

Children of the Earth High School

A Big Picture Learning School

Report to the Community

2023-2024

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School Vision:

Children of the Earth aims to be an example of Indigenous Education at its best, and a school where learners thrive. We value our students for who they are, and we nurture the gifts and talents they bring. Students have deep, real-world learning opportunities that prepare them to share their gifts and talents with their community, using them to lead our nations with strength, wisdom, and courage. Our focus on deep and rigorous learning for all students is enhanced by the centrality of our language and cultural programming.

Children of the Earth aims to change the lives of families, communities, and future generations. The work of our school - creating leaders who can easily navigate both Indigenous and non-Indigenous worlds - supports reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

When we look ahead, we envision a growing collective of graduates from Children of the Earth who know who they are, who know their history, and who are prepared to speak truth.



About Our School

Children of the Earth is an Indigenous high school, distinct in Winnipeg School Division and in the Province of Manitoba. The school was born of Indigenous grassroots activism and developed out of the need for Indigenous learners to have a school that responds to our specific cultural, language, and learning needs. In our work, we are focused on this historical dream, articulated when tobacco was passed and when ceremony was offered to give birth to the school. We understand that we work with young people who have the opportunity and responsibility to lead a strong future for Indigenous nations. We take this responsibility seriously, and carry forward with joy, love, and rigour.

Guiding Principles:

- Producing graduates who are prepared to lead our nations with wisdom, courage, and strength
- Passing on rich cultural knowledge and practices, and promoting acquisition and fluency in Indigenous languages
- Engaging all students in rigorous academic programming from an Indigenous perspective according to their individual interests, strengths, and needs, both inside the school and in the community
- Engaging caregivers and community in the life of the school and supporting free access to cultural programming/ ceremony
- Responding to the needs of students and families to promote consistent presence at school
- Promote a healthy lifestyle in balance with the four quadrants of the medicine wheel



School Highlights

2023-2024 Programming:

- Traditional cultural ceremonies: smudge, pipe ceremony, full moon ceremony, seasonal feasts, traditional practical and spiritual teachings for students and family/community
- Grade 9-12 Oshkaabewis/Oshkapwis Helper Cultural Program
- Indigenous Language programming integrated into subject-area classes
- Guest knowledge keepers
- Grade 9 – transition to Big Picture Learning design
- Grade 10-12 Late Entry program – integrated, project-based design for credit recovery
- Omazinibii'igeg Artist Collective
- Journey and Succeed Program
- Family Camp at Camp Manitou
- Fort Whyte Farms: fall and spring
- Kitchen Brigades
- Louis Riel/Metis Day Celebration
- Mini-Olympics/Indigenous Sports Day
- Student Council
- Drumming and Singing Club
- Rec and Read
- Nutrition Bingo
- Indigenous Youth Leadership Program
- Shared programming with R.B. Russell
- Medical Careers Exploration Program
- Caregivers' Arts Council and Murals Project
- Student Night at the Opera – Li Keur:
- Free student breakfast and lunch
- Food security support for families
- Sewing Circle – caregivers, students, & families
- Clinics: ID, Birth Certificate, Mobile Vision, Immunization
- Cultural Advisory – weekly
- Regular Leaving to Learn field trips
- Crochet Club
- Board Games Club
- Young Mycologists Club
- First Aid, CPR, Babysitting Certification, Food Handler's Certification, Safe Talk – parents and students
- North End Grad Walk



Special Events and Partnerships

Children of the Earth High School had many special events over the course of the school year that brought our students, parents, and community together. We have also worked hard to enrich our existing partnerships and develop new partnerships with community resources.

Some of the highlights from this year include:

- **30th Anniversary Celebration:** Children of the Earth turned 30 during the pandemic, and so we celebrated this milestone with a day of festivities including speeches from founding community members, a community feast, school tours, and singing, dancing, and drumming.
- **School to School Partnerships:** The Grade 9 Big Picture Learning program and some of our Grade 12 singers shared tipi teachings with students from Isaac Brock School (2 full days), Dufferin (two half days) and Rossbrook House (one half day). The Omazinibii'igeg Artists' Collective and the art program, along with support from language and science teachers, hosted 30 grade 4-6 students from Mulvey School to participate in the 13 Moons on a Turtle's Back project.
- **"Connected: A Multi-Cultural Display of Belonging":** students from Children of the Earth, Niji Mahkwa, and Sisler partnered with the Winnipeg Boy's Senior Choir and the Little Opera Company to perform "Connected: A Multi-Cultural Display of Belonging" at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights.
- **Food security grant:** Children of the Earth received a \$25 000 grant from the Moffatt family through the Winnipeg Foundation. This allowed us to provide free lunch to students every school day and to provide food security packages to families over Spring Break and Summer Break
- **Parent/Student Workshops:** Food Handler's Certificate, First Aid/CPR, Babysitting Certification, and SafeTalk training were held at the school at no cost for parents and students.
- **Community Partnerships:** Students from the University of Winnipeg Urban and Inner City Studies department visited our school as a part of their coursework with Shauna McKinnon and Kathy Mallett; Children of the Earth hosted nursing students from the University of Manitoba Faculty of Nursing; Community Aboriginal Human Rights Development continues to fund our Journey and Succeed Program; CEDA continues to support students with housing and academics;
- **Building Student Success with Indigenous Parents:** This grant funded many opportunities for our school to provide caregivers with free access to ceremony and cultural experiences in the evenings: Family Camp at Camp Manitou, guest Knowledge Keepers sharing teachings about the Little Boy Water Drum, Star Teaching, and Creation Stories, Full Moon ceremonies, and Pipe Ceremonies.
- **Big Picture Learning:** As we reorganize our school according to the design principles of Big Picture Learning, we are being supported by Winnipeg School Division with access to professional learning opportunities including coaching, conferences, and networking. This partnership supports us our journey towards creating a highly engaging and student centred learning environment focused on relationships, relevance, and rigour.

