

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

Why Choose MECCS For Your Family

As parents and grandparents, you want the same things for your children and grandchildren when they go to school. You want them to learn and succeed in their academic subjects. You want them to graduate from high school, get a good job, and then compete and succeed in the work world as adults. You want them to experience as many things as they can while they are growing up. You want school to be fun for them.

Research shows that if a child can read at grade level by grade 4 they have a much greater chance to graduate from high school, get a good job and make far more money than students who do not learn to read at grade level by that time. Our school's promise to you and to our students is that we will do everything that we can starting from kindergarten to make sure that they can read at that level.

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, and the

hot breakfast and lunch program. Students also like to succeed academically. They know that the results we are getting at MECCS gives them an excellent chance to succeed in the future. They know they are building an excellent foundation.

An important part of the school charter calls for us to deliver a strong cultural component. This year we are strengthening that aspect of our program even further. We want to be the school of choice for you and the children in your family, and we will do everything we can to earn your trust.

We have recruited two new teachers to fill gaps in our programming. We have developed partnerships with other schools and created strong academic and cultural programs and events. We intend to be the best school for First Nations students in Alberta. We think people will want to come from every part of Alberta to see what we do. We invite you and the children in your family to be part of the most exciting year in the history of MECCS.

We want to expose our students to a range of culturally appropriate programming but also open them up to activities that are available to all students in Alberta and Canada.

MECCS offers a sound educational program founded on Indigenous teachings that foster our students' self-confidence and self-respect. This unique program increases their appreciation of the cultural connections to our Mother Earth.

The MECCS kindergarten graduates sit with their big kid counterparts.

"One day that will be us!"



Our Mission

MECCS exists in order to support and encourage the whole individual's development of strength, resiliency, and personal, cultural and academic growth.

Our Vision

Rediscovering the gifts and potential given to them by the Creator, our children will achieve personal excellence and fulfillment.

Key Values

- We value the *Medicine Wheel* as a philosophy of balance.
- We value the *Seven Sacred Teachings* (Respect, Love, Courage, Wisdom, Honesty, Humility, Truth) as a basis for action.
- We value *Spiritual Connectedness* as a means of realizing personal excellence.
- We facilitate *Culture* through spiritual and social connectedness, together with academic excellence.
- We value *Respect* for self, culture and accomplishments.



Learning together in partnership with Academy at King Edward.



Wildwood School staff join in a smudge ceremony at MECCS.

Principal's Message

The 2018–19 school year promises to be one of our most exciting yet! Over the years we have undertaken some interesting projects, and this year they are all converging to create an atmosphere where learning will be engaging, fun and magical!

This year we are continuing and expanding our school partnerships. We are starting our third year with Wildwood School and Academy at King Edward (AKE). Working with Wildwood and AKE has given our students the opportunity to enjoy great activities like fishing, outdoor education, hide tanning and other handicrafts.

We are expanding these programs to include an outdoor education option for students from grades 3 to 9. We will also be exploring traditional handicrafts in greater depth, including moccasin-making and birch bark crafts.

We are thrilled to be able to begin a new partnership with Suzuki Charter School, which is based in Edmonton. This new development will likely add some musical opportunities for our MECCS students in addition to the other expanded offerings.

Since 2008, our Warriors athletics program has provided opportunities for our junior high students to compete within the Treaty 6 area in various sports disciplines. We will once again be competing in sports such as cross-country running, volleyball, floor hockey, basketball, badminton, and track and field.

This year we are proud to welcome Mr. Dylan Boxall as our Warriors coach and physical education teacher. Mr. Boxall comes to us from Rocky Mountain House and has extensive experience in coaching, with a special interest in karate.

We are adding another new team member this year as well. Ms. Megan O'Neill will be joining our junior high group to teach science. She will also round out our school's physical education and Warriors athletic program. Our Warriors athletes will have the best coaching and support in order to pursue excellence!

Speaking of excellence, our archery program will be in full swing starting in October. All students from grade 3 and up will have the opportunity to learn about target archery. This year our students will once again be taking part in a large

School Partnerships

We are expanding our partnerships with Academy at King Edward School and Wildwood School.

We are also starting an exciting new partnership with Suzuki Charter School.



Author David Bouchard gathers students for a group selfie.



Taking time to listen to Lazura Roan's story.

tournament. MECCS students will have the chance to compete with other students from all over the province to achieve their personal best. Our school is also hosting an archery tournament this year so that all of our students will have the chance to compete and set a goal.

Cross-country skiing is a sport that few students get a chance to try. This year we have partnered with Spirit North, an organization that will work with us to make sure that our students can learn how to ski within a safe, positive, play-based program delivered right at our school. We will build cross-country skiing trails and help the students develop skills that they will be able to transfer to the classroom and to daily life. We are thrilled to announce that Canadian Olympian Beckie Scott will be involved in bringing this activity to our students.

