

THE SOULARD SCHOOL

COMMUNITY NEWS

JAN
2018

SEEING YOURSELF IN THE SOULARD SCHOOL

Notes From The Leadership *By Sarah Christman, Executive Director & Co-Founder*

As an educator, I have always utilized art and creative expression as my primary teaching tool and source of inspiration. I enjoy meandering through a museum and letting my mind wander as I am influenced by the work around me. The staff will be the first to tell you that I emphasize the value of documentation on our bulletin boards as a mini-curated exhibit -- **an opportunity to invite a viewer into the experience, and as a means to connect and learn.**



So it was no surprise to me that when I read the article, *The Invention of Empathy: Rike, Rodin, and the Art of "Inseeing,"* I discovered the origin of the word "empathy" lies in "art." The first description of what is now known as empathy can be found in the late 1800's as describing the moment a viewer sees oneself in a work of art. In other words, it was the self, existing in another place. And if we can see ourselves in art, perhaps we can also see ourselves in other people. **Empathy was the gateway into the minds of others.**

I can see a similar trajectory in the development of the school's arts emphasis and our focus on social emotional intelligence. Our children are able to connect to other's experiences and, through the unique curriculum developed by our teachers, ultimately **see themselves in learning.** Just as the understanding of empathy has evolved and expanded, so has our school's ability to explore empathy in all experiences. Over the past year, staff and parents have been digging deeper, literally and figuratively.

In this month's newsletter you can read about the work the Lab Class (5th Grade) is doing to bring creativity, intention and connection to Culinary Arts, STEAM and documentation through our Sow, Grow, Video project. Parents and staff have been collaborating through our recently established Diversity & Inclusion Committee to grow our social emotional and social justice conversations. **These are the just some of the ways we can see ourselves in The Soulard School, and experience a higher level of empathy.**

What we see depends mainly on what we look for. -John Lubbock



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SEE US
GROW

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SPEAKER
SERIES

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WONDER
& ART

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PARENT
PARTNERS



Our Calendar

- 1/20 Open House 10am-12:30pm
- 1/29 Birthday Book Assembly
- 2/3 Trivia Night Fundraiser
- 2/6 Parent Coffee: Mosaic Hosts
- 2/13 PA Meeting 6-7pm
- 2/16 School Closed: Records Day
- 2/19 School Closed: Presidents Day
- 2/26 Birthday Book Assembly
- 3/2 School Closed: Conferences
- 3/6 Parent Coffee: Enigma Hosts
- 3/14 PA Meeting 6-7pm
- 3/26-30 School Closed: Spring Break
- 3/19 Birthday Book Assembly

Here at The Soulard School - we are a fun, creative, quirky crew! So, don't let the theme fool you. Think...

"What's Sporty Spice been up to?"

"Hey, that's a sporty skirt she's wearing!"

So, just for the **SPORT** of it, gather all of your friends and family together, get a table or 2

Reserve your table at: www.soulardschool.org/trivia-night/

OPEN FOR BUSINESS

The Quietude Class (Pre-K) has been working on creating a restaurant in the Dramatic Play area. We created menus, identified roles within the restaurant industry, and even experimented with baking.



Our first customers!



Camden works in the Message Center to create a menu



Allene makes fruit and veggie prints in the Studio.



Eddie explores pretend fruits and veggies.



Julian & Emma look at the menu to decide what food to order.

RAVE REVIEWS FROM THE ALCHEMY CLASS

This year Alchemists (3rd Grade) are exploring food reviews as a form of opinion writing. Our class became inspired to learn about food writing after listening to a book about a young food critic. They began scouring local food magazines for reviews and researching different styles of food writing. During our classroom lessons we focused on descriptive and sensory language. We encouraged our young food critics to take notes taking during lunches to reflect on each taste.



By **Eva Mahfood**

The corn cake was smooth and soft and a little bumpy. It was the best corn cake I've ever had. I would give it four stars. The setting in the McGurk's room was perfect, not too loud but also not too quiet. I loved it. The enchilada was definitely amazing. The enchilada was warm and I really liked the sweet potato filling. It was very creative. I think the lunch was delicious. I would eat it again. The corn cake was especially good. I loved it!



