

### Soulard School Constellations: A State of Convergence, A State of Connections & A Stellar Association

#### Notes from the Leadership

By Sarah Christman, Executive Director  
& Kerri Fair, Principal

At our school, we use stars to symbolize our school and its members. We have talked about them as stars that shine in different points in time as students, parents, staff and alumni. This excerpt from Neil D. Tyson expresses this state of being the school is composed of:

To let the past, present and future converge on us, all we have to do is step outside and let the night sky transport us. When you stare into the depths of the night sky, like looking at a distant star, you are also looking back in time. Focusing on that one star, you are seeing directly into the past. The light from the star is a messenger from some OTHER now that is long, long gone. And here is another twist. All the other stars in the sky are at different distances, which means different depths in time [are represented]. This present moment, in other words, is made of a whole lot of pasts. All those different past moments converge on you to create what you are seeing now, what you are experiencing now.

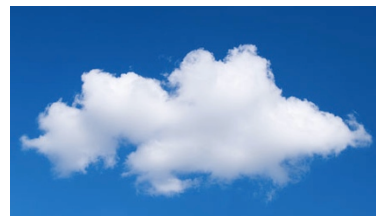
At our 2015 State of Learning Meeting, to emphasize our growth and achievements and symbolize our transition from convergence to connections, we played an interactive game to visualize our community and experiences as constellations, or a set of stars. The images we used to play the game came from a Professional Development experience where the staff talked about philosophy, innovation, growth and goals. As we talked, the teachers wrote down the words/phrases that came to mind. Those lists were then transferred to the images that a few lucky parents helped us connect.

This short game reminded us that connections happen throughout the day, in the classrooms, between staff and with our families. As we move around the school shifting into different roles, interacting with different committees, at recess, lunch or during extended core, each collection of stars transforms to a new constellation that symbolizes that moment, and the possibilities are infinite. This building of connections, embracing the moment and value we place on all of the moments that tell our story, is one of the many ways our community remains strong, or in our new metaphor, a star cluster or **STELLAR ASSOCIATION**.

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## Fall Calendar

- |       |   |               |                             |
|-------|---|---------------|-----------------------------|
| 10/19 | Grandparent Coffee & Cake<br>PA Meeting 6pm | 11/21 & 11/22 | Left Bank Book Fair         |
| 10/24 | Open House 10:00am-12:30pm                  | 11/25         | School Closed Conferences   |
| 10/26 | Birthday Book Assembly                      | 11/26 & 11/27 | School Closed Harvest Break |
| 11/3  | Parent Coffee: Thrive Hosts                 | 11/30         | Birthday Book Assembly      |
| 11/6  | PA Fall Party (see p 9)                     |               |                             |
| 11/6  | School Closed Records Day                   |               |                             |
| 11/14 | Girls on the Run 5K                         |               |                             |
| 11/16 | PA Meeting 6pm                              |               |                             |

## Scenes From The Nursery



Toddlers pruning the garden and picking ripe tomatoes.



Hop in, Friend!

SATURDAY • NOVEMBER 7 • 2015

McGurk's PROUDLY PRESENTS

# CLOVERS & STARS

AT

Souland  
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Hall  
1921 9th Street  
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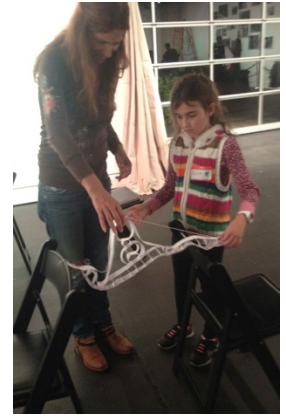
Choose from two showtimes: 3pm or 7pm

all proceeds benefit

THE  
**SOULARD★SCHOOL**



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[soulandschool.org](http://soulandschool.org) to pre-order your tickets today!



## Family Science Nights! Designing with Boeing Engineers and learning with your family!

### Notes from the Leadership Continued....

In the past two years we have welcomed 30 new families into our community. You wouldn't know there has been a one-third increase in our population. The new families have joined the efforts of the Parent Association, answered calls for volunteer support and become a seamless part of our community. In recognition of this collaborative effort, The Hyser family announced The Founding Family Fund, a generous expression of the impact that new and old (senior) families have made. They generously matched the 2014-15 new families' Annual Fund contributions. ***Being a Founding Family is a state of mind, not a place in time.*** It is empowering to know whenever a family joins our community, they know they have an important role to play.

The last constellation is formed with our five improvement goals made with The Missouri Non-public School Accrediting Association. We are proud to show you how hard we are working to develop ourselves, improve processes, build communication, increase access and shine for another 10 years.

