

Chinese Mandarin an ideal choice as a second language

The Edmonton Journal

Published: Friday, January 06, 2006

In an interview with Scott McKeen ("Q&A: Mayor Stephen Mandel looks back at his first year in the big job...," The Journal, Jan. 2) the mayor recognizes that Edmonton has the best public education in Canada and he is setting up a China desk to expand economic links with China.

Edmonton Public Schools has been recognized as the most innovative education district in North America and our "made-in-Edmonton" Chinese bilingual program is the most comprehensive Chinese language program outside of China.

The Edmonton Chinese Bilingual Education Association has supported Chinese Mandarin as a second language for almost 25 years. In fact, a few of our Chinese bilingual schools are twinned with schools in Beijing and Harbin.

Alberta Education's decision to have every Grade 4 student begin learning a second language this September places our schools in an enviable position. If you are looking for a challenging and rewarding program in which to place your children, look no further than any of the schools offering Chinese Mandarin: Caernarvon, Dovercourt, Meadowlark, Meyonohk and Kildare elementary schools. Students are accepted into kindergarten and Grade 1 without any prior knowledge of Chinese Mandarin. Contact the school of your choice for registration details after Chinese New Year on Jan. 29.

Students completing elementary school can easily move on to Rosslyn, Parkview, Ottewell and Londonderry junior high schools to continue studying Chinese language arts. McNally, Ross Sheppard and M.E. LaZerte high schools offer Chinese language arts at the International Baccalaureate level.

Edmonton's Chinese Bilingual Program is well-positioned to fulfill the branding that Mandel advocates.

Wei Wong, Edmonton Chinese Bilingual Education Association

© The Edmonton Journal 2006