

THE SOULARD SCHOOL

COMMUNITY NEWS

Dec
2015

Be Your Best Self, Be A Buddy

Buddy Circles: A schoolwide model of peer support developed by The Soulard School

Notes from the Leadership By Haley Biehl, Asst. Principal

"Being a buddy is basically being someone who helps others, and cares for the whole school. And just because you're in one Buddy Circle doesn't mean you can't be a buddy to all the people."

-Soulard School Alchemy Student (3rd grade)

We have long suspected that we do great things within our community. From our integrated approach to a curriculum that is driven by student interest, to our holistic approach blending academic instruction with emotional intelligence, **we have the stories, quotes, dialogue, and a school full of thoughtful, bright students that show us we are successfully guiding our students to their best selves.** There is a difference, however, in suspecting something and knowing something.

Buddy Circles are comprised of 3-4 students and 1-2 adults that problem-solve, strategize, and provide systematic support for an identified student, called the Center. Buddy Circles meet once a week for a set number of weeks or as needed. As part of our initiative to share our model with the larger community, we have carefully monitored Buddy Circles and the ripple effects that may occur from student to student, grade to grade, and year to year. Because of our partnership and work with Webster University, we can say with certainty that we are, indeed, onto something here.

An initial look at data collected indicates that students are building stronger and more meaningful connections, with each other and within themselves. We know that students are expanding an emotional and executive function-based vocabulary, including words like "flexibility," "communication," and "strategies." **We know that students are deepening their understanding of confidentiality, building trust, and the respect and empathy that accompany those practices.** We also know that not only do our circle Centers (the student exhibiting a need) grow with Buddy Circles, but the Buddies (those working to support the Center) experience the greatest "ripple" within these effects, as they begin to see the bigger picture of "being a buddy to all the people."

In the coming years, we will continue to work from intuition toward confirmation that Buddy Circles are an avenue to move beyond tolerance toward acceptance, beyond haphazard comments to non-judgemental, supportive statements; and beyond cursory interactions to empathic connections.

"I learned I'm important; I matter, and everyone else does, too. That's what helped me, and I think that's what is going to help other kids, too."

-Soulard School Mosaic Student (2nd grade)



TOTAL WELLNESS

Buddy circles are one piece of our Total Wellness message.

Read about what has been happening in:

P.E. with our Polar Active monitors. See page 5

Culinary Arts in your home! A recipe is on page 3

Thrive & Enigma are practicing ways to be buddies to our community. See pages 3 & 4

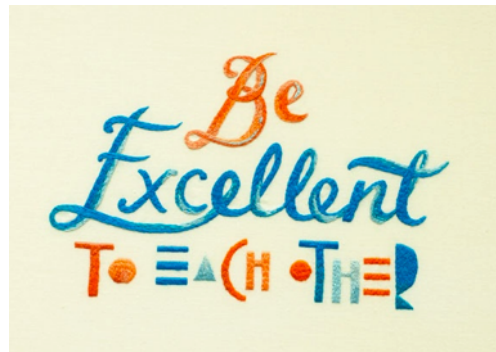
Our Calendar

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1/18 School Closed: MLK Day
PA Meeting 6pm | 2/15 School Closed: Pres. Day
PA Meeting 6pm |
| 1/21 Open House Work Night 3:30-8:30pm | 2/26 End of Trimester 2 |
| 1/23 Open House 10:00am-12:30pm | 2/27 Trivia Night Fundraiser |
| 1/25 Birthday Book Assembly | 3/4 School Closed: Conferences |
| 2/2 Parent Coffee: Mosaic Hosts | 3/21-25 School Closed: Spring Break |
| 2/6 Mardi Gras Fundraiser | 3/28 Birthday Book Assembly |
| 2/12 School Closed: Records Day | |



Buddy Moments at The Nursery

Two year olds
Mikey and Holland,
help push younger friends
along on a fall day.



The more buddies, the more you get done! Vincenza, Linkyn, Lucy and Holland helping with the fall leaves.



CASH BACK PROGRAMS

Remember that cash back programs are an easy way to support the school through everyday spending. The Soulard School participates in several cash back programs, including:

- ✓Box Tops for Education
- ✓Campbell Soup Labels for Education
- ✓Schnuck's eScrip Community Cards

Cash Back Program Committee Chair Andrea Dunn helps coordinate these programs for our families. Stay tuned for her updates and announcements about how you can participate!



Collect for the
Culinary Arts
Program!



ASSEMBLING UNDERSTANDING

A Study of the Industrial Revolution Leads to Efficient Community Outreach

In 1913 Henry Ford revolutionized the automobile industry with his use of the assembly line. The Model T Ford was the first car built on an assembly line: a manufacturing process in which machines, equipment, and workers are positioned in a logical order so that work is passed from one operation to the next, in a line, until the final product is assembled.

