



# FORT MCKAY

FIRST NATION

## Media Release

### FMFN Hosts Grand Opening of New School

For immediate release

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FORT MCKAY, AB / August 23, 2022 — Fort McKay First Nation (FMFN) is hosting a grand opening of its new school on Thursday, Sept. 1.

“We are very excited to welcome our learners and their families to Elsie Fabian School,” said FMFN Chief Mel Grandjambe. “We are also proud to showcase this first-class educational facility to our community and stakeholders.”

The new school’s mission is to promote and preserve FMFN languages, history and culture, and to continue to provide opportunities by advancing the education, economy and health of our people. Programs at the new school will include Cree language, Dene language, and land-based education.

“Our land-based learning approach will benefit our students for their lifetimes. It is also essential for the future of our community,” said Chief Grandjamb. “Our deep connection to the land and traditional ways of knowing will help us preserve our culture and our languages and build a strong foundation for our future.”

The school was built at a cost of \$35 million. It was funded by FMFN, the Government of Canada, and sponsors including Indigenous Services Canada, Imperial Oil Ltd., Syncrude Canada, Bouchier, Canadian Natural Resources Ltd., Hammerstone Infrastructure Materials Ltd., and Teck Resources.

The new school is named after the late and memorable Elsie Fabian – a mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother. Elsie was passionate about education. For more than 25 years, she served as Chairperson of the Fort McKay Local School Board Committee and as a member of the Northland School Division No. 61 Board of Trustees. It is the community’s hope that Elsie’s commitment to life-long learning, as well as her cultural and traditional connectedness, will be an inspiration to many.



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A Junior Kindergarten through Grade 9 facility, the school has many features to benefit students and the community, including:

- Classrooms that are inviting to learners.
- Fitness centre and indoor walking/running track.
- Career and Technology Foundations facilities.

In its first year, the school expects to see 140 students at all grade levels. The 38-member staff includes a literacy specialist, inclusive education teacher, physical education teacher, music teacher, cooks, custodians, library technician, principal, vice principal, and an administrative assistant.

The website for FMFN's education programming, including the Elsie Fabian School, is [www.fortmckayeducation.ca](http://www.fortmckayeducation.ca).

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**About FMFN:**

Fort McKay First Nation has nearly 900 band members of Cree and Dene heritage, with approximately 450 living in the on-reserve section of the community of Fort McKay, located 60 kilometres north of Fort McMurray, on the shores of the Athabasca River. In addition to the Fort McKay community, FMFN has reserves 174A at Gardiner (Moose) Lake and 174B at Namur (Buffalo) Lake, approximately 65 kilometres northwest of Fort McKay. Moose Lake is the traditional home of what is now the Fort McKay First Nation.

A signatory to Treaty 8, Fort McKay First Nation's mission is to assert Treaty rights, revitalize culture and language, promote education, build economic capacity, and support wellness to create opportunities for our Nation's healthy and sustainable future.

The Nation also manages a business portfolio of 11 entities. Business revenues are invested in infrastructure, programs, services, and directly benefit both the community of Fort McKay and individual band members. Only five to 10 per cent of FMFN's annual operating budget comes from federal or provincial governments.

For more information about Fort McKay First Nation, visit our website at [www.fortmckay.com](http://www.fortmckay.com), or follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

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