested in having your child attend Highwood School for the 2025-2026 school year:

All registrations must be in by Tuesday, February 11th by NOON. All students **new** to CBE will register through SchoolEngage. If this is the first time your child will be attending a CBE school, you will need to create an account through SchoolEngage before registering. If you have another child(ren) already attending a CBE school, you will register the new student through your existing MyCBE account or one that you will create.

***Completing the registration form through School Engage does not guarantee acceptance into Highwood School. Official registration will not occur until your family receives an offer of acceptance.**

Lottery Process

- **All Alternative Expression of Interest forms must be in by noon on Tuesday, February 11th**
- **Lottery will take place the morning of Wednesday, February 12th**
- **All students registered will receive a letter indicating whether or not he/she was drawn in the lottery. Students who were drawn have until March 7, 2025 to accept or decline the spot.**
- **The lottery names will be drawn in the following order:**
 - 1. Students living in the walk zone with a sibling in the school in 2025-2026.**
 - 2. Students living in the walk zone with no sibling in the school and/or students living in the school's designated area with a sibling in the school in 2025-2026.**
 - 3. Students living in the catchment area with no sibling in the school.**
- **Those that did not receive an offer of acceptance will be drawn for the wait list. You will receive a letter indicating where you are located on this list. Call backs occur all the way up to the first week of September.**

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Is my child old enough to attend Kindergarten or Grade One?

A: Kindergarten: Children born between September 2019 and August 2020 qualify to register for 2025-2026 kindergarten. Children born between September 2020 to December 2020 have the option of attending kindergarten in 2025-2026 or 2026-2027. Grade One: Students born in January-August 2019 are eligible to attend Grade One.

Q: What documentation do I need to register? Can I use my driver's license?

A: When you complete your online registration form, you will be required to upload a proof of address, proof of citizenship, and a picture of yourself holding a government issued picture ID.

Q: If I don't get into Highwood, what should I do?

A: You need to register at your community English school. But don't lose hope! Often people move or decide not to attend Highwood and we end up calling off the waitlist, even in early September! If we end up calling you after you've registered at another school, it is as simple as transferring your registration over to Highwood School... something we take care of.

If you aren't accepted in Kindergarten, you can enter the Grade One lottery the following year. For entry in Grades Two and above, an entrance exam needs to be completed to ensure that students are reading and writing at grade level in Chinese and English. Kindergarten and Grade One are the only two entrance points where students do not need to know the languages in order to be accepted into the program.

Q: If I don't get into Highwood, can I register at the other Chinese bilingual programs?

A: Each Chinese bilingual program only accepts registrations of students who live in the communities that are designated to them. CBE's website ("find a school") provides information as to which school is your designated Chinese bilingual program when you enter information about your home address.

Q: How many spots are you drawing for in Kindergarten and Grade One?

A: At Highwood, there are 50 spots for Monday, Wednesday, and some Fridays kindergarten (2 classes), and 25 spots for Tuesday, Thursday, and some Fridays kindergarten (1 class).

The number of Grade Ones that will be drawn in the lottery varies from year to year. It all depends on how many current kindergarten students decide not to continue with the program in Grade One or have moved. In the past, it has been less than 10 spots.

Q: How will I be notified if my child was accepted or not?

A: The lottery draw takes place on the morning of Wednesday, February 14, 2024. It is done completely anonymously by a number randomizer and is verified for fairness by the school council chair and principal. Once the lottery has been completed, we try our best to email families that afternoon about the results. **PLEASE DO NOT CALL US!** Even if you do not get drawn in the lottery, we will send you an email telling you your spot on the wait list. If you do get drawn, you will need to notify the school by March 14 as to whether you accept or decline the spot.

Q: What are the chances of my child getting in?

A: It is impossible for us to answer this question as it depends on how many people register for the program. Because CBE uses the following categories for the lottery, the higher category your child is in, the higher the chance of being accepted.

Category 1: Students who live in the walk zone and have a sibling that will attend Highwood School in the 2025-2026 school year.

Category 2: Students who live in the walk zone (with no sibling at Highwood) and students who live in a community designated to Highwood and have a sibling attending Highwood in the 2025-2026 school year.

Category 3: Students who live in a community that is designated to Highwood School.

*NOTE: If the student has a sibling that attends Colonel Irvine School in the 2024-2025 school year, this DOES NOT qualify them for categories 1 and 2. The sibling must be at Highwood School in the 2025-2026 school year.

Once you've been accepted into Highwood, you automatically progress to the next grade. You do not need to keep reapplying each year once you are a Highwood student.

Q: What if I need childcare on the days that my child does not attend Kindergarten and on PD days?

A: Kids Come First is the onsite childcare operator that provides care on the days that kindergarten students do not have classes, as well as childcare before and after school. They can be reached at kcf93@telus.net or 403-241-3052

Q: How do I know if my child is suitable for the Chinese bilingual program?

A: You truly won't know until you try it! But understand that students that are risk takers and are willing to make an effort tend to experience more success. Due to the nature of the Chinese language, students should be able to sit for a longer period of time and be willing to practice writing Chinese characters over and over again in order to learn it.



Q: What if no one in my household knows Chinese and are unable to help my child?

A: No problem! The teachers provide many supports for students and parents during in-class lessons and post useful websites, games, and strategies on their Google Classrooms.

Q: What is the difference between a bilingual program and immersion program?

A: In the CBE, only French is offered as an immersion program. Immersion programs teach French to students 100% of the day from Kindergarten to Grade Two. In Grade Three, they begin to receive some English instruction. In the Chinese, Spanish, and German bilingual programs, students learn English for 50% of the day and the other language for 50% of the day from Kindergarten to Grade Six.

Q: Why is kindergarten a full day (alternating days) program?

A: Since CBE has eliminated mid-day kindergarten bussing, this made it difficult for many parents to provide their own transportation in the middle of the day if there was half day kindergarten. With full day kindergarten (alternating days), students have access to bussing before and after school (for a fee). Since students are at school for the full day, they will eat lunch at school and will therefore be a noon supervision fee. Bussing and noon supervision fees have not been determined at this time.

Q: What happens after my child completes Grade Four at Highwood School?

A: Students who finish Grade Four at Highwood School are automatically transferred to Grade Five at Colonel Irvine School. Colonel Irvine School houses the Grades Five to Nine Chinese bilingual program and is conveniently located right next to Highwood School. Because they are our sister school, Highwood and Colonel Irvine Schools share all school busses and have the same school calendar. Therefore if there are siblings at both schools, they can take the bus together and have the same schedule/ days off.

Q: What subjects are taught in Mandarin and what subjects are taught in English?

A: Students registered in the Mandarin Program in grades K - 4 receive 50% of the Alberta curriculum in Mandarin (primarily Mandarin Language Arts, Mathematics and Science) and 50% in English (primarily English Language Arts and Social Studies) allowing students to build fluency in both languages.

Q. How do I register my child for bussing?

A: Please visit the Busing and Transportation page of the CBE website for information on bussing.

