

THE SOULARD SCHOOL

COMMUNITY NEWS

PARTNERING WITH BRAVERY & JOY

*Notes From The Leadership:
Shenika Bishop, Principal*

As a new Principal and a new member of the Soulard School community, the fierce dedication from parents, teachers, and community partners has filled me with an overwhelming amount of joy while managing an unorthodox scenario: "Pandemic Principal-ing!" The circumstances of the world can weigh heavily on us, and it can be so easy to focus on the negative, but an easier option is to choose JOY! I strongly believe that **JOY is a brave decision**, a thoughtful choice that influences how I respond to LIFE and, most recently, adjust to a "new normal." Our students continue to be a part of my joy from the start of my day to the end of it. At morning driveway, walking the halls, stepping into the classrooms (in-person and Zoom), having conversations, playing four corners or lunch-time hoops bring me great joy, and helps me refocus my energy on the positive which is our students! It's a gift to witness their wonder, hear their laughter, and experience the humor in many of the things they share!

This school year is an exceptional display of the commitment we all have to making our school work. Our students, families, and community partners have truly supported and shared the workload. It is with everyone's dedication that we are able to continue to operate at full capacity. **The extension of support in and out of the classroom consists of extended family supporting the hybrid learning model, carpooling, volunteering to care for our chicken coop, and most recently shoveling snow.** The administration team, teachers, and staff are taking steps to get back to all the wonderful things that make The Soulard School unique and a transformative fixture in our community. As we work to reimagine and restructure community engagement, we invite parents to take the opportunity to engage with us during Parent Association meetings and our monthly parent workshops.

Our community continues to be one filled with love, shared wisdom, and dedication. **Thank you all for your valuable partnership, supporting the school and the development of our students.** In closing, the village that we foster here at The Soulard School is one that will thrive and have an everlasting impact on our children as it relates to diversity, inclusion, well-being and community; it is because of all of you leading by example and helping to educate our students beyond the classroom!

History will judge us by the difference we make in the everyday lives of children. Nelson Mandela

February 8 – 11, 2021

"ACROSS THE GENERATIONS" CELEBRATION

We are reimaging many of our long-held school traditions this year. We cannot leave out our annual event expressing our love and appreciation for our grandparents and special friends of our students. Though we cannot welcome visitors into the building, we still want to honor these special people with our "Across the Generations" Week February 8th - 11th.

Pre-K Grandparents

Be on the lookout for a special video sent to your email.

K-5th Grandparents

Across Generations Week will be a series of Zoom Grandparent/Friend Show-and-Tell sessions. We are excited to have Grandparents join a scheduled classroom Zoom time with students and teachers. If you haven't done so already, please contact kimberly.shead@soulardschool.org to RSVP for a time. We will schedule our Grandparents in small groups throughout the week to avoid overcrowded Zoom classrooms.





Quietude Pre-K students rang in the new year in celebratory style. They painted fireworks, dressed up, and banged on pots and pans.



Open-ended art exploration... Just a sample of what goes on each week as we explore materials and use our 100 languages to express ourselves.



Before the winter break, students excitedly talked and shared stories about their holiday traditions. A classroom tradition unique to the Quietude Pre-K classroom is to decorate paper lanterns on each child's birthday. At the start of the year the plain white lanterns are hung from the ceiling and as each child celebrates their special day, the rainbow of colorful lanterns grows and brightens the classroom.

Tallis and Beau park their bikes and scooters. On a cold winter day, this is a perfect way for the kiddos to use their gross motor skills indoors.



NURSERY

Bella loves to build very tall towers out of different materials and then watch them fall.



Max loves to use his imagination. This piece of mulch has turned into a magical phone.



PRE-K

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Since beginning the school year hybrid, our Kindergarten friends enjoyed place-based learning of weather and the seasons. What better place to study weather change than St. Louis, right? Each day students tracked the weather and documented the changes they saw as Soulard went from a beautiful fall haven to a winter wonderland.

Walking trips to Pontiac Square Park gave in-person learners a first-hand look at how the seasons in St. Louis affect the plants and animals. During the fall, Mums created art with fallen leaves and conducted experiments to understand how the reduction of pigment changes the color of the leaves.

Mums also noticed the changing of decorations throughout the neighborhood. This led to a study of the many holidays celebrated in October through the end of the year. This helped Mums understand the diversity of our local community and gain appreciation for other cultures.

Mums closed out this cross-curricular study with learning about snow and creating snow globes in STEAM. Each student selected a photo of themselves touring the neighborhood to be the center of their snow globe. They filled mason jars with glitter, oil, and water. Now they have keepsake of their study of Soulard in its many seasons.



Gertrude shows off her snow globe.



The Tues/Thurs group poses with neighborhood decorations.



Adrian researches "change makers."

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★ How much of a difference can young people make in changing the issues we see in our daily lives?

