



School District #39, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

Vancouver School Board

PARENT INFORMATION

EARLY MANDARIN BILINGUAL PROGRAM

JOHN NORQUAY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
SCHOOL DISTRICT # 39 (Vancouver)

Developed by:

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Program Description of Norquay's Early Mandarin Bilingual Program (EMB)

- Students are accepted into Norquay's EMB program at Kindergarten and grade 1 only. Students entering the program must be proficient in English.
- The EMB program provides students with opportunities to develop and maintain practical language skills in both Mandarin and English.
- Students will have the opportunity to develop the basic skills of listening, speaking, reading, writing, and communicating in both Mandarin and English.
- Promotes exploration, understanding and appreciation of the cultures and traditions of Mandarin-speaking world and contributes to multilingualism and multiculturalism.
- Students will be able to apply acquired Mandarin language skills in real life situations and environments.

What does Norquay's EMB Program look like?

At Norquay, the EMB program is taught by teachers who are specially trained to teach all subjects in Mandarin and English. The program is fluid where teachers interchange Mandarin and English throughout the day.

Subjects taught in Mandarin:

- Mandarin Language Arts (K-3 Traditional and 4-7 Simplified Mandarin)
- Arts Education
- Physical & Health Education
- Applied Design, Skills, and Technologies

Subjects taught in English:

- English Language Arts
- Math
- Science
- Social Studies
- Career Education

Even though the above subjects are determined by language, there is often integration of both languages.

Benefits of learning Mandarin

- Expands the intellect through learning both English and Mandarin
- Develops enhanced feelings of self-esteem due to pride in having acquired a tangible skill
- Supports students to be part of our global community and prepares them to be part of the new global community
- Inspires interest in and respect for people of other cultures and traditions
- Provides students with more choices for advanced education and career options
- Broadens students' cultural life through access to literature, art, music and theatre in another language

How is English impacted?

- Increases cognitive abilities, critical thinking, and creative thinking
- Develops an understanding of how languages work which leads to improve English literacy
- Enhances communication skills in students' first language
- Improves overall student performance
- Makes learning additional languages easier

Curriculum Expectations:

The Norquay EMB teachers are working to align the Mandarin expectations to that of the newly developed BC Ministry of Education Curriculum. This means that the learning is student-centered, literacy-based, competency driven, while at the same time, teachers are working to support learning in the following areas of language development: (see K – 5 Mandarin Curricular Framework)

Assessment:

At Norquay, the EMB teachers use various tools to assess students. Assessment is often done on a daily basis so that teachers can use this information to further inform their teaching to meet the individual needs of students. Summative assessments (tests, projects, presentations, etc) are sometimes used at the end of units or a learning series to ensure students have grasped the important knowledge, skills, and applications. Self and peer assessments are also used so that students can reflect on their own learning and to provide further information to the teacher. Assessment obtained throughout a term is then relayed to parents on the report cards.

How can parents support their child?

- Engage in conversations with your child's teacher regularly about your child's learning.
- Talk to your child frequently about what he/she is learning and to teach you some words and phrases in the new language. Practice together!
- Expose your child to a variety of Chinese language resources and culture. Such as visiting public library, watching videos, playing Chinese apps and internet games and eating in Chinese restaurants. Give them opportunities to practice outside of the classroom.
- Encourage your child to use and experiment with English and Mandarin. Children readily transfer skills from one language to the other.
- Encourage literacy skills through activities (word games, discussions, reading together, writing activities, shopping, dining out) to help enhance your child's communication skills in both languages.
- Read to your child in English every day!
- Be positive and be supportive in your discussions about school.
- Offer your child the chance to participate in community programs or events that provide opportunities to interact with native speakers of Mandarin and experience the culture.
- Encourage your child to interact with a relative or friend who speaks Chinese through visits, letters, telephone conversations or emails.