The assembly line and its creation was one topic covered by the Thrive classroom during our study of the Industrial Revolution. Students researched the importance of the assembly line and its impact on the world today. To bring our investigation to life, we created an assembly line right here at the Soulard School. After some research we decided our final product should be care packages for the homeless.



Thanks to generous donations from parents and staff members we were able to collect plenty of items for our packages. On the day of the assembly line, we separated each of the items to create an individual job for each student. One student opened and prepared the bag while other students filled the bag with warm socks, toiletries, and food. Our assembly line student-managers checked to ensure each package was complete. We were able to create thirty care packages in only thirty minutes.

Following the completion of the care packages, we met to reflect on how it felt to be a part of an assembly line. Students discussed the responsibility they felt to ensure that their single job was completed efficiently and correctly. They discovered their small task was important to the overall finished product. **The Thrivers made connections between working in the line and being a part of their own community.** Much like the assembly line, each student's role at the Soulard School is an essential part in the learning process.



.....

The Thrive Class 4th & 5th grade students sort supplies in an assembly line to make care packages for St. Peter & Paul Homeless Outreach.

.....



RECIPE
CORNER
with Chef
Monica Watson

Corn Salsa

- 2C. Corn
- 4C. Red & green garden-fresh cherry tomatoes
- 1/4C. Red wine vinegar
- Salt & black pepper to taste
- 1T. Sugar

Pulse clean de-stemmed tomatoes in food processor until desired consistency. Add vinegar, sugar, salt and pepper. Stir in corn.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH: Being A Buddy In Our Neighborhood

The Enigma Class (1st grade) focused on giving back to the community with two separate field trips: One to Allen Market Lane, a senior living center in the neighborhood, and one to The Humane Society.



While visiting Allen Market Lane, Enigma students read and spoke with senior residents.

We were able to make social connections by allowing the seniors to, "Escape their boredom and relieve a sense of social isolation," as one resident put it. **The Enigma class gained a new understanding of other's perspectives and also an understanding of how useful they could be; just by giving others their time.** We were able to establish a very positive relationship, and will definitely be returning in the near future!

Will reads aloud to one of the dog patients at the Humane Society.



The Humane Society gave us an inside look by taking us behind the scenes at their animal shelter and veterinary center. They not only explained what they do, but also allowed Enigma students to interact with animals that have faced hardship. This experience gave students new knowledge and helped all of us grow our skill set when handling animals that have experienced trauma. We were able to read to the animals, and use our new knowledge to create a wonderful interactive experience and develop our empathy skills.

The good feelings the Enigma students were able to experience while helping others and giving back is as important to their own lives as proper diet and exercise. It is the smile from the veteran and the wag of a tail that show us we really can make a difference. We hope to continue these relationships in the future!

11TH ANNUAL TRIVIA NIGHT

Are you smarter than a Souard School student?

WHEN: Saturday, February 27th
Doors open at 6pm, questions start 7pm
WHERE: Mad Art Gallery, 2727 S. 12th St.

It's a great time, so gather your table of friends and get ready to play! We will be selling tables of 10 for \$250 each, which includes beer, wine and soda. Reserve your table online or call the school!

ACTIVE LEARNING REVEALED

The Soulard School prides itself on creating an atmosphere for “active” learning, but we didn’t know just how active our community was being.



Many thanks to ITEF for granting the funding for this program!

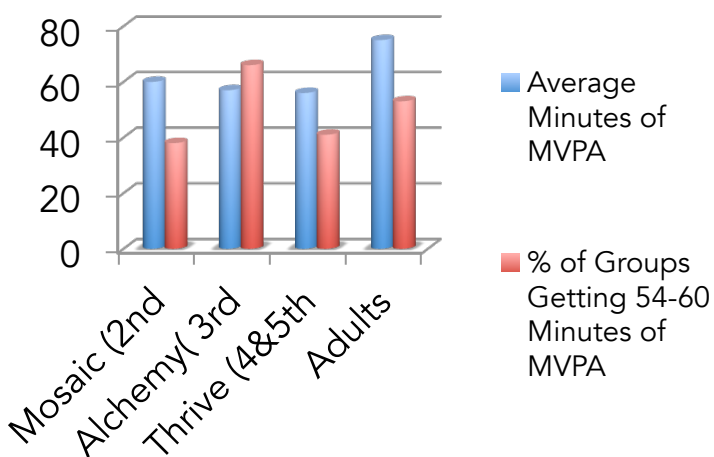
From Lisa Berman, P.E. Teacher

A grant from ITEF has allowed us to focus on several aspects of health and fitness using technology. The most visible of this project has been our Polar Active monitors, a wrist watch-like device that tracks daily activity levels. The technology of the Polar Active activity monitors helps us gather data to support our notion that we are indeed being active and to see if our students are getting the recommended daily amount of moderate to vigorous physical activity (MVPA). **The recommended amount of daily activity for children ages 6-19 is 60 minutes per day.** Adults are encouraged to get 30 minutes 3 times a week. On average, only 25% of children get this daily average. If you remove the teenagers from the group, 44% of children ages 6-11 in the US get their average of 60 minutes of MVPA.