By **JP Wildermuth**

The corn cake was creamy with a mild but good smell. They were moist, rich, and warm. I would say one of the best corn cakes I've ever had. The oranges were nice and tropical tasting; a mix of soft, juicy, and cold. The enchiladas were sweet and mushy with beans and a nice crisp tortilla. I didn't prefer the enchiladas because they were very sweet but if you like sweet potatoes then I recommend them to you. I give this entire meal three and a half stars!



By **Daniel Gutting**

When I walk into the McGurk's room, I am hit by a wave of noise. I sit down to taste the enchiladas. They were delicious. I wish I was still eating one. The oranges were full of citrus- a little sour and a little sweet. The corn cake was mashed together and perfect. I actually found small traces of herb. I seriously recommend this lunch to anyone.

RECIPE CORNER *with Chef Monica Watson*

Southwestern Shepard's Pie

- 2 T. olive oil
- 1 medium onion
- 1 small green pepper
- 1 T minced garlic
- 1 T ground turkey
- 1 T. tomato paste
- 1 T. chili powder
- 2 T. ground cumin
- Salt & pepper to taste
- 1/2 C. black beans rinsed
- 1/2 chopped cilantro
- 1 1/2 lb. sweet potatoes, peeled and diced
- 2 T. butter
- 1/2 C milk

Heat oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add onion and bell pepper; cook, stirring, for 10 minutes. Add garlic. Raise heat to medium-high; add turkey and brown for 5 minutes.

Add tomato paste and spices; cook, stirring, for 2 minutes. Add beans, and 4 tablespoons cilantro. Spoon into a 9x9-inch baking dish.

Place sweet potatoes in a saucepan with water to cover. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer for 30 minutes. Drain; mash with butter and milk. Spread mash over the meat mixture. Bake in a 400°F oven until brown, 30 minutes. Garnish with more cilantro.

Try this at home!

With Great Growing, Comes Great Responsibility

The Lab Class (5th Grade) has been tasked with the awesome responsibility of creating a video presentation documenting the inner workings and connections between the lunch program and various other curricular aspects and experiences implemented at the Soulard School.

Think of it, as the NUTRITION WEB! We aren't talking about what's in your generic everyday lunchbox. The Soulard School goes well beyond how to make a PB&J. Everything is connected. The students are learning about nutrition and a healthy diet from Chef Monica by learning about, creating, cooking and eating a variety of different meals. These healthy meals bring the students together in a familial community environment that allows them to share in conversation, laughter and civil debate, as well as a nutritious lunch. **The Lab students have been documenting the process of making the meals, eating together, serving each other and, after the meal is over, the clean up, recycling and composting of our waste materials.**

That is where the process takes us next. **The Lab students have been realizing that in order to build a more holistic, sustainable practice at school, we must take part in the process of recycling and composting.** After every meal, the students are learning to look at what is left on their plate and decide what can be thrown away, recycled, or composted. The waste is thrown in the garbage, the recycling tossed into the blue container, and the compost is thrown into orange buckets beside the garbage cans. After each lunch, the compost is taken outside to a larger compost bin where these materials will further decompose and later will be used for soil in our school garden.

So where does that compost go? Yup! Into the school garden and outdoor classroom. **The Lab students have been documenting their progress, as well as the entire school's, in sowing, growing, maintaining, and harvesting their crops at the outdoor classroom and in the school garden for use at lunch.** The composted material helps the students understand one step in the many cycles involved for maintaining a healthy sustainable school garden.

Because our growing season during the school year is so short, we have a grow lab in the Thrive classroom. This grow lab will help the students get a jump on the growing season, help the students understand the basic plant processes in the classroom, and help maintain a cyclical process for growing a variety of crops at staggered intervals. These plants may even be used in our vertical garden.