#### 1. Strengthen and formalize the student evaluation tools and process.

- We have purchased updated math assessment materials that better align with our trimester reports and the Common Core Standards: the Comprehensive Mathematical Abilities Test (CMAT) and Test of Mathematics Ability (TEMA-3).
- We have revised the social emotional section of our trimester reports to better reflect executive functioning skills that are embedded in our school philosophy. The new format shows how these skills relate to the self, others and the environment.
- We have moved our evaluation forms to an online platform, Alma. This tool will help us run more efficient reports and as our training continues, we will be able to share more with you digitally.
- Additionally, these improvements and alignments help us to better present the efficacy of our model to grantors and funders. As we submit proposals, we are building in evaluation to ensure we build a stronger capacity to tell our story.

#### 2. Improve communication with families regarding the education experiences of their students.

- A glossary of terms was added to the Parent Handbook. We hope that having this resource will help parents feel more connected to the language of the school.
- Kerri Fair has begun Make Meaning Mondays, a weekly email to parents with articles or videos that connect to school/classroom philosophy and approach.
- The Quietude continues to utilize the BringUp app which sends a daily text to parents with a prompt to help start meaningful dialogue with their children about their experiences at school.

#### 3. Strengthen and formalize the professional development process for teachers in order to improve instructional quality.

- We have award winning and celebrity staff! Ann Luciani, Thrive (4/5th grade) Teacher, was chosen for the Missouri Association of Colleges For Teacher Education (MACTE) Outstanding Beginning Teacher Award.
- Lee Hahn, Enigma (1<sup>st</sup> grade) Teacher, was featured on HEC-TV: Behind The Minds.
- Monica Watson, Culinary Arts Instructor, was a guest on STL TV LIVE sharing her nutritional knowledge.
- Each full-time staff member has created a professional development plan. Currently, their combined PD experiences equal 1000+ hours! They also added another 200+ with the summer workshops they attended.
- We are presenting to fellow educators about our innovative programs and partnerships at the Professional Development School National Conference and the Council for Exceptional Children State and National conferences.
- We help others develop their skills as educators. Our teachers mentor Webster University students, model best practices and help prepare future educators. We work with pre-practicum and practicum students and are co-leading a Master's level course, CMAT 5000. This opportunity was made possible through a Boeing Global Corporate Citizenship grant. This is also the first time our model has generated funding for the school, to hit this milestone in our 10th year is something to celebrate! **Cont. on page 8...**

## MEET OUR SOULARD SCHOOL 2015-16 STAFF

## ADMINISTRATION

**Sarah Christman, Executive Director & Co-Founder**

When I began my career in education I started with the youngest age group, preschool. I knew then, and now, how vital and meaningful this foundation was and felt it would be a place to make a positive impact. Little did I know when I found my way to this community almost 15 years ago what an opportunity for impact I was walking into. As a Co-Founder of The Soulard School, I am delighted every day to see all that we have become, together. It has been an educator's dream to be a part of building a school that has layers of community, unique curriculum and innovative approaches. I value the relationships built in our close community of students, staff and parents and know what we are doing is making an impact.

I have two very wordy degrees, a Bachelor's degree in Human Development and Family Studies with a focus on Children in Group Settings from the University of Missouri, Columbia. I continued on at Webster University and completed a Master's in the Arts of Teaching with an emphasis on Children's Creative Expression (phew!). During my Master's work I was able to explore my love of art and found ways to pass on my learning to students in the classroom. This experience gave me the foundation to help develop The Soulard School's creative side and embrace arts integration. Outside of school I enjoy spending time with family, bragging about my husband Paul's amazing photography and walking the cutest pug in the world, Stella.

**Kerri Fair, Principal**

Just as we hope to create lifelong learners in our students, we strive to inspire and challenge our teachers to be wholehearted and passionate about learning. It is my goal as principal to support both students and teachers on this journey. Before coming to The Soulard School, I was a reading specialist in the Hazelwood School District for three years, a classroom teacher for seven years in North Kansas City, and a kindergarten specials teacher in Odessa, MO my first year as an educator. While teaching at The Soulard School, I have been a classroom teacher, literacy coach, and instructional specialist. I have taught grades K through fourth grade and am now in my twentieth year as an educator. I hold a Master's in Reading Education, a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education, and am working on my Ed. Specialists Degree in Educational Leadership through Webster University.

My husband, Clayton, and I are also parents of three Soulard School students. Our son, Colin, is a fourth grade Thrive student. Audrey, our oldest daughter is a Mosaic in the second grade classroom. And, finally, our youngest daughter, Emma, is a kindergarten student in the Mums classroom. We look forward to continuing to be part of this welcoming community of families and educators.