★ What problems need to be fixed?

These questions were posed to our first grade class as an introduction to *Change Makers*. As we began to learn about historical figures that made a positive impact, we also began identifying things that we could change in our family, school, and neighborhood to bring about necessary change. This interdisciplinary unit combined reading, writing, social studies, and social emotional learning as students spent time researching people in history that devoted their lives to make a positive social change.

As we dove further into nonfiction texts, students were given the opportunity to select a biographical subject to study more in depth. During classroom discussions, both in-person and online, students were prompted to understand the motivations behind change makers as well as identify commonalities in their lives and work. Each student selected a change maker and researched their lives and the contributions they made. Their research included identifying questions they had about their change maker, creating a timeline, and finalizing their research with a self-selected culminating project that demonstrated their learning.

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Our Alchemy friends in Second Grade have been working so hard this year learning so many new things. We love to learn about ways to open our minds up to all walks of life and essential questions surrounding them –

- ★ What can we learn from different groups of people?
- ★ What mistakes have occurred in history?
- ★ What can we do to create a positive change?
- ★ How can we show appreciation?



One unit of study that we did in the fall **was learning about Indigenous Peoples**, specifically regions and tribes that were found here in Missouri. We incorporated nonfiction reading and finding the main idea, research based writing, and utilizing text features to write about tribes, food, clothing, homes, tools, and natural resources used by these tribes. **We finished our study by presenting our creations of either a home, tool, or item of clothing from materials found at home and sharing what we have learned to the class.**

All year long we have continually focused on the idea of change- changes faced by groups of people throughout history, changemakers, changing seasons, changes of the Earth rotating and revolving around the sun, the history and changes of holidays celebrated around the world, and current events like political changes and changes brought on by the pandemic.

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In the Mosaic class, **we have been working on grammar in literacy**. More specifically, we have been working with Montessori grammar symbols to help us clarify parts of speech. In the Montessori curriculum, **grammar symbols help the students denote to which part of speech an individual word belongs**. So far, the students have studied articles, nouns, adjectives, and verbs. The symbols help the students see that each word is its own part of speech and has a specific job in communicating. The symbols that belong to each of these words we have learned so far are a small light blue equilateral triangle for the article, a medium dark blue equilateral triangle for the adjective, a large black equilateral triangle for the noun, and a large red circle for the verb. The different colors and shapes of the grammar manipulatives help the children stay engaged while easily connecting them to different parts of speech.

ALSO...

Just before the holiday break, **Mosaic students completed an economics unit in which they created a concept for a food truck**. We began the unit reviewing goods and services and learning about how our wants and needs are met within the community. **Students were introduced to supply and demand and worked on developing a cost-effective product**. Students also created a brand name and a visual look for their food truck. Local restaurant and food truck owner **Lemya Sidki of Yemanja Brasil** gave our Mosaic friends a virtual tour of her mobile eatery and answered student questions about getting into the restaurant business. Covid-permitting, Mosaic students look forward to one day being able to prepare and serve their dishes for their very own Food Truck Friday.



EXPLORERS

4TH



In Explorers 4th Grade class, **we completed a unit about memorials** this Fall. A memorial is an object created to remind people of a person or event. This past summer, there was a large focus on Confederate and other memorials around the country being taken down, so **we decided to build memorials for people we felt deserved them!** We researched, planned, and created very different memorials for such people as Breonna Taylor, Rosa Parks, Pocahontas, Rube Goldberg, and Ruth Bader Ginsburg, just to name a few. Each memorial has a page to go with it explaining the person's contributions to our lives, and why they deserve a memorial. They turned out incredible! **They decorate our Explorer classroom and the halls of The Soulard School.** It is important that we understand why some memorials need to be taken down. It is also important that we honor those people who have passed who have made contributions to our community or our country.

Here's a recipe for a Soulard School lunch favorite:

Rainbow Vegetable Soup

- 2 tablespoons of olive oil
- 2 cloves of garlic, minced
- 1 small yellow onion, minced
- 2 stalks celery, minced
- 1 cup chopped bell pepper, any color
- 2 large carrots, diced
- 1 head broccoli, chopped small
- ½ cup chopped green beans
- ½ cup shredded purple cabbage
- ½ cup frozen peas
- 1 cup frozen or canned corn
- 2 15oz cans diced tomatoes
- 2 cups water or vegetable broth
- 2 tablespoons of herbs (basil, chives, chervil, dill, tarragon, and thyme are what I use)
- Salt & pepper to taste

- ★ Heat the olive oil in a large stock pot over medium heat.
- ★ Sauté the garlic, onions, onions, celery, peppers and carrots until the onions are clear and soft.
- ★ Add in broccoli, green beans, cabbage, peas, corn and tomatoes. Mix well.
- ★ Add the water or vegetable broth, then cover and bring to a boil, then simmer 20 minutes.
- ★ Season with herbs, salt and pepper.
- ★ Serve with crackers, cornbread or a grilled cheese sandwich.