That's right! We have a vertical garden that will begin again with the help of the grow lab in the spring. The vertical garden is quite advantageous since the Soulard School has limited horizontal space for garden beds. We installed the vertical garden on the chain link fence at the entrance of back door to the lunch room. The Lab students measured out the spacing and helped the Alchemy (4th grade) class to set it up. The Lab students also documented as the Alchemy students transplanted crops of mustard greens and kale to the vertical garden in the fall. Much of those crops went directly into the salads and pasta dishes in our lunch program. And now we've come full circle. **The Lab students can't wait to finish their project and show off their hard work later this spring, when the Soulard School nutrition web will once again be in full swing!**



We were videotaping the classroom garden and how we grew our plants.
-Violet



We were planting seeds and putting string across the bed to show something is growing there. - Eliza



We are weighing and looking through the trash to see if there is stuff we can decompose. - Ari

HEALTH & WELLNESS SPEAKER SERIES

We are excited to announce the following opportunities to talk with experts in the field on topics around children's health, wellness and development. Our school philosophy and programs explore all of these realms our students. With the help of these guest speakers, we are working to keep our parents educated and informed too. If you are interested please email sarah.christman@soulardschool.org to reserve a spot.



Staying Healthy During Flu Season Presented By Audrey Odom John, PhD January 29 @ 6:30pm in The Richter Room

Join us for an informational evening with Dr. Odom John. As a leader in her field, she is knowledgeable on best practices and methods of prevention.

Dr. Audrey Odom John is an Associate Professor of Pediatrics and of Molecular Microbiology at Washington University School of Medicine, and an attending physician at St. Louis Children's Hospital. She received her M.D. and Ph.D. from Duke University, during which she was recognized by a national Harold Weintraub award for excellence in graduate studies in the biological sciences. Dr. Odom John completed her residency in Pediatrics and fellowship in Pediatric Infectious Diseases at the University of Washington in Seattle. Since joining the faculty at Washington University School of Medicine, she has received multiple national awards for her work from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, the March of Dimes, and the Burroughs Welcome Fund. Dr. Odom John's NIH-funded laboratory focuses on malaria, en route to development of new malaria therapies and diagnostics.

ComePlay STL Presents Early Childhood Developmental Domains: What is a cause for concern? February 6 @ 8pm via Facebook Live

Join us from the comfort of your home to listen to Evangeline Bauer, Founder of Come Play, STL and Bethany Arkills, Occupational Therapist at Come Play, STL. Evangeline is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and a Registered Play Therapist. Come Play, STL was started to find a better way to care for children and their families psychological health and meet their developmental needs through a multidisciplinary approach. They will be sharing their expertise with us starting at 8 pm and taking your questions and comments along the way. www.comeplaystl.com

Sprouts Presents Early Childhood: Behavior as Communication February 20 @ 8pm via Facebook Live

Sally is the Director and Educational Specialist for Sprouts with over 35 years of experience in the early childhood/early childhood special education community. She has a passion for working with adults to help them understand why children do what they do and how they can best support them. Her specialties include teacher trainings, child support within the their community, and the special education process. www.growwithsprouts.com

The Right Ingredients Presented by Soulard School's Chef Monica Watson & SIUE Professor Kathy Mora, PhD, Rd Early March, date TBA in The McGurk's Room

Join us for a informative, interactive (afternoon/evening) full of food and fun. Leave with recipes, ideas and resources.

Kathy received her Ph.D. in Nutrition Science and Epidemiology from The University of Arizona. Prior education includes a BS in Dietetics from Miami University and an MS in Nutrition and Fitness from Florida State University. Kathy spent 10 years as a clinical dietitian working in an outpatient diabetes education clinic and private endocrinology office. For the past five years, Kathy has been an adjunct faculty member at St. Louis University teaching in the Nutrition and Dietetics Department and Physical Therapy Department. Kathy has prior teaching experience at Florida State University, Pima Community College, and The University of Arizona. A few of her professional interests include promoting nutrition science in the media, comprehensive health education to improve the lives of those with diabetes, wellness education to improve childhood fitness, and exploring prevention strategies to reduce the incidence of oral cancer. In her free time, Kathy enjoys spending time outside hiking with her family and friends, running, cooking, and reading.

COOPERATION THROUGH POETIC TRANSLATION

The Thrive (4th grade) classroom has been working in conjunction with the Center for the Art of Translation through a program called "Poetry Inside Out." We choose from a database of hundreds of poems in many different languages. A protocol for working with the poems takes us from increasing background knowledge about authors and cultures, all the way to presenting and reflecting on a new version of the poem translated to English.