**Eleanor White, Assistant Executive Director**

I am a St. Louis native, growing up just around the corner from the school, in Lafayette Square. I attended Bard College, then received a Master's in Education Policy Studies from the University of Wisconsin. Returning to St. Louis, I continued my education, receiving my certification in Elementary Education from Fontbonne. After a few years of teaching at a charter school, I discovered the Soulard School, a place that looks just like the progressive elementary school I attended and loved as a kid. This is my ninth year with the Soulard School – over the years I've taught kindergarteners and toddlers as well as worked in the office. Meanwhile, my son Emmett is in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade this year and Theo is in pre-k. I live in Shaw with my husband Brad, the kids, and a big brown dog named Rufus

**Haley Biehl, Assistant Principal**

Every child learns differently, and what is fair is not always equal. It is our charge as educators to show regard for, and to reflect on, how a student expresses themselves academically, socially, and emotionally. In turn, we reflect on how our approach and interactions can adjust to ensure the child is feeling supported and respected. My role at The Soulard School has evolved from Student Support Coordinator to Assistant Principal. Now entering into my fourth year here, I am thrilled with the opportunities to continually support and evolve with this delightful community of students, teachers, and parents.

I started my journey in education nearly 10 years ago (!) as a paraprofessional with the Illinois Center for Autism, and quickly learned that nurturing the growth and development of my students was far more rewarding than working as a freelance journalist. I returned to school and received my Master's in the Art of Teaching in Special Education, and then continued as a teacher at ICA before joining the Behavior Support team in Belleville, IL, where I taught 1st through 3rd grade. I found my way to The Soulard School when I married my wonderful husband, Jason, and made St. Louis my home. Outside of school, I teach barre and fitness classes at Bl Three Fitness Studio, spend too much time spoiling the most adorable boxer, Louie; and love going on (mis)adventures with my family.

**Erin Quick, Development Director**

Excited by the school's grassroots beginnings, my family eagerly joined TSS in 2006. I have a BA in English - Creative Writing with an emphasis in Poetry, and a certificate in Women's Studies from Webster University. I have been a bookworm all my life, and am committed to building community through literature. I have volunteered in the school's library since 2006, and my role has included opportunities to teach poetry units & library lessons, and coordinate author visits. Three years ago, my work in fundraising and community outreach for the school led me into Development. As Development Director, I will be taking our incredible story out into the larger world, putting my library research and writing skills to use on strategic fundraising, donor relationship-building and stewardship, events, campaigns and grant writing to help support all of our meaningful work here.

I am a poet at heart, and outside of school you will find me writing poems and attending poetry readings. I love exploring the city with my partner Heath and making art with Audrey (Alumni) and Ezra (Enigma). I also enjoy traveling, gardening, collecting old dishes, and of course, bedtime stories - most especially *From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*.

## MEET OUR SOULARD SCHOOL 2015-16 STAFF

## NURSERY STAFF

**Sheri Mancuso, Nursery Teacher**

As a veteran educator, I have taught Infants and Toddlers, Preschool, Kindergarten, First and Second grade. I have served on the steering committee for Independent Schools Association for the Central States, Missouri Voluntary Accreditation and as a National Validator for the National Association of Education for young children. I am also certified with Missouri Parents as Teachers in Special Education. I have a Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education from Webster University and have furthered my studies in numerous continuing education classes. I am thrilled to be working in the nursery and nurturing one of the important beginnings at a school with high standards and community involvement.

In my spare time I enjoy reading, nature walks, swimming, traveling, and theater. I take pleasure in visiting with my daughter and 8 mo. old grandson in Los Angeles and spending time with my six brothers and sisters, seventeen nieces and nephews, and friends.

**Diana Hemkens, Nursery Teacher**

I earned my MAT in mild/moderate disabilities from Webster University. I have been involved with The Soulard School 2011, tutoring several elementary students, supporting the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade Mosaics classroom as a teacher's assistant, and teaching in the Nursery 2's room since January 2015. I also spent all summer with the pre-k friends at Little Camp Soulard. Now a 1's teacher, I am enjoying my role in supporting my curious class as they continuously discover the world around them.

**Gloria Haukap, Nursery Teacher**

I have worked in many areas of education throughout my personal and professional life; from working in nurseries to teaching middle schoolers. I graduated from Harris-Stowe State University in 2013 with my Bachelor's in Middle School Education. I have had a connection with Soulard School families since I was a teenager, and was a frequent substitute teacher in the Nursery and pre-k last year. I am super excited to be on staff this year to grow with your wonderful children in the 1's class!

**Sarah Henrich, Nursery Teacher**

I earned my BS in Nutrition and Exercise Science from The University of Missouri – Columbia. I have a variety of experience as an educator that includes toddler through high school age groups. I have taught preschool, worked at a before and after school program, and taught Nutrition education in the St. Louis Public Schools. This will be my fifth year with the Soulard School and my fourth year being full-time at the Nursery. I am looking forward to another great year with a wonderful group of children and an amazing group of teachers!

