

MECCS

A newsletter for Mother Earth's Children's Charter School to share its successful traditional and innovative programming.

Mother Earth's Children's Charter School

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MECCS is on Facebook!



Find driving directions and more at www.meccs.org

Welcome to the Best Year Yet at MECCS

We want to welcome back all returning students and their families for another year of learning, caring and fun at school. Our results last year were the best ever, and we intend to do even better this year.

The school is now open for registration. You can drop in or call us at 780-702-7531. You can also contact Janet House, our Parent Liaison, at 780-340-1716, who will also have information about bussing. Classes start on August 31, 2016.

We have a great attendance incentive for the coming school year. Students who register at MECCS for the 2016/17 school year will automatically be eligible to receive one of our special edition 2016 hoodies. If a student is registered at the start of the year and attends regularly until October 14, they will receive one of these special hoodies at a full school assembly.

When a student registers at MECCS, the parent or guardian of that student will become eligible to earn



Our school has special guests like David Bouchard.

\$150 in gift cards from Superstore or Walmart. They will receive a gift card for each child registered at MECCS as long as the following eligibility criteria are met:

- Students must be registered by September 9, 2016.



We have outstanding teachers like Maxine Hildebrandt.

- Students must attend at least 80 per cent of the days between their registration date and October 14, 2016. That's an average of four times per week.

- All student paperwork must be up to date as of October 14, 2016. This includes signed registration forms and copies of student identification and treaty number, if applicable, on file, and up-to-date home contact information.

For more information or to obtain a registration package, please contact our Parent Liaison Janet House.

Why MECCS?

As parents and grandparents, we all want the same things for our children and grandchildren when they go to school.

We want them to learn and succeed in their academic subjects. We want them to graduate from high school and then compete and succeed in the work world as adults.

We want them to experience as many things as they can while they are growing up. We want school to be fun for them.

The fact is that our students like coming to this school. They like the way they are treated by adults and students. They like having a positive learning environment because these students like to excel at learning while having fun. Our students do well when they move on to high school as they develop into learners who are confident in their abilities.

Mother Earth's Children's Charter School has earned a reputation for being one of the best schools for First Nations students to learn and excel. Our academic results are among the best in Alberta for First Nations students. Our Alberta Education surveys show that students and parents feel the school provides a safe and caring environment as well as a broad range of programs for students.

Students like being at Mother Earth for a variety of reasons. They like the small classes, the personal attention they get from staff, the extra programs they are getting, and the hot breakfast and lunch program. They like the TransAlta Christmas where TransAlta employees in Calgary provide gifts for every student at MECCS and several of them come to the Christmas concert to distribute them.

Students also like to succeed academically. They know that the results we are getting at MECCS give them an excellent chance to succeed in the future. Students like the athletics program that sees them travel to and compete against area schools. Our students value the opportunities that they have received through our participation in student exchange programs. They also appreciate the field trips in which all grades participate.

An important part of the school charter calls for us to deliver a strong cultural component. Two afternoons per week are dedicated to that idea.

Stoney Language

We are once again offering students the opportunity to learn the Stoney language. The Stoney language is in danger of disappearing. It is only spoken by about 3,000 people (mostly Elders) and only in Alberta. It is a challenging language to learn, as it is very difficult to write.

Theresa Bird, a respected grandmother from the Paul First Nation, will be joining us once a week beginning in early fall to work with our young people. She will be teaching students conversational Stoney so that they can make more

meaningful connections to their grandmothers and grandfathers in the community. This is an excellent way to preserve their own family and cultural history. Many of Mrs. Bird's own grandchildren attend or have attended MECCS. To see her interact with them in this way is very special.

Once again this year, we will offer students a choice of Aboriginal Fine Arts Options.

Drumming

This option will continue during the 2016/17 school year. In the past, community members such as Terrence Paskemin, Sr., Darcy Paul, Jr., and Jarred Rain have led this course. Drumming will be offered in the second part of the year to give our boys the chance to "tune up" for powwow season.

Aboriginal Land Stewardship

This option was first offered last school year and was a remarkable success. We were fortunate to have Donny Rain and his brother Doug Rain, Paul First Nation members, teach our students about how their connection to the land can be a symbiotic relationship.

Students were led on outdoor excursions to explore the 160-acre parcel of land that MECCS stands on.

During these outdoor sessions, the Rain brothers discussed the way the land can provide for us. They also demonstrated methods of tracking, reading natural signs and trapping, all the while reminding the children that they have a responsibility to the natural world all around us.

Due to the great response from our students, we will seek to offer this option once again in the 2016/17 school year.

Traditional Flute

Garett Strawberry serves on the MECCS board and hails from O'Chiese. Garett generously volunteers his time to spend an afternoon with our students on alternating weeks, instructing them in the art of traditional flute music.

Thanks to a generous donation of flutes, instruction booklets and other materials from Odell Borg at High Spirits Flutes, we are able to provide 12 students with this experience.

Beading

Our school principal Erin Danforth leads the beading. She doesn't see herself as an instructor but more of a mentor or facilitator. Most of the children in the group know how to bead already or have at least attempted to do it on their own.

Erin will help her students to explore different techniques like loom beading, peyote stitch and lazy stitch. The students will have the opportunity to complete at least one project.

We also offer those in grades 5 to 9 a variety of Student Choice Options.

Golf

Dale LeMoignan will continue giving golf instruction on Tuesday afternoons. Dale holds certification as an instructor in both Canada and the US. He enjoys working with people to introduce them to the game he loves.



MECCS students Storm Mackinaw and Marty House dance during powwow. PHOTO BY MILDRED HOUSE



Our parents, grandparents, family members and community members are always welcome at Mother Earth's Children's Charter School.

Off-site golf outings are planned for fun and to take what students have learned, in class and indoors, to an on-course situation.

Archery

Erin Danforth, our principal, and Maxine Hildebrandt, one of our teachers, took training this summer so they could offer archery instruction to our students. In-school lessons will lead to Alberta Archery Association competitions as students gain skills and learn how to be a responsible and accomplished archer.

Introduction to Cosmetology

Elaine Boe is a licensed hairdresser. She is excited to once again share her passion for and knowledge about health, beauty and self-care with our students.

Advanced Techniques in Art

We believe it is important to incorporate art into our classrooms. Our art option students will have the opportunity to delve deeper into some of the more challenging art techniques. Students will get to explore different styles of art and will use different materials and techniques.

Food Preparation and Safety

It's not a secret that the foods option is a favourite! Kathy Mawer, our cook at MECCS, will once again open up her kitchen to a small group of students who are keen to learn about food preparation.

Last year the foods class prepared marinades for lunch and desserts like butter tarts and cookies. They planned and prepared a whole meal for our entire school. Their work was delicious and we are really looking forward to seeing what they are capable of this year!

Sewing

Sewing is a lifelong skill. Janet House, our school's Parent Liaison, is a prime example of someone who has put that skill to great use. Janet not only sews for her family, she also sews for our school and for the Paul First Nation community. Her small group of students will select practical, real-world projects that let them build their skills and create something practical yet fun!

We look forward to seeing each and every one of you in our school, and to making this the best year yet at Mother Earth's Children's Charter School.