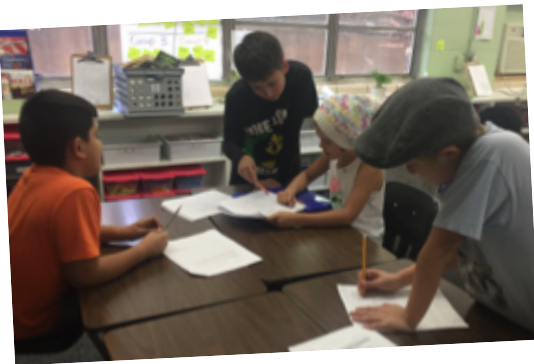
So far we have worked with Tzotzil, a Mayan language, and with Italian.

The process: We start with a step called "Phrase by Phrase." At this stage students work in pairs and try to write a straight translation for each word in the poem using a glossary provided with the poem. Evan explains, "we look at the glossary, and then we try to find a word that matches." It can end up sounding really choppy, but there's more to come!

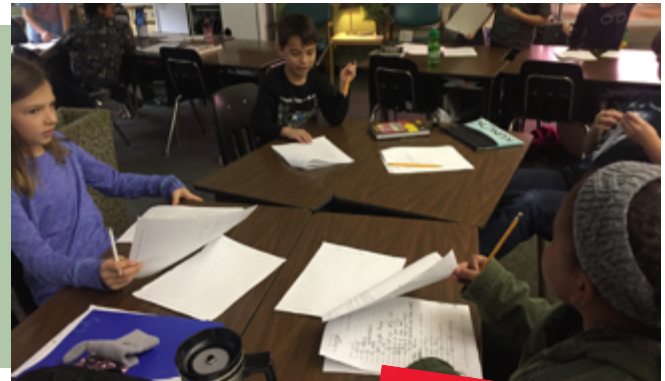
The next step: "Make It Flow," generally takes longer because partners work with another pair and have to make decisions on what they think their final translation should be. Here, Darius says, "you have to work with more people, and sometimes it's harder. But sometimes it's better because you have more people that might understand what you're thinking." Thrivers go back and forth in open debate and discussion, trying to make the poem sound and look the way the author intended (or the way they want it to!).

Key words which always come up during the "Reflect and Share" steps are: compromise; cooperation; discussion; argue. We've learned a lot about what it looks and sounds like to have a productive discussion. We are excited to choose more poems and work in more languages as we hone these important language and social skills.

How it feels: "It was fun, but it was kind of hard because sometimes someone didn't want that. Sometimes they (another group) did something else, like we had 'jaguar prances' and they had 'dancing jaguar.' It was fun because I liked choosing the words. The definitions were cool," said Lydia (photo below).

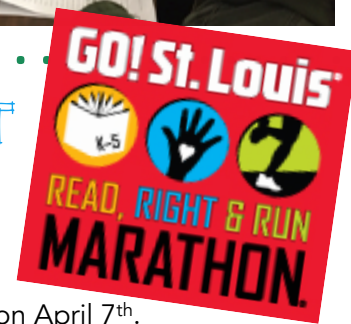


Audrey, tells us about her group in the photo on the right, "We're working on 'Make It Flow,' and Lucy and Darius are debating on what words we should use. It was a serious poem, and we wanted it to sound like that."



READING & RUNNING FOR WHAT'S RIGHT

Fitness, community service and literacy all come together in the Read, Right, Run Marathon (RRRM) afterschool program. The program was created by Go! St. Louis with the Soulard School's branch run by a group of parent volunteers, including parent/PE teacher Lisa Berman. Registered students pledge to read 26 books, do 26 good deeds and run 26.2 miles over the course of 6 months. The last 1.2 miles will be run as part of the Go! St. Louis Marathon on April 7th.



This program shows the power of our school community to bring innovative programming to our students. The most challenging part of the program for families is typically finding time and opportunity for them to complete the running during the time frame of the program. To support the students who signed up for the program, we've been running Wednesday Miles. Each week, parents lead a group of students on one mile runs at the Gene Slay Girls and Boys Club field.

Empathy, responsibility and integrity are words we use often at Soulard School. Doing good deeds for others and their community outside of school bridges the experiences they are having during the school day to their home lives. We discuss integrity in making sure we're running the full distance during our weekly miles and documenting their reading, good deeds and runs to make sure they're fulfilling the intention of the program. Through Read, Right, Run, students are learning the value of working towards a goal that betters themselves and others.