## PRE-K TEACHERS

**Bethany Burress, Quietude Teacher (Pre-K)**

Joining the Soulard School community has been such an amazing experience for me. The Soulard School's philosophy and view of education is what initially attracted me to this community, and I am thrilled to be a part of such an innovative and imaginative environment. This is my third year in the Quietude and I am incredibly excited for the year ahead of us. I have my Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education with a concentration in Family and Child Studies from Eastern Illinois University. I have been teaching for 7 years, and I love that every day is a new adventure for both myself and the kids. Outside of teaching, I love spending time with my two daughters, Holland and Harper, and my husband, Joe. We enjoy camping, dancing, and gardening together. I look forward to getting to know each and every family and working together to ensure the children thrive and blossom in the Pre-K classroom. I feel incredibly fortunate to be a part of the Soulard School community, and I know this year is going to be a great one!

**Amy Cross, Quietude Teacher (Pre-K)**

I have been at The Soulard School since 2012 and loved my time in the Quietude classroom and in the Pre-K summer camp. My passion in life is working with children. They bring smiles to my face every day as I learn as much from them as they do from me. I am originally from the St. Louis area and graduated from UMSL with a degree in Elementary Education. While attending UMSL, I lived in Benton Park and really fell in love with the community. Since that time I have been fortunate enough to travel extensively while living in Europe, Asia and Latin America. I taught English in a public all-girls school in South Korea. At that time, I volunteered at an afternoon program for economically underprivileged 4- 6 year olds. Although I always knew I wanted to teach, that was the first time I felt passionate about early childhood. I went on to the Dominican Republic where I was given the opportunity to work with preschool students again at Punta Cana International School. I stayed there four+ years before returning to St. Louis. Now, I am living in the Soulard neighborhood with my family: James, Dakota (2<sup>nd</sup> grade), and Pickle the dog. I look forward to continued growth within an amazing environment where I see children being inspired and encouraged to live in such a positive, respectful way! In all my travels I found the uniqueness of individuals is what makes the world wonderful. I look forward to teaching in a way that helps students love themselves and appreciate others.

**Jenna Morrison, Quietude Teacher (Pre-K)**

I am beyond excited to continue my adventures in teaching Pre-K at TSS! I earned my Bachelor's degree in Child Development & Education from the University of Missouri-Columbia. Throughout my time at Mizzou, I was a teacher in a Montessori classroom and in the University's Child Development Lab. Additionally, I completed my student teaching practicum at The College School in Webster Groves, where I embraced the school's Reggio Emilia inspired curriculum. Having been exposed to these various curriculums has helped me to build my own unique teaching philosophy, which I have been able to put into action and expand upon here. I strive to pass on my love of learning to the children by encouraging them to explore their ideas and interests and take an active role in their education. I have spent time in the school's Aftercare and Summer Camp programs, which allowed me to build strong relationships with kids and their families throughout the school. I have loved being a part of the Soulard School community for the past two years, and am excited to see what my third year brings!

# MEET OUR SOULARD SCHOOL 2015-16 STAFF

## ELEMENTARY TEACHERS

### Michelle Steele, Mums Teacher (K)

I'm so excited to be teaching in such a supportive and collaborative learning environment! I have the honor of teaching our kindergarten friends with my co-teacher, and friend, Julie. I couldn't be happier to share in a year filled with discovery and wonder, led by their interests and passions. My degree is in Special and Elementary education, a passion I discovered while working with adults with a variety of diagnoses. It was apparent just how elemental quality early education was/is to the development of how a child's mind perceives stimuli and processes it. I have my Master's degree in Profound to Severe Diagnosis at Webster University and hope to earn another in Positive Behavior Support. My daughter graduated from Soulard last year and it is quite evident how the education here has benefitted her academically. I'm just so pleased to be a partner in this process with so many intelligent and thoughtful peers!

### Julie Radin, Mums Teacher (K)

Joining the community at The Soulard School is a dream come true for me. Every day I get to spend time with our enthusiastic children and with a team of educators who work together to encourage each child to grow. I am especially fortunate to share a classroom with my co-teacher and friend, Michelle. With my Bachelor's of Science in Education plus over 20 years of classroom experience and Michelle's expertise in Special Education, we are able to create a classroom where each child is fully supported in learning and discovering new ideas. In my spare time I enjoy taking long walks through city neighborhoods, catching up with friends in coffee shops, and reading with my dog curled up beside me. I love my students, and I love teaching. The children's author, Mem Fox, says it for me, *"I like children. I like them very much. I have enormous respect for their intelligence and ability, and high hopes for their future."*

### Stephanie Grassel, Enigma Teacher (1st Grade)

I am so happy to be a part of The Soulard School family! It has been such a great experience moving to Missouri this summer and I am so excited for my future here. I grew up in Brookfield, Wisconsin and attended Marquette University (Milwaukee). After graduating in 2013 with a double major in Elementary Education and Broad Field Sciences (Chemistry and Biology), I taught 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> grade for two years in West Allis, WI. There is something so special about teaching, especially encouraging a life-long love of learning. I was drawn to TSS because of the great focus on well-rounded and hands-on learning in such a personalized environment! Currently, I live in Clayton with my two roommates and we enjoy exploring new areas of St. Louis. In my spare time, I love to spend time with my family, my fiancé (Mark), and friends. Mark and I are getting married this coming July, so we are enjoying house hunting in the St. Louis area, as well as wedding planning!! I also enjoy running, knitting and playing any board/card game. Thank you for the incredibly warm welcome, and I am so excited to be here and help educate your children!