School Priorities 2024-25

Presence and Engagement:

- All students engaged in educational programming every day
- School design based on principles of Big Picture Learning
- Emphasis on student voice guiding the reinvigouration of our cultural programming
- Advisory, individual learning plans, exhibitions, portfolios supporting relationships, relevance, and rigour

Meaningful Caregiver Involvement:

- Intentional inclusion of caregivers in planning student programming
- Helping the school to learn about their children
- Enhancing access to cultural programming: Sewing Circle, ceremonies, cultural teachings

Community Partnerships:

- Building relationships with the business, trades, professional, and community development sectors to provide access to rich internship opportunities
- University of Winnipeg Dual Credit program supports deep, place-based learning opportunities
- Enhancing and leveraging existing community partnerships to support *Presence and Engagement* and *Meaningful Caregiver Involvement*

Big Picture Learning @ Children of the Earth

INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES & CULTURAL PRACTICES

Children of the Earth is a grade 9-12 school that centres Indigenous cultural and language learning. Through participation in language classes and cultural programming, students develop their Indigenous identity, grow to understand worldviews, and practice our ways of knowing, being, doing, and becoming. Our focus on deep and rigorous learning for all students is enhanced by the centrality of our language and cultural programming.



ADVISORY

Our students have one teacher, called an advisor, for most classes. Advisors meet daily with their group of 15-25 students to help students pursue their interests in the community and in the classroom through learning projects that build on students' strengths and talents. Advisors facilitate group discussions, run learning workshops and build strong relationships with students. Advisors also build strong relationships with caregivers and are their primary point of contact at the school. Students stay with their advisor for a minimum of two years.



PROJECT BASED LEARNING

Students and advisors work together to plan real-world, meaningful, and cross-curricular projects based on student interests. In this way, students access the learning outcomes of core and elective courses included in the Manitoba curriculum. When students see the meaning and relevance behind what they are learning, and when their school work is work that matters in the real world, students become actively engaged in their learning and are able to make connections and develop deep understandings of their world.



LEAVING TO LEARN (L2L)

Often, students leave the school as a group to learn in the community or on the land. These opportunities complement the work students are doing in class on their projects. L2L also offers students the opportunity to develop varied skills and knowledge, and introduces new and exciting possibilities for their future. Advisory group, grade group, and full school opportunities to leave to learn are offered.



ONE STUDENT AT A TIME

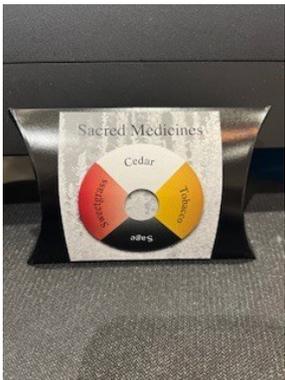
We know that each student is an individual, and that all students come to us with their own gifts, strengths, and talents. We develop programming for individual students based on their interests in order to meet students where they're at, discover their passions, build on their strengths, and design meaningful and individual educational experiences.



RELATIONSHIPS, RELEVANCE, & RIGOUR

Everything begins with building strong, supportive learning **relationships**. We understand and value students' interests, passions, talents, and goals so that their educational plans are **relevant** and connected to the wider world. Designing learning experiences with these goals in mind creates a **rigorous** educational experience that allows students to deeply connect and engage with their learning both in and out of the classroom. Knowing and valuing our students, and relevant, rigorous teaching ensures their access to *mino-pimatisitwin*.





CHILDREN OF THE EARTH HIGH SCHOOL

30TH ANNIVERSARY GIINIIBWITADOOT

We would like to announce by your presence at:
Children of the Earth's 30th Anniversary Celebration
 April 25, 2024
 9:00 a.m.
 Children of the Earth Gym
 100 Salter Street

The online, digital, and virtual elements will be available.
 Live music starts at 10:00 a.m. on the top level.
 Reserve RSO tickets by April 18, 2024.

CHILDREN OF THE EARTH HIGH SCHOOL