It's not too late to register for this program. Go to <http://gostlouis.org/read-right-run-marathon/> and start reading, doing good deeds and joining us for our Wednesday Miles starting again in February.

FULL OF WONDER

The Mosaic (2nd grade) class began our year encouraging each other to celebrate and value diversity, be proud of who we are, and of our family traditions. Our focus has been respecting and valuing others regardless of the color of their skin, their physical abilities, or the language they speak. We participated in an experience where we read portraits as biographies, wrote six-word stories, and read numerous books, like *10,000 Dresses* by Marcus Ewert, that expanded our awareness of diversity and exposed us to similarities and differences in communities beyond our own.

One novel we read was *Wonder* by R.J. Palacio. In this book, the author portrays a 5th grade boy with facial deformities. The book sends a powerful message about the importance of kindness, understanding and acceptance of everyone. The Mosaic students were able to dissect different characters and reflect on different perceptions of people. After this novel was finished, we were lucky enough to take a field trip to watch the movie adaptation of the book. Combining the book with the movie brought our study to life and allowed our students to further understand the importance of finding beauty in differences throughout our world.



"We are all different.
None of us have the
same mind."
-Payton

"It would be so
boring if we were all
the same people."
-Brooke

"Our differences are
special and no one else
can do what I can do."
-Sophia



TEACHING TO YOUR INNER ARTIST

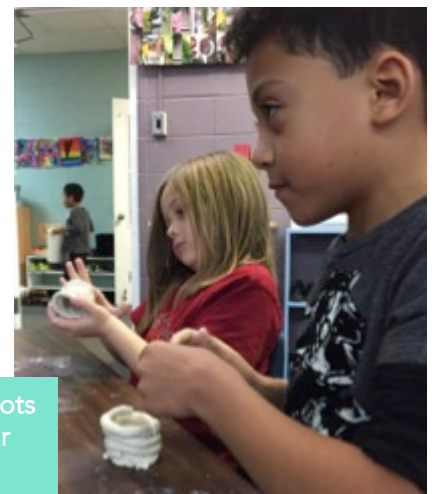
This school year has been one of experimentation and self-directed work in the Enigma (1st grade) classroom with Studio Arts. Although all students at The Souland School are encouraged to create and follow their own path regarding Studio, the more traditional teaching model is still an "introduction -> discussion -> lesson prompt -> independent student work time" model. Within the art education community there has been a buzz for some time regarding the "Choice-Based Art" or "Teaching for Artistic Behavior (TAB)" method as an alternative to the traditional model. In Enigma, we have spent the last few months working with this model, using it to explore larger themes such as architecture and textiles.

The structure of this TAB classroom is very much based on center-style learning and play, something our students have been familiar with beginning in our early childhood program. After an overall introduction of unit theme and contents of each center, students choose a center they have not previously worked in. Some centers are project-based, where a student will have a final piece to take home and some centers are experience-based, where the materials are disassembled and used again the next class. Centers contain basic prompts, occasionally visuals, but ideally are conducive to students exploring the materials in their own way.

Unit themes have been stretching for about 2-3 weeks allowing for all students to have a turn creating something at each center. This is a new process for me to implement in my art programming so it has been a great learning experience for me as well as the Enigma students. I look forward to seeing how this studio method may grow and change throughout the rest of the school year!



"Vessel" unit station: Otis, Janae and Celeste work on collage/oil pastel paper vases.



Jane and Will create coiled pots using air-dry clay during our "vessel" unit.

PARTNERING FOR CHANGE

Last school year, a group of parents formed the Diversity & Inclusion Committee and worked together to survey our community to learn about ways families grow their understanding of diversity and inclusion. The parent committee and school administrators met over the summer to discuss the responses and create an action plan to deepen community engagement. Their first task was to establish a mission statement:

In partnership with the school, the purpose of this committee is to have safe and honest conversations about the importance of diversity and inclusion in the Soulard School. We want to continue to ask one another and ourselves questions that allow us to reflect and grow as individuals and as a community. We will strive to discuss ideas and take action to improve school diversity through recruitment and outreach, student curriculum, parent discussion, and teacher professional development.