### Lee Hahn, Enigma Teacher (1st Grade)

I am excited and very proud to be able to continue my life-long learning journey with this amazing community and these personality-filled students! I have a wonderful husband, and 3 boys of my own: a hilarious 9 year old (Jaxon in the Thrive class), a very clever 2 year old (Linkyn at the Nursery), and a very calm one year old (Hayze at the Nursery). Generally, I am family oriented, and occupied at all times by the interesting aspects that they bring to my life! My children make me view everything in a different light and I am so thankful to them for allowing me to view education through a parental perspective.

I have a BA in Elementary Education from Webster University, and am currently getting my Master's in Curriculum and Instruction with a concentration on Teacher Leadership through Concordia University. I have an emotional attachment to all of the students here at the school, and I love being able to implement TSS philosophies that I feel are essential for a prospering generation.

### JoAnna Daniels, Mosaic Teacher (2nd Grade)

I could not be more excited about continuing my Soulard School journey by moving up to second grade with my students from last year! I have a Bachelor's Degree from UMSL in Special Education and earned a teaching certification in Early Childhood Education and Elementary Education. Additionally, I have a Master's in Special Education. Before joining the TSS community, I taught students with autism in a self-contained school. This amazing experience allowed me to reflect on the uniqueness of each learner and recognize each student's gifts and abilities. Besides teaching, I am passionate about animal rescue and living a lifestyle that embraces and protects our animal friends. I live in St. Louis Hills with my husband, Spencer, and our wonderful pets. Next spring we are expecting a new addition to our family, with the birth of our first child.



### Anna Lee, Mosaic Teacher (2nd Grade)

I feel so lucky to be beginning my third year at the Soulard School. I was introduced to this school during my student teaching while getting my Master of Arts in Teaching degree from Webster. I spent the fall of 2011 in the Mums class and was able to return in 2013 to teach those same students as second graders. Before all of that I earned my undergraduate degree at Mizzou (Go Tigers!).

This summer I moved back to Ballwin from Clayton. It is quite a drive to Soulard, but I am happy to be close to my family, especially my two year old niece, Nora. I also rescued a puppy named Franklin. He is a lab mix and is full of energy and makes me so happy...when he is not chewing on my shoes! I look forward to the rest of this year and am excited about the possibilities it holds.



### Phillip McFarlane, Alchemy Teacher (3rd Grade)

I am very proud to be a part of the experienced and capable team at the Soulard School. In the past, I have been a professional actor working primarily with children's educational programs; violence prevention, AIDS education, and children's literature. I have worked as a Montessori educator for 13 years, six of which were spent teaching math and science to 7th and 8th grade students. I was also a theatre director for 8 years during which I wrote, produced and directed 3 operettas with 70 little Montessorians. I have my B.A. in Applied Behavioral Science from National Louis University and a degree from NAMTA in the Montessori Orientation to Adolescent Studies. I enjoy playing the guitar, gardening, adding to my vinyl collection and working as an advocate for children.



## MEET OUR SOULARD SCHOOL 2015-16 STAFF

## ELEMENTARY TEACHERS CONT.

**Ann Luciani, Thrive Teacher (4/5th Grades)**

I am so excited to, again, be learning with the Thrive classroom this year! I am beginning my third full year of teaching in an elementary setting as part of The Soulard School community. I first learned about The Soulard School when I worked as a literacy tutor through Webster University's Student Literacy Corp. I knew this was the school for me when I walked in on my first day and saw the Mums class crab-walking down the hall! After graduating in December of 2012 with my Master's degree in elementary education, I worked with the Enigma students as a long-term substitute. I am fortunate to be teaching at a school that embodies a philosophy that matches my own.

Teaching is a second (and final!) career for me. My first degree was in business. I worked for 10 years in the insurance and securities business until I decided to stay home with my two children. I first realized I wanted to pursue a career in education after volunteering in my children's schools and teaching preschool music. I truly feel I was called to be a teacher.

Both my children are seniors in college now and my husband and I enjoy running, going out to dinner, and traveling to our cabin in Michigan's Upper Peninsula every summer with our dog and kids. Now that we are empty nesters, my time and energy is dedicated to helping instill in my students a lifelong love of learning. I look forward to making this the best year possible for the Thrive learners.