We are also hosting HeartBeat Theatre in October for a three-day residency. Our students will not only be able to watch a professional theatre company production but also participate in workshops that will let them explore their creative side.

We have another exciting opportunity for our students coming up in the spring. The University of Alberta will be hosting us at a weeklong camp called U School where our students will explore some big questions: What are the characteristics of scientific understanding and how does society, technology, culture and/or the environment influence the development of scientific knowledge? How can this knowledge transform our world? We will have a “stay-cation” at MECCS while we spend our days at the University of Alberta campus working with

Community Partnerships

We are working with Spirit North to bring our students a cross-country skiing program.

We will host a three-day residency with HeartBeat Theatre this fall.

Our students will take part in U School, a weeklong camp at the University of Alberta, in the spring.

Literacy Partnerships

Noted Métis author David Bouchard will return to the school to work with our students.

We're adding more books to our classroom libraries through the Adopt a School program.

To help add to our libraries, visit www.adoptaschool.indigo.ca.



Special times for MECCS students (clockwise from above):

1. Azarie Rain and Santa at the TransAlta Christmas celebration.
2. Blair Brereton on a chuckwagon at Cliff Cunningham's ranch.
3. On a train ride during a trip to the zoo.



professors, students and academic staff. This camp is sure to give our kids a great learning experience.

We will once again welcome award-winning Métis author David Bouchard to the school to work with our students and share his latest adventures. Always an entertaining guest, David enjoys his time at his “second-favourite school in the world!” (His first favourite has to be the one that is named after him.) We are always excited to see him! He has made such a great impact on our students through his writings and the time he has spent with us over the years. We literally have students who have grown up with David!

In other exciting literacy news, Chapters/Indigo at Kingsway Mall has adopted our school. From September 15 to October 7, as part of the store’s “Adopt a School” program, customers who visit the Indigo Spirit store in Kingsway Mall will be able to donate books or money to help us add to our classroom libraries. Our goal is to add one book for every student in the school.

After September 15, people can also make donations online.

Simply search for our school’s name on the program’s website at www.adoptaschool.indigo.ca.

All of the practice our students and staff have had in travelling to other places within Canada has prepared them for what is probably the most exciting event of all:

a trip to Disneyland! The trip will take place over the 2019 spring break. Participating students in grades 7 to 9 will travel to Anaheim by air, spend three days at Disneyland and one day at Knott’s Berry Farm. What could be more magical than that? Any junior high student registered in September who maintains good attendance and behaviour records will be eligible to go on this trip. Full details will be shared with parents in early September.

Field Trip News

MECCS students in grades 7 to 9 who demonstrate good attendance and behaviour will be eligible to take part in the 2019 spring break field trip.

This year’s destination will be truly magical: Disneyland!

Meet Our New Teachers

Mr. Dylan Boxall has taken coursework in Indigenous Education. He also has experience teaching junior high students in both of his practicums through the University of Alberta.

His teaching philosophy is grounded in the belief that building healthy relationships with staff and students is crucial to teaching success. Mr. Boxall values the concept of respect, and believes that achieving respect among his students will create a solid learning environment.

He has experience with many types of sports and is actively involved in running. Mr. Boxall holds a black belt in karate and has good karate instructional skills. He is excited and willing to provide karate options within the school. He believes he could easily set up a martial arts program at MECCS. He is sure the students would appreciate the additional unique physical activity content.

Mr. Boxall is excited about the prospect of developing a physical education plan for the students at MECCS. He is also interested in a variety of athletics such as trail running, biking, downhill skiing, Muay Thai kick boxing, badminton and swimming. One of his favourite sports activities in which to both take part and watch is track and field.



Mr. Dylan Boxall



Ms. Megan O'Neill

Ms. Megan O'Neill is a recent graduate from the University of Calgary, where she earned her Bachelor of Education in Secondary Science. She also has a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry. She has experience teaching junior high students and an enthusiastic interest in sports and has some experience coaching students.

Ms. O'Neill has a deep passion for music, and was enrolled in both voice and piano lessons at the age of 10 at the Royal Conservatory of Music. She's known she wanted to teach, shape young minds and make a difference in the lives of all students ever since she was a young girl.

She views relationship building and collaboration with staff, students and parents as paramount to the learning process. She has the ability to use a variety of differentiated instructional methods in the classroom. She also has several years' experience of tutoring students in various grades and subjects. Like Dylan, she is committed to lifelong learning and is a reflective teacher.

One of the things Ms. O'Neill will bring to MECCS is a science fair, which she plans to organize and implement. During her practicum, she taught the Planet Earth unit to grade 7 students. The final project involved them constructing a model volcano that represented a real-life volcano of their choice. The students worked very hard on these projects, and Ms. O'Neill worked closely with a partner teacher to make sure these were on display at the celebration of learning event that took place at their school.

Ms. O'Neill has a Métis background, and is very excited to join MECCS and call this her first official teaching experience.

Both of these teachers will make excellent additions to the MECCS team. We are pleased to welcome them to our school this year.