

# 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](http://www.meccs.org)**

## Students Like Program Choices at MECCS

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.

We believe that students should have a voice in what they study when they attend Mother Earth. We asked them what they would like to learn about. We then designed a series of options for them to choose from based on those student suggestions.

Wouldn't you like to have your children, grandchildren, and nieces and nephews attend school with a friendly, personal environment like that? Contact us to find out how to register for next year. Call 780-702-7531 and ask for Principal Erin

Danforth or Family Liaison Janet House. They will explain everything we do at Mother Earth's Children's Charter School, and how you and the children in your family can be part of it next year.



*Brisa Lewis explores her painting skills in the Techniques in Art options class.*

An important part of the school charter calls for us to deliver a strong cultural component. We also believe that students should have some say in the programs offered to them. Several afternoons per week are dedicated to that idea.

### **Stoney Language**

On Wednesdays, we offer students the chance 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, joins us every Wednesday to work with our young people. She is teaching students conversational Stoney so that they can make more meaningful connections to the grandmothers and grandfathers in the community, thus preserving their 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.

### **Drumming**

Terrence Paskemin, Sr., leads our drumming option. Terrence has led the renowned drum group The Blackstone Singers since the late 1980s. They perform regularly throughout western Canada and the western United States.

Terrence is from Sweetgrass, Saskatchewan, but has lived in the Paul First Nation community for a number of years. Terrence's children have attended MECCS for the past four years. Our students are very fortunate to be able to learn from such a distinguished and successful performer.

### **Aboriginal Land Stewardship**

We are fortunate to have Doug Rain from the Paul First Nation teach our students about how their connection to the land can be a symbiotic relationship. He leads them on outdoor excursions to explore the 160-acre parcel that MECCS stands on.

During these outdoor sessions, Doug discusses how the land can provide for us. He also demonstrates 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.



*Kookum Theresa Bird with Taylor Tompkins, Jaynee Paul and Gavin Adams during Stoney Language option.*



*Jayden Lewis, Terrence Paskemin, Jalen Paskemin and Levi Yellowhead during Drumming option.*



*Shawn Bird, Katlyn Bearhead, Doug Rain and Rose Tompkins during Aboriginal Land Stewardship option.*



*Dale LeMoignan provides Golf option instruction to MECCS students, including Jayden Lewis.*

## **Golf**

How many schools can say they have a licensed golf professional right there in the building? Our Maintenance Director Dale LeMoignan has been a member of the Canadian Golf Teachers Federation since 2005. Dale holds certification in both Canada and the US as an instructor.

Dale enjoys working with people to introduce them to the game he loves. He provides golf instruction on Tuesday afternoons.

## **Introduction to Cosmetology**

Elaine Boe is a teaching assistant here at MECCS. She is also a licensed hair dresser. Elaine owned a beauty school in Prince George before moving to Spruce Grove. Elaine has been at MECCS since 2008. She is excited to share her passion for and knowledge about health, beauty and self-care with our students.



*Simone Bearhead practises her hairdressing skills as a delighted Elaine Boe looks on during Introduction to Cosmetology option.*

## **Sewing**

Sewing is a lifelong skill. Janet House, our 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 has selected practical, real-world projects that will let them build their skills and create something practical yet fun!

## **Techniques in Art**

Principal Erin Danforth has always wanted to expand the fine arts program for all students and enjoys incorporating art into her classroom. With a small, dedicated group of students, she is able to delve deeper into some of the more challenging art techniques.

Students have the opportunity to explore different styles of art and use different materials and techniques to bring their talent to the forefront.

## **Target Archery**

Erin Danforth and Maxine Hildebrandt each took a summer course last year to get certified to teach archery. The school also received a grant and some funding from St. John's School that allowed us to purchase the necessary indoor equipment. Our students have started to learn the fundamental skills of this sport.



*Simone Bearhead, Isaiah Bird, Katlyn Bearhead and Serenity Bird during Target Archery option.*



*Tristan Breriton, Nicolai Bluebird, Andrew Rain, Lazura Roan and Mrs. Hildebrandt.*



*Jalen Paskemin, Nakoda Paul, Storm Mackinaw, Jayden Lewis and Katlyn Bearhead.*

## Edmonton Oil Kings Hockey Hooky Day

Mother Earth's Children's Charter School students took part in the 8th Annual Edmonton Oil Kings Hockey Hooky Day on February 15. Over 7,000 loud and cheering students from the Edmonton area took buses to Rogers Place to see the host Oil Kings defeat the Kootenay Ice 3-2 in overtime.



*The beautiful mural by Alex Janvier at Rogers Place.*

This event is a daytime Oil Kings game with built-in school curriculum. All participating students received a workbook to follow the lessons when play stopped and during intermissions. MECCS Superintendent Ed Wittchen is familiar with Rogers Place as an Oilers season ticket holder. He took small groups of students and supervisors on a tour around the rink to see highlights of the new facility.

MECCS partnered with the Oil Kings and their owners, the Oilers Entertainment Group, to get tickets for 54 students and 7 adult supervisors. We are grateful for the support of CN Rail, the corporate sponsor of our tickets.



*Joey Potts, Mr. Reinhardt and Bethany Ochuschayoo.*



*MECCS students at the Oil Kings hockey game.*