**Melissa Uhl, Thrive Teacher (4/5th Grades)**

I am delighted to begin my second year at the Soulard School as one of the fourth and fifth grade teachers in the Thrive room. I feel so fortunate to continue my journey as a teacher in a school that values self-discovery and individuality. These values have been a part of my philosophy since I began my study of education. I attended Webster University where I got my Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education. During this time, I completed my practicum at The Soulard School. I fell in love with the tight-knit community and core values of the school. In addition to studying education at Webster, I was president of the Webster University Speech and Debate team and studied abroad in London, England. I now live in Webster Groves with my orange cat, Samson. I enjoy reading, traveling, and spending time with my family and friends. I am looking forward to this year with the Thrive students. I am hoping to instill a love of learning in each student as we explore the world through authentic learning experiences.

## EXTENDED CORE TEACHERS

**Lisa Berman, Physical Education Teacher**

This is my third year as The Soulard School's physical education instructor. I have an M.Ed. in Literacy, Language and Cultural Studies and have taught for more than 20 years in both formal and informal settings including the first K-12 charter school in Massachusetts and at the St. Louis Zoo. I currently also work for the World Sport Stacking Association overseeing their tournament programs in the US. A few evenings each week, I volunteer as the sport stacking coach at Concordia Gymnastics Society where my kids also take gymnastics and trampoline. My daughter, Holly and I are on the USA Sport Stacking Team and Darius started competing last year. Holly is a Soulard School graduate attending Grand Center Arts Academy and Darius is in the Mosaic class at The Soulard School. My husband, Alex, is a Wash. U Physician in the Neurology Department specializing in neuro-rehabilitation.

**Matt King, Strings & Performing Arts Instructor**

I have been playing and teaching violin for over 25 years. I started learning violin at school in third grade, and love teaching at a school that starts in Kindergarten with the violin. I received a Bachelor's degree in Music from the University of Missouri, Columbia in 2001, and joined the Soulard School in 2007 where I currently teach violin and performing arts. I have a son, Everett, in Kindergarten and a daughter, Eleanor, in pre-K at the Soulard School.

**Sarah Kate Buckles, Out of School Time Coordinator**

This is my fourth year as a parent at The Soulard School and I am so excited to join the team as Out of School Time Coordinator. I look forward to working with both parents and students to bring an enriching and fun after school program to everyone. My background is very diverse. I have a degree in Culinary Arts and Restaurant Management, but I've spent the last ten years working with not-for-profits in many different capacities. I've been a roller derby league president, a booker for an all-ages nightclub and art gallery, and a grocery co-op manager. I have worked as a caterer, a camp counselor, and a restaurateur. All these different jobs have given me an appreciation for the ever-changing organism that is the city of St. Louis and a strong drive to be involved in changing this city for the better and helping bring colorful and exciting events to the community. I'm looking forward to spending time with the aftercare kiddos, getting to know more of the families and to support the school in this capacity. I live in Fox Park with my husband Matt Thenhaus, our son Joss (he's in the Alchemy class this year), Uno the one-eyed pug and a flock of backyard chickens. You can also find me at The Fortune Teller Bar, divining the future on Cherokee Street on the weekends or knitting socks and drinking coffee at The Mud House.

**Toni Feldhaus-Ingley, Aftercare Assistant**

I'm new to The Soulard School, but many of you are already old friends of mine. I've lived in the City of St. Louis for most of my life, and I'm delighted to have the chance to work with some of the wonderful families I've come to know. My background includes a degree in English Lit from Mizzou and a career in the Education Department at the Humane Society of Missouri, but I tossed it all aside seventeen years ago for the chance to stay at home with my two wonderful kids, Alan, who is seventeen, and Helen, sixteen. I'm really enjoying getting to know all of you and even more excited by the chance to be a part of the nurturing and enlightening education experience that is The Soulard School.



Thanks for all you do!

# MEET OUR SOULARD SCHOOL 2015-16 STAFF

## EXTENDED CORE TEACHERS CONT.

### Brenda Ladin, Aftercare Assistant

I am from the Chicagoland area, and recently relocated to St. Louis, after 20 years in Seattle, which involved pursuing excursions to other parts of the country, and the world. During my Seattle years, I completed a MA in Education at Antioch University, specializing in Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligences. Early in my teaching time, I was involved with organizing two after school programs, a Team Read program with the Seattle Public Schools, and a 501C3 with the YMCA of Metropolitan DC, YCare, integrating standards with creative programming. I was Director for two years for a KnowledgePoints franchise, a for-profit tutoring program, modeled after the Sylvan methodology. I have also been a classroom teacher for grades K-12; including two years as a teacher in Beijing. I am pleased to be a part of the Soulard School team, both as a substitute teacher, and as a part of the after school program. I am also a trainer and consultant for Time to Teach, and run my own insurance business.

