

# THE SOULARD SCHOOL

## COMMUNITY NEWS

### Notes from the Leadership

by Kerri Fair, Principal

### PERSPECTIVE:

Have you ever felt a three or four year old child looking at you? Those searching eyes that seem to look right through you? The look is often followed by the most innocent of questions, *“why are there wrinkles by your eyes even when you stop smiling?”* Some questions that follow come from nowhere; *“what if there were cars as big as one house or three houses?”* Sometimes they are so deep you can’t help but wonder where they came from.

It feels difficult to try to remember what our own three or four year old minds conjured up. Over winter break, my youngest daughter (aged 4) received a child’s version of a digital camera. She took pictures of everything and we all encouraged her or posed for her. When the newness wore off, I picked up the camera and scrolled through her photos. At first, all I could see were blurred images and strange angles. But then I remembered a neighbor’s comment a few years back about seeing his daughter’s perspective when he looked at her pictures. He felt it was a window into what she saw, and a way of seeing through her eyes.

Suddenly, my daughter’s photos took on a new meaning and importance.



We can never fully see through another person’s eyes or know what they are feeling, but it feels important to try. **At The Soulard School, our goal is always to individualize and focus on each child as a whole.**

To do so, we need to know who they are and how they think. This is not an easy task. It takes much time and careful observation to nearly think as they are thinking, or see as they are seeing.

**I often think we are like anthropologists; keen observers drawing and building upon knowledge of students in social, independent, and unique settings. We go even further, though, because we do not just observe. Our teachers create and customize educational experiences that are unique and address each of their students’ needs. As important as this is to our philosophy, we also support students’ growth towards acceptance and awareness of others’ perceptions.**

Giving students a variety of experiences and environments with which to practice empathy and acceptance also helps them build their perception of their world and their place within it. This issue highlights several experiences and places that provide these opportunities.

## Winter Calendar

- 1/21 YARD CLEANUP DAY 3:30 - 5:00 P.M.
- 1/23 RE-ENROLLMENT FORMS DUE TO ELEANOR
- 1/24 JANUARY OPEN HOUSE 10:00 A.M. - 12:30 P.M.
- 1/26 DEC/JAN BIRTHDAY BOOK ASSEMBLY 2:45 - 3:15 P.M.
- 1/30 PASTA ORDERS DUE FOR PA FUNDRAISER
- 2/3 FIRST TUESDAY PARENT COFFEE HOSTED BY ENIGMA
- 2/5 **STATE OF LEARNING 6:30 - 7:30 P.M.**  
REQUIRED MEETING- *BABYSITTING PROVIDED*
- 2/12 PASTA ORDERS ARRIVE
- 2/13 **SCHOOL CLOSED - RECORDS DAY**
- 2/14 MARDI GRAS GRAND PARADE
- 2/16 **SCHOOL CLOSED - PRESIDENTS' DAY**
- 2/21 **THE SOULARD SCHOOL TRIVIA NIGHT AT MAD ART -**  
*DOORS OPEN AT 6, TRIVIA STARTS AT 7*

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## QUIETUDE JAM SESSION - *not so quiet!*



As we noticed Quietude Pre-K friends developing an interest in various music styles and genres, sparked by *Charlie Parker Plays Be Bop*, we decided to study jazz music more in depth.

Our Cozy Loft featured music by jazz musicians that **students were encouraged to listen to and describe what sounds and instruments they heard in the different pieces.** We explored classifications of instruments used in jazz music and discussed the history of jazz. We also were able to experiment inventing our own sounds using a ukulele, a drum, a tambourine, shakers, and a xylophone and with that, we discussed rhythm and tempo.

As we continued our study on jazz music and instruments, we were inspired to create more of our own unique instruments. We used recycled materials donated by Quietude parents to put together our very own rain sticks! We filled them with dried corn that we previously shucked in the sensory table, and then were able to create a new kind of sound. We also made “jingle sticks” from recycled toilet paper rolls, fabric, and bells.

During our outdoor exploration time, friends used items in their environment to make percussion sounds and beats. A Quietude parent joined us along with his band to share their musical talents, and we were fortunate to experience live jazz music. This led to their own “jazz club” in the dramatic play area where friends could put on a musical performance for their peers.



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THE  
SOULARD ★ SCHOOL  
2014 BOOK FAIR



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And a huge THANK YOU to Left Bank Books for their continued support of our school and library!



