

# MECCS

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

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## Persevering Through a Pandemic Year



This issue of the MECCS newsletter is dedicated to our hardworking staff, our amazing students and all of you at home. You have all persevered through the last 15 months of the most challenging time any of us have ever experienced. Working together, we have ensured that our students got all the love and support they needed and deserved to get through the many challenges the COVID-19 pandemic presented to us.

It has been challenging in so many ways. By sticking together and working together, we made it to the point that now the province has started to open up again. Hopefully by September things will look like how we remember them in terms of what is normal.

Everything looked different this past year, from the time students got on the bus to the time they left for home at the end of the day. Everyone wore masks for much of the time. Litres of hand sanitizer were used. Sheila Gardiner, our custodian, and Myron House, our kitchen assistant/custodial assistant, cleaned and sanitized bathrooms, the cafeteria and heavily trafficked areas like the gym several times a day. Teachers set up their classrooms to allow for social distancing. We had to go back and forth

*Children need fun and play, even in a pandemic: Illyana Paul on the school playground.*



*Clockwise from top left:*

1. *Erin Danforth, our principal, painting a beautiful ceiling tile and preserving the legacies of our students.*
2. *Grades 5 and 6 teacher Maxine Hildebrandt.*
3. *Grades 1 and 2 teacher Mark Ehnes.*
4. *Yvonne House, head cook, and Myron House, kitchen assistant, worked hard all year to safely prepare nutritious meals for the students.*
5. *Custodian Sheila Gardiner carefully cleaned and sanitized throughout the school.*

several times between in-school learning and stay-at-home learning. Some students were on virtual learning all year. Thanks to Mark Ehnes, Naomi Anderson, Maxine Hildebrandt and Erin Danforth for adjusting to all the changes and keeping the students moving forward.

Yvonne House, our head cook, and Myron House planned and created nutritious breakfasts and lunches for every student. They served them with their usual friendly approach, even though they did so this year behind a barrier.

Janet House, our family liaison worker, kept in contact with parents about everything from bus issues to schools closures to attendance issues. Joanne Cardinal had additional responsibilities beyond driving the bus, making sure it was sanitized twice a day and that the students were masked and socially distanced.



Behind the scenes, our maintenance coordinator Dale LeMoignan kept things running. He took care of the big repairs, plowed snow off the road, mowed the grass, kept the water system functioning and more. He also handled little jobs like replacing lights in the gym, ensuring fire extinguishers were up to date, fixing the dishwasher and other things that we don't see but are so important in keeping the school running.

Also behind the scenes but so important is Anita LeMoignan, our secretary-treasurer. She also coordinates the transportation system, looks after ordering and picking up groceries



for the kitchen, and monitors orders for the Maintenance Department and custodial orders, among many other tasks.

We weren't allowed to have our three partner schools join us for common activities this year, nor were we allowed to plan return visits to their schools. We weren't allowed to have other partners like David Bouchard or HeartBeat Theatre join us for our usual activities that the students have enjoyed so much in the past. Even local activities like swimming lessons and visits to the corn maze were among things our students could not do.

We were, however, fortunate to be able to continue our partnership with Spirit North, thanks to the outdoor nature of the cross country program. This program will continue next year as well.

Together we persevered and we made it, and we look forward to having a great year next year.

Have a safe and healthy summer, everyone!

*Clockwise from top left:*

- 1. Janet House and Myron House having some fun on the playground with the kids.*
- 2. Behind the scenes with Dale LeMoignan, our school's maintenance coordinator.*
- 3. Another great behind-the-scenes support, Anita LeMoignan, our secretary-treasurer.*
- 4. Theresa Bird, our amazing Elder and Stoney language instructor.*
- 5. Family liaison workers Janet House and teacher Naomi Anderson.*





*Above: Evelyn Tompkins-Bird having fun.*



*Above, clockwise: Drake Bird, Lazura Roan, Darius Rain-Mackinaw and River Letendre proudly displaying their vibrant ceiling tiles.*



*Tyrell Houle happily exploring the playground (above and below).*



*Tristen Lafleche enjoying an opportunity to climb and play outside.*