### Monica Watson, Culinary Arts Instructor

*"One cannot think well, love well, sleep well, if one has not dined well."* Virginia Woolf Finding my way to the Soulard School felt like destiny. I'm thrilled to have an opportunity to do what I love. Working in a supportive school community allows me to combine my two passions, children and food. I'm committed to educating kids on how to make healthy choices for life. I believe nutrition plays an extremely important role in developing whole children. I have spent the past six years working with this purpose by improving nutritional standards for young children in school settings and working for a farm-to-school lunch program. I have a degree in Restaurant Management and Culinary Arts. I began working many years ago in restaurants and catering. After spending time at home with my children, I returned to find my focus nurturing kids with food and empowering them with food knowledge. Our family began in Chicago before relocating to St. Louis 11 years ago. My husband and I have two sons in college and a daughter who graduated from St. Louis University last year. In my free time you'll find me running, spinning or on walks with my husband and our dog Gracie.

### Carrie Keasler, Studio Arts Teacher

I am excited to return for my fifth year as the Studio Arts Instructor at The Soulard School. I feel that our school's mission is to nurture personal, creative and intellectual growth for students and teachers alike. This sense of community and the desire to make instructional connections is a unique aspect of our school. I initially studied art (with an emphasis in printmaking) at The University of Dallas. After moving to St. Louis, I began working with young people through arts-related organizations, but felt a calling to be in the classroom on a regular basis. In 2012 I completed Missouri certification in Art K-12. I am so fortunate to be a teacher and learner in The Soulard School community. When I am not teaching, I enjoy working on my artwork, reading, watching movies, and studying yoga.



### Courtney Keefe, STEAM Lab Teacher

It was an amazing first year for the STEAM Lab and I am incredibly excited to tackle this role yet again this year! Collaborating closely with classroom teachers and students alike, I am looking forward to the awesome learning experiences and projects we will be creating together as we continue to embrace the Makers Movement as we engaged in the Design Thinking Process. Think, Design, Make, Build, Tinker, Improve!

It's hard to believe that this is my fourth year with The Soulard School! I feel incredibly lucky to be a part of this special community and have the opportunity to work with such remarkable children. I attended undergraduate at Loyola University New Orleans where I received a Bachelor's degree in Psychology. After Hurricane Katrina, I migrated to Miami, Florida for two years before returning to St. Louis to attend graduate school at Lindenwood University where I received my Master of Arts in Teaching in Elementary Education.

One of my goals as an educator is to inspire a love of learning in my students, as I share my passion for learning with them. I believe that teaching is more than a sacred responsibility; it is a privilege. When I am not at school, I can be found spending time with my family, friends, and beloved canine companion Chloe, curled up with a good book, chasing pavement at the various city parks, or exploring anything that piques my curiosity.

## Notes from the Leadership Cont. ....

### 4. Provide all students increased access to technology that is integrated in meaningful ways with their class curriculum.

-We proudly opened our STEAM Lab in 2014 with Courtney Keefe at the helm. She has been working with teachers to explore classroom studies through science, technology, engineering, arts and math.

-We have received additional funding for the 2015-16 school year to purchase technology for classrooms and expand our STEAM programming. **Making Makers** brings the design thinking process into curriculum building. We have partnered with The Disruption Department and Monsanto to make this STEAM expansion possible. The Innovative Technology Education Fund (ITEF) provided funding for our **Total Wellness Project**. Through this we formally connect our Culinary Arts & Nutrition, Physical Education and Social Emotional programs to bring awareness to the importance of balance in all realms.

### 5. Strengthen financial stability and sustainability in order for the school to meet students' educational needs.

-We want to keep this star burning bright. We provide a service that is valuable and unique here in St. Louis, and we invite our donors to participate, to join us in making sure we stick around. People are responding to us, demonstrating their confidence and their belief in us through giving. ~



2015-16 PARENT ASSOCIATION

- President: Sarah Coleman
- Vice President: Charles Bock
- Treasurer: Matt King
- Secretary: Rachel Kryah
- Outreach: Linsey Griffin  
Matt Wilson  
Esmeralda Felix  
Laura Krueger  
Cara Spencer
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Shelley Flynn-Harding  
JJ Lane
- Room Coordinator Coordinators:
  - Elem: Heather Manley
  - EC: Lisa Donahue
  - Nursery: Amy Grailer
- Room Coordinators:
  - Nursery: Annie Killeen
  - Quietude: Becky Voboril
  - Mums: Brenda Brown,  
Chris & Lauren Page
  - Enigma: Patricia Darek  
JJ Lane
  - Mosaic: Esmeralda Felix  
Tonya Marin  
Lauren Probst
  - Alchemy: Ingrid Weise  
Magen Saunders
  - Thrive: Diane Keaggy  
Kim Van Buren

# CAULDRONS OF FUN

Come celebrate the fall season  
at the PA's Annual Party

**WHEN:** Friday, November 6th, from 6-8pm  
**WHERE:** St. Matthew's United Church of Christ,  
located at 2613 Potomac

Kids can dress in costumes, participated in craft activities, and dance the night away! Chili potluck, think cauldrons of chili.