## FROM OUR OUTDOOR CLASSROOM

You've heard the expression, "If you build it, they will come." Our outdoor classroom is a bit like that. Over the course of the last five years, outdoor experiences have become more requested by students and connected to classroom studies. In the past (and continuing into this year), we have been very fortunate to have community partners such as the Litzinger Road Ecology Center, Forest Park Education Center, Missouri Botanical Garden, Missouri Department of Conservation, and a few close farms to support our students' need for outdoor experiences.

*But, when the opportunity arose for our school to use a lot two blocks away from our school, our staff and students were beyond excited to begin to use it. Over the course of several months beginning this past spring, students, parents, and school staff helped design raised beds for each classroom with supplies that were largely donated. In addition, the owners (Pre-K parents Vicki and Jay Morris) tilled a large section to the north of the beds, planted sunflowers and*

*zinnias, and three watermelon vines grew in one of the raised beds. By the time school began again in the fall, there were many watermelons growing; causing a great deal of excitement among students.*

*We were able to enjoy eating our own ripe watermelon during several lunches, and several other classes used them to explore concepts such as weight, width, and how to determine ripeness. Classes use the space weekly before it gets too cold, either to connect to their studies, explore, or just as a different environment in which to learn. The Thrive fifth grade class buddied with the Enigma first graders every Friday morning to complete nature journals together in the space. Late in the fall, students got to see a monarch butterfly (that was found in our school yard and kept through metamorphosis by staff) take its first flight. These experiences are priceless and the space encourages a broader range of learning opportunities that we are now able to provide for our students.*





## THE SOULARD SCHOOL WINTER CONCERT

Our preschool and elementary students were given an opportunity to showcase their musical learning at our winter concert at the end of December. **This year the concert incorporated vocals that connected to class studies, as well as the winter season in general.**

While many parents come to see and hear their children play beautiful pieces on the violin, they are also witnessing much of the technical learning their children have been introduced to and have practiced during strings classes. Our youngest violinists (kindergarten Mums) had their debut on stage sharing their

knowledge of parts of the violin and proper handling skills. Older students in our orchestra have had many years of instruction and time to practice. Now that their basic violin skills have been established, they were able to show their ability to play both harmony and melody together. This is challenging because half of the students are hearing music played that is different than what the other half are playing: it takes much concentration. How did our orchestra students get to this place? ***Practice, practice, practice!***



### more views of our Outdoor Classroom





## VISITING AFRICA IN ENIGMA

The Enigma first grade class, through a grant from the Missouri Arts Council, was thrilled to have Metro Theater Company come teach us about Africa through a variety of art forms over a five week residency this fall.

The residency tied in with our continent study. The main focus was on animals in Africa. Students explored Africa through rhythm, movement, acting, drawing, songs, books, and photographs. Students imagined venturing through the Savannah, the desert, the tropical forest, and down the Nile River.

For our final project, the class created a play about a young man who found himself lost and looking for the rest of his safari group. He travels across Africa and, with the help of some friendly animals, he finally finds his safari group. **Teamwork, patience, and focus were essential to a smooth production and the students did a beautiful job!** The Enigma class is so grateful we were able to have this unique opportunity to learn through art!



## GARDENING & COMPOSTING

The Alchemy 3rd and 4th grade classroom has embarked on a scientific journey, though the STEAM program at school, to explore the potential of increasing sustainability through gardening and composting in conjunction with our culinary arts program. We have been noticing a large amount of compostable waste, along with other recyclable materials, that were simply being discarded into the trash. While setting up our garden this fall, we thought that it would be of tremendous support to become as sustainable as possible.



Some of the integrated curriculum that has been or will be studied in order to complete our garden project incorporate science, mathematics, humanities, art, engineering and technology. These are the integral pieces in our STEAM program that have been the impetus for our project. We began with the simple study of plant structures in science. We infused the construction of raised beds with the study of arrays in multiplication. This study also bridges to other areas of mathematics, including: area, perimeter, surface area, three-dimensional objects, volume, ratios and much more. An integrated curriculum with a meaningful project at the core provides for a more enriched understanding of the world around us.

To begin our project, the students divided into groups to focus on different aspects of the project. There is a unit of management, of education and communication, and one of design and construction. After each piece is begun, further tasks will begin to incorporate regular day-to-day implementation of running the garden/compost program. We are all very excited to begin composting and recycling to thrust Soulard into a more sustainable future.

**SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL OF  
THE GRANDPARENTS WHO  
JOINED US IN OCTOBER FOR  
GRANDPARENTS DAY!**





## Please help us once again reach 100% Family Participation



### JOIN OUR SCHOOL'S P.A. (Parent Association)

The Soulard School Parent Association (PA) is a place where we can come together and add to the community of our school; **the experience of our students, educational resources for our teachers, support of our administration and school facility, and our collective experience as parents.**

I invite you to participate in the PA and help us define our community and how we support our school this year.

**The next PA meetings will be held on the  
3rd Tuesday of the month at 7:30:**

**Jan 20, Feb 17, April 21st.**

**You are welcome to join in the fun!**

*We meet either at McGurk's Pub or in the McGurk's Room  
- check with Matt King for each month's meeting location.*

#### 2014-15 PARENT ASSOCIATION

President:	BETH HYSER
Vice President:	LISA BERMAN
Secretary:	MATT KING
Treasurer:	SHANNON MCGRATH
Room Coordinator Coordinators:	
EC:	SHAWNA CLIMER
Elem:	SIERRA CORTAZZO
Social Events:	SARAH FOLKEMER-COLEMAN AMY COREY GWEN WEST LAURA JACOBSON
Outreach:	SHELLY FLYNN-HARDING CHARLES BOCK CARA SPENCER ESMERALDA FELIX
Member at Large:	HEATHER MANLEY



## Community Outreach Club

The first session of clubs brought a new opportunity to Soulard School students, **Community Outreach**. Lead by Diane Keaggy, TSS parent and Sarah Christman, ED, they found opportunities within the neighborhood for the group to volunteer and exposed them to the variety of opportunities to reach out.

Club member, Addison Thornton (5th grade, Thrive) can tell you more:

*The Community Service Club is a weekly club where my friends, teachers and I go around our community and make a difference by helping a food pantry, entertaining the elders and making nice little notes for people to up their spirit. Why I chose this club was because I felt like I can make a difference in my community.*

Here's what the other members said, *"I really liked going around and helping out at Allen Market Lane, meeting new people and playing games with them,"* Audrey Quick (5th grade, Thrive). Sorena Keaggy (4th grade, Alchemy) said, *"I learned there are different ways to be helpful to communities."*

We look forward to more opportunities to be out in our neighborhood!



See and hear more from The Soulard School: Follow us on Facebook

## Thank you to everyone who attended Clovers & Stars and supported The Soulard School

Thank you so much to all who helped make this such a memorable event, including: McGurk's, St. Louis Irish Arts, The Irish Brigade, Wave Productions, Soulard Preservation Hall, Matt King, The Soulard School Orchestra, and the event organizing committee!

*McGurk's* proudly presents



# CLOVERS & STARS

... An Irish Music and Dance Festival ...

to benefit

THE  
SOULARD ★ SCHOOL



## Thanks to our Very Generous Donors

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



It is incredible and inspiring to be heading into our 10th year at The Soulard School. During the past 9 years, we have emerged as a leader in

education innovation. Two years ago, a Development Committee of parents, teachers and administrators was formed to ensure our unique school's long-term viability. Last year, we launched our Major Gift Initiative, taking our compelling story out to the larger community. It was a year of tremendous growth for us. Our supporters now include benefactors like Emerson and Dana Brown Charitable Trust. We are partnering with Webster University and Boeing and having an impact beyond our neighborhood. This progress has validated our model and our courageous spirit, and throughout it all we have remained committed to our values - child-centered learning, community, innovation and diversity.

Because tuition covers only half of the school's operating expenses, meeting the budget each year depends on a combination of funding streams. These include gifts to the Annual Fund, income from fundraising events, corporate and foundation contributions, and generous benefactors who support The Soulard School's vision of socioeconomic diversity. Soulard School families and staff have helped to build and shape and energize our school from the beginning. We would not be here today without the continued generosity and support of dedicated parents, grandparents, alumni families, and friends in the community. This section of the newsletter will feature our fundraising efforts and the generosity of our donors - those who believe in our mission and support our work. For their gifts, and for your gifts, we are grateful. We could not do what we do without you. **Thank you.**

### FOUNDING DONORS

(\$10,000 - \$40,000 per year, up to 5 years)

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