This school year, more parents joined the planning and helped to narrow action steps. At the same time Soulard School staff are using their professional development time to prepare for **expanding curriculum around equity, diversity, and inclusion topics**. We are excited about this trajectory and **look forward to working together as parents and staff to plan a parallel curriculum that will include social justice standards, books, speakers, and discussion groups**. More details to come. If you want to be a part of planning contact sarah.chrsitman@soulardschool.org

People who
make the
world better
for other
people are
some of the
best people
-Kid
President

THE SOULARD SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT PROCESS



I see you



I learn from you



I partner with you



I make change with you



I belong



"You have the right to share your work." -Evie

The Mums Class (K) discussed the difference between a right and a privilege. We talked about how all humans are created equal and deserve respect. We are working on building a sense of community and advocating for what is right not only for ourselves but also for others.

"All people should have the right to be peaceful and safe." -Nora

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
- ✓ Schnuck's eScrip Community Cards



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

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The luck of the Irish was with The Soulard School in early November at our Annual Clovers and Stars Irish Benefit Show. Switchback, the internally recognized duo, headlined the show with their unique Celtic-Americana sound. The evening started with traditional Irish Music by The McGurk's House Band. World Champions from The Clark Academy of Irish Dance joined the line up this year along with a special performance from TSS's New Development Director, Molly Walsh. St. Louis Irish Arts musicians rounded out this exciting night of music with a very special performance by The Soulard School Strings Program.



The event was a huge success raising almost \$80,000 for our learning environment. THANK YOU to all sponsors, entertainers and volunteers who helped make this night a success.

Thank you to our many partners & supporters!



Annual Appeal 2017-18

Thank **YOU** to all who have already gotten their 2017-2018 Annual Appeal gift in. There is still time to get your tax-deductible gift in and support the innovative learning experience that makes The Soulard School so unique. With your support, TSS will continue to provide an exceptional educational experience to our students — an experience that facilitates healthy growth of both the individual and the community

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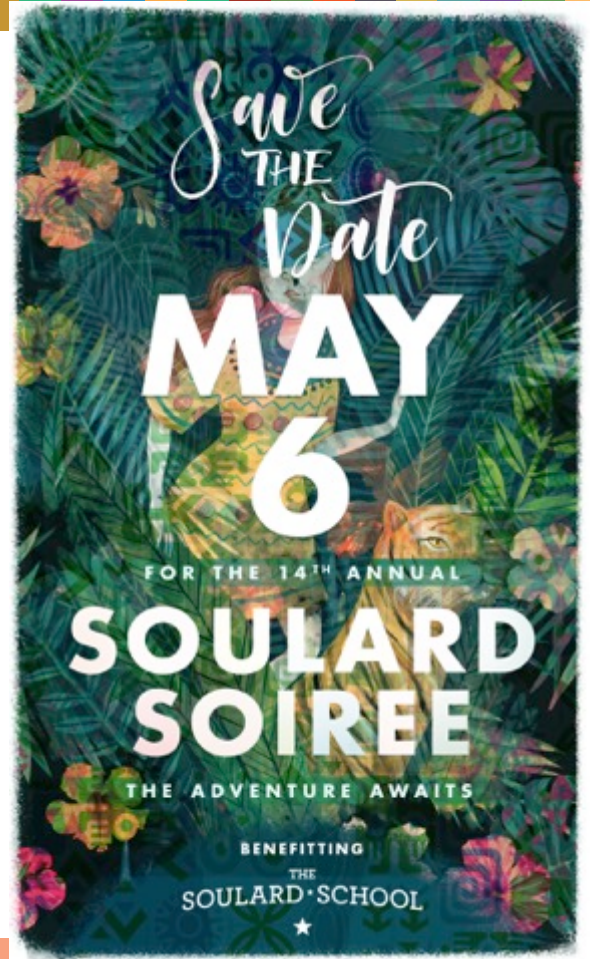
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We are looking for awesome "adventures" to add to our Silent and Live Auction. We are looking for fun adventures to do around town such as Cardinal's tickets, concert tickets, Muny tickets and Symphony tickets. We are looking for trips and hotel packages to exciting destinations.

If you have any leads or connections that might help our team secure these adventures please contact molly.walsh@soulardschool.org

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