## Annual Appeal 2015-2016

All hands on deck! Keep your eye out for the November 1st launch of our Annual Appeal. The Annual Fund directly supports our Equitable Tuition Program, and last year was another great year. We exceeded our \$40,000 goal and raised \$51,067 - WOW!! Let's make that happen again! **This year's goals are to raise \$45,000, achieve 100% family participation, and add four new members to our Grandparent Scholars Club.**

## THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS!

We had great weather for Oktoberfest. As always, the Parent Association and an army of volunteers manned a booth at Soulard Oktoberfest Oct. 9-11. Overall, **the volunteers raised \$5000+ for PA projects.** Thanks to all who helped - the funds raised will support many facets of the school, including classroom budgets, family social events, professional development, and much more.



Collect for the  
Culinary Arts  
Program!

# PRE-K IS FOR THE BIRDS

## *A Classroom Investigation Into Bird Habitat*

After putting a bird's nest in our Science Area for investigation, we noticed quite a bit of interest forming around the topic of birds. Quietude friends approached teachers with various questions about birds, and friends were excited to share information they knew regarding the subject. We hypothesized about what we thought a bird's nest is composed of, and later we deconstructed the nest to see what materials were used to make it. After examining the materials that are used to make a bird's nest, we went on adventure to gather the necessary resources to build a nest. We used twigs, dried leaves, dirt, and water to begin making a nest. Upon closer look, we noticed the nest was tightly woven and the bird had created a very hard surface in the middle of the nest that closely resembled dried clay. To further our investigation of birds, we began examining the different parts of birds. We noticed that birds have a lot of similar features, but that there are distinct differences among birds. We compiled a list of attributes and features that all birds share. We noticed that all birds have feathers, wings, beaks or bills, lay eggs, and have hollow bones. When we began looking at the different types of beaks and bills, we noticed that certain beaks/bills were better for particular activities. We tested our theory out by trying different types of tweezers on a sunflower to remove the seeds. We concluded that a bird would need a narrow and pointy beak to successfully remove the seeds. We also pretended to be birds and use the tweezers to pick up materials using only our "beaks". We will continue explore the various characteristics, habitats, and migration patterns of birds as our topic of focus.

–The Quietude Class



Ana, Ella and Whelan using pretend play to explore bird life. "A beautiful bird!" -Ella



Back in the classroom Theo, Logan and Raleigh investigate and construct a nest. "We're making a bird's nest. We already finished it right there and we used the mud. We used the mud to put in the middle."  
–Theo & Logan

"A bird doesn't sing because it has an answer, it sings because it has a song." –Maya Angelou

## Confluence, Convergence and Culture Connections

The confluence project in STEAM connects both to our study of water and our study of Native American cultures. As part of our study, we built our own watershed on the playground, working in teams using sand from our sandbox. We were excited to see our small rivers and streams join together as they moved through the terrain. **The project supports our water study by allowing the students to build, manipulate and visualize how the force of water moves over and through the land.** They are able to **connect** this project towards a better understanding of the St. Louis watershed, the properties of water, and the geography of our river systems. **We are also studying the ancient native cultures that settled the land primarily due to the benefits of the river systems.** We will be looking specifically at the settlement at Cahokia and its connection to the Mississippi, the Missouri, and the Illinois Rivers: the Confluence. **Our next steps will be to visit these places of study.** We will be visiting Cahokia Mounds in a few weeks to learn how these people lived and to the National Great Rivers Museum to further understand the importance of our river system. *-Alchemy Class (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade)*

## FLASH MOBS & SCHOOL SPIRIT

The Soulard School's physical education curriculum follows the SHAPE America National Standards goal "to develop physically literate individuals who have the knowledge, skills and confidence to enjoy a lifetime of healthful, physical activity." We learn skills, play games and sports, and get heart-pumping exercise. We also learn about facing challenge, discover what kind of physical activities we find most enjoyable and learn about responsible social and personal behavior in active situations.

Dance is included in the standards, and we began our year learning parts of a flash mob dance. **A "flash mob" is when a group of people assemble suddenly in a public place and perform an unusual and seemingly pointless act for a brief time before quickly dispersing.** We used the song "Believe" by Shawn Mendes because of its positive message, and the students have quickly learned many common dance moves as part of the choreography. Each class, including pre-k, has a special verse where they have a class routine, and everyone learned the same moves for the chorus, plus modifications for different skill levels.

The first plan for our dance is a true "flash mob" surprise one day at recess. Once we build our confidence here at school, we will take our show on the road. Many different locations have been brainstormed by the students and we will make some choices before too long. In the end, I hope this dance becomes the "Official Dance of The Soulard School" and that we perform it often to remind ourselves that "Everything is possible. There's nothing we can't do." *-Lisa Berman, PE Teacher*

We are what we  
believe we are.  
C. S. Lewis



# DEVELOPMENT UPDATES

THE SOULARD ★ SCHOOL | COMMUNITY NEWS

BACK  
PAGE

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

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