Lunch at the Soulard School looks very different this year. We don't have family-style lunches with tables of mixed grade students eating together in the McGurk's Room, passing bowls of salad and practicing table manners. Our Student Chef program, where all students participate in cooking lunch for the school, has been put on hold. Our parent and grandparent volunteers can't come to help us clean up after lunch. Like most things this year, it feels different.

After winter break, more **friends started returning to school** on our hybrid schedule. **We've had to rethink our lunch program again** and decide how to best serve our community. Most grades are eating in the classrooms. **Food comes plated for each student and is served at their desks**, spaced apart. It feels different, but the learning at lunch continues.

When Erin and I deliver lunch to the classrooms, **we engage with the kids**, asking and answering questions about lunch, snacks, recipes and menus. We have done menu planning on the fly, with the class brainstorming menus, researching recipes, and exploring new tastes.

While I long for the days we can return to student prep cooks lining the tables in the McGurk's Room chopping, peeling, slicing, dicing, stirring, tossing and tasting; I know that **we are still serving healthy, made from scratch, plant-based meals to all our students and staff.**

- Sarah Kate Buckles
Nutrition and Culinary Arts Instructor

THRIVE
5TH



Reading to Kindergarten friends by Zoom.



Playing "Detective" game by Zoom.



We are thankful to the generous individuals that came together to "Raise the Roof" for the Soulard School Nursery. Our building is in need of a new roof and several of our neighbors and their friends came together to raise the necessary funds to make it possible, \$15,000!!!!

Matt Snyder
Michael Duggan
Arnold Porter
Hal Liller
Gred Heidt
Hope Abramow
Marybeth Wallace

Something we love about TSS is that it is a place for family and community. More than ever before we've had to get creative to foster community as we have continued in our virtual learning environments this year!

The Thrivers have done some amazing things to build connections with each other. They have played interactive Zoom games like "Hide and Seek" and "Detective," participated in digital collaborative design challenges through Google Slides, and found new ways to work together for projects and learning.

Although physically apart from each other and the school, Thrivers have shown compassionate and thoughtful leadership through community engagement. They enjoyed writing notes to our senior friends at Allen Market Lane as part of a whole school care project.

They also absolutely love spending time with their "Mums Buddies" from the kindergarten class. Through Zoom, they have been able to share a love of reading with their younger friends as they spend time reading to one another. They made holiday cards to show their Mums Buddies and also have enjoyed playing games with them. Currently our Thrivers and Mums friends are looking forward to making play doh together on Zoom and then using it to make fun creations!

We are excited to see these amazing Thrivers continue to cultivate community throughout the rest of the year.



Thanks and gratitude to Sugarfire for their weekly contribution to our school lunches.

STUDIO ARTS CORNER



We all know Soulard and Mardi Gras go together like red beans and rice. Since the celebration is looking a little different this year, *some of our amazing Soulard students had an opportunity to participate in Mardi Gras Inc's (virtual) Shoebox Parade.* Our Pre-K students worked on a St. Louis Aquarium themed float, showcasing some amazing sharks of different sizes and colors.

One of our 3rd graders, Harley, also made a turtle-themed float to showcase the aquarium. The aquarium was definitely a popular theme as one of our 2nd graders, Rylan, created a Mardi Gras octopus complete with lights! Additionally, we had two more 2nd grade students, Avery and Emerson, create some impressive floats using the City Museum for inspiration. Congratulations to all the students whose hard work and creativity helped keep the festivities going during this non-traditional celebration.

For a complete look at all the floats and more information about our local attractions check out the video* on the St Louis Mardi Gras YouTube page.

- Jacci

* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9nmXc78lwpl>

Our weekly Performing Arts Zoom classes have been filled with listening, discussion, and of course a little dancing! The first part of the second trimester was spent exploring Musical Instruments and Ensembles. Students were introduced to the instruments of the orchestra through Prokofiev's famous children's symphony, Peter and the Wolf, wrote their own ideas for symphonic stories, and gained appreciation for ensembles like marching bands and folk groups.

After spending so much time on instruments, it was time for some much requested vocal music! Mums, Enigma and Alchemy kids reviewed terms Major and Minor with Rodgers and Hammerstein's classic "My Favorite Things", while Mosaic, Explorer and Thrive learned Verse, Chorus, Bridge and other components of pop song structure.

This month we are excited to begin a new unit appreciating Black musicians across the classical, ragtime, jazz and rock genres, and the effect that Black culture has had on music throughout history.



Janae (4th) working on note reading

PERFORMING ARTS CORNER



Crosby, Tatum, Harper, and Arlo (1st) play a 4 beat rhythm



Through Zoom, Gladys (1st) shared a favorite thing and a Woodwind instrument!