Students were excited to get their monitors and eager to show that they were being active. This began a series of thoughtful conversations about how everyone’s awareness of their physical activity levels was increasing. Students reported noticing when they were sitting for long periods of time, and feeling motivated to “get up and ride my bike around the block.” Some students were disappointed that they were not permitted to wear them during some of their activities such as soccer games and we discussed how much activity that might actually be. The most important point was the awareness they were showing.

We now have data from the first 4 groups to wear the fitness monitors. The Thrive, Alchemy and Adult groups have been wearing them since September and the Mosaic class wore them for one month. We had an assembly to present this data to students, including a mini-lesson on “what is an average” and how that is different from actual data. **The chart shows the average daily fitness minutes per group.**

These results really made us feel good about our program. However, we knew that some students hadn’t been wearing the monitors that often and some were getting much more than the 60 minutes and we wanted to know how that affected the class average. The chart **shows the percentage of individuals in each group who are getting MVPA in the 54-60 minute (or more) range.**



Because of the varying group size, this means that 7-8 members of each group (a few more in the adult group since it is the largest group) are getting this number of minutes recorded and that some of those students or group members are getting so many minutes that they are making up for the rest of the group when you consider averages.

Our next step has been to show students this data in their PE classes and talk about what it means. We have very small sample sizes so students who infrequently wear their monitors are affecting the data. Does this mean they are not being active? We don’t know. Students who wear the monitors are very aware of when they are active and when they are not. For instance, across all groups, Sundays are a day where most groups do not get the average MVPA. This data point has allowed us to discuss the importance of rest. When we return from winter break, we will set some class goals based on the data.

Students and Teachers Dig In Thanks To Gateway Greening

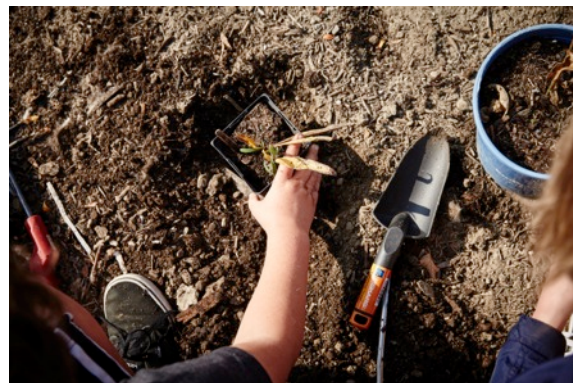
While The Soulard School continues to update technology resources, we also have a renewed focus on outdoor learning. **Children need to stay connected to the outdoors and feel comfortable exploring all that nature can provide and teach.** It is important to provide opportunities for them to explore and learn that being outdoors is safe and enjoyable.

We are grateful for our many outdoor learning partnerships, and have looked for ways to encourage consistent experiences within our own schoolyard. We want our students to see that connecting with nature doesn't always mean taking a field trip. Instead, we like for our students to experience nature on a daily basis. Our school garden was established in 2006 with the support of Gateway Greening, Soulard School families, and Soulard residents. Designed as an outdoor classroom with a pond, landscaping that includes native plants, and four raised beds for growing food, the garden has seen nine robust growing seasons. Since 2006, it has served over 400 individuals (students, parents, teachers & community members), and has provided neighborhood beautification, hands-on learning, connection to nature in an urban setting, habitat for songbirds and pollinators, food for the school's Culinary Arts Program, and many other benefits.

This year, thanks to a generous grant from Gateway Greening, the school was able to expand the garden through improvements. These field experts were already familiar with the garden, having played an instrumental role in its design, creation, and initial volunteer training. Now the garden is lush, and as it matures is also in need of continual, increased maintenance each year. Just last year, the garden's wooden bench was removed due to normal wear & tear. Items from this grant will create an inviting space with seating for learning and working, making it easier for teachers to connect nature to curriculum; and will make it easier for the Landscaping Committee volunteers to participate by having appropriate tools already on-hand. New garden materials include: new hand tool sets for each classroom, a 100' hose, a scale, a wheelbarrow, a new wooden bench, and a new tool shed for storage. In addition to the expansion grant, Gateway Greening also donated three gently-used raised beds to our Outdoor Classroom on Victor & Menard in December.



 Gateway Greening



Clovers & Stars IRISH MUSIC & DANCE Festival was nuge success! We enjoyed our third Irish benefit show in November, which brought in many new supporters and received tremendous reviews! Thank you so much to all who helped make this such a memorable event, including: McGurk's, Switchback, St. Louis Irish Arts, McGurk's House Band, Wave Productions, Soulard Preservation Hall, Matt King, The Soulard School Orchestra, and the event organizing committee!

We were able to raise over \$80,000 thanks to their efforts and the generosity of all of our donors - our most successful event to date! THANK YOU!!



ANNUAL APPEAL 2015-2016

Our Annual Appeal is in full swing, with just under \$20,000 raised so far!

If you have already made a donation, thank you!! Below are our goals this year.

Help us get there –
make your pledge or donation today!

- ✓ 100% Family Participation
- ✓ Raise \$45,000
- ✓ 3 New Grandparent Scholars (\$500 and above)
- ✓ 2 Matching Gifts from Employers

Thank you to our amazing grandparents, whose leadership during the Annual Fund is always phenomenal! For the sixth year in a row, the school is thrilled to announce a matching gift for grandparent donations. **Remember, every tax-deductible dollar that you give will be worth double its amount!**

2015-2016 GRANDPARENT SCHOLARS

Laurie & Rick Buckles
Louise & Paul Cameron
Kathy & Tom Fisher*
Anne Coggan Johnston
Martha & William Gavin
Virginia & Earl Heitzenroeder
Sarapage McCorkle
John Quick
Patricia & Nicholas Reding
Loretta & Charles Smith

**new Grandparent Scholar*

2015-2016 GRANDPARENT DONORS

Lois Kelly Coder & Tom Coder
Becky & Mike Collins
Sharon & Jim Griffin
Jamie Lane
Dana & Ken Moomey
Patricia Wells
Carolyn White

FOUNDING & MAJOR DONORS

We are profoundly grateful to those who help The Soulard School build capacity through very generous multi-year pledges and major gifts.

FOUNDING DONORS

\$10,000 - \$50,000 per year, 4+ years
Anonymous
Joan & Lance Callis
Dr. William Danforth
James Dowd
Laura & Norman Eaker
James P. Holloran
Orville Middendorf
Andrew O'Brien
The Saigh Foundation
Today and Tomorrow Education Foundation
The Joan and John Vatterott Family Foundation

2014-2015 MAJOR DONORS

\$5,000 - \$25,000
Anonymous
Michael Barr, Sysco St. Louis
Dana Brown Charitable Trust, U.S. Bank, Trustee
Lucie & David Dempsey, Property Assessment Review
Emerson Charitable Trust
E. Reuben & Gladys Flora Grant Charitable Trust,
Eric Tremayne and Commerce Bank, Trustees
Mary & Mike Harris, E.M. Harris Construction
John D. McGurk's
Sons & Daughters of Soulard:
Jay Shields, Schaeffer Manufacturing
Anne & Tom Herrmann, Schaeffer Manufacturing
Peter Miller
Webster University, with funding from Boeing

The Mosaic Class meets Mayor Francis Slay.



The Mosaic's (2nd Grade) study of mayors and local government culminated in a special fieldtrip to St. Louis City Hall and a visit with Mayor Slay. The students asked him, "What could we do to make St. Louis a better place?" He told us that if we start by taking care of ourselves, we will feel like we can help others too and also encourages us to pick up trash in our neighborhood. A special thanks to Cara Spencer, TSS parent and Alderman of Ward 20, who showed us around the Board of Alderman's chambers and Ann Chance, TSS Grandparent and Special Events Executive @ City Hall, who coordinated our visit. Did we mention we rode the city bus to get there?



This year's book fair in November raised almost \$1,200 in store credit at Left Bank Books & included 40 book donations in-kind. **Thank you** to all those who made it out. And a huge **THANK YOU** to Left Bank Books for their continued support of our school and library!



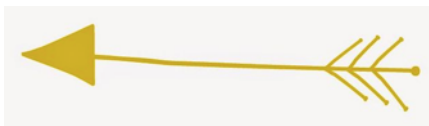
Hazel perfects her form for optimal control and precision.

The Thrive Class (4th & 5th Grades) Takes Aim At Physics

Students were able to explain how archery demonstrated states of energy. Pulling back on the bow strings is potential (stored) energy and the moving arrow is kinetic (moving) energy. This archery fieldtrip along with projects building trebuchets, catapults and shephard's slings integrated physics and simple machines with a study of the Medieval Age.



Thrive students learn archery skills while connecting their learning of force and motion to their study of medieval times.



Thank you to our many partners & supporters!

DANA BROWN CHARITABLE TRUST
U.S. Bank and Lela Rice, Trustees



MONSANTO



MERCURY LABS+



theSAIGHfoundation.org

Litzsinger Road Ecology Center