

FEB
2024

THE SOULARD★SCHOOL

COMMUNITY NEWS

A COMMUNITY DEVOTED

A message from Amy Cross, SEC Director



During our January Open House, I overheard a parent saying as they were leaving, "I wish I had a school like this when I was in elementary school." I remember having the same sentiment the first time I walked through the doors of The Soulard School. So what is it about the school that makes it so special?

I think it is the display of dedication in this community that makes our school stand out. Dedication from teachers, students and parents partnering together to create a place they are all proud to be a part of. This reminds me of our mission statement: "The Soulard School is dedicated to educating its children so they can be empowered academically, grow emotionally, and build authentic connections." It is the empowerment of learning that builds excitement in students. The walls are filled with documentation of hands-on learning. You can see the pride students have taken in their work. You can hear them talking about their interests and see those topics reflected in photos, quotes and drawings. Every space in the building seems to reflect learning. There is a mosaic wall created by students who graduated years ago, and a lost and found coat hook constructed by Pre-K students just last month. Reflections of community members past and present give character to this brick and mortar building, transforming it into a warm, welcoming oasis in the middle of the city.

While reflecting on this, two students walk by me in pj's and slippers, then another does a bear crawl, followed by a group of fifth graders headed out to take care of the chickens. To the outsider this may seem like chaos, but at Soulard School we know that we are witnessing what it looks like when kids feel safe and free to be themselves. I wonder how the world would be if all families had access to a school where parents worked in the kitchen, helped shovel snow, fixed lights, and truly partnered with community members to build a transformational village for kids to learn in. I'm so proud to be a part of our school's legacy. As you read this newsletter, I hope our mission statement takes meaning as you see how our students are empowered academically, growing emotionally and building authentic connections.





Sprouts students creating art with pasta.

FOOD EXPLORATION SPROUTS FUN

The Sprouts, Jr. PreK class, had a blast engaging in our unit on food exploration. Our little friends made lots of their own recipes, including no bake cookies, as well as smoothies. We also engaged in taste tests, and used food materials in our studio center. Some of our favorite art projects from this unit included our lasagne noodle mosaic and decorating coffee filters to hang in our windows. The Sprouts also had tons of fun engaging in a tea party dramatic play. This was a fabulous exploration and the Sprouts really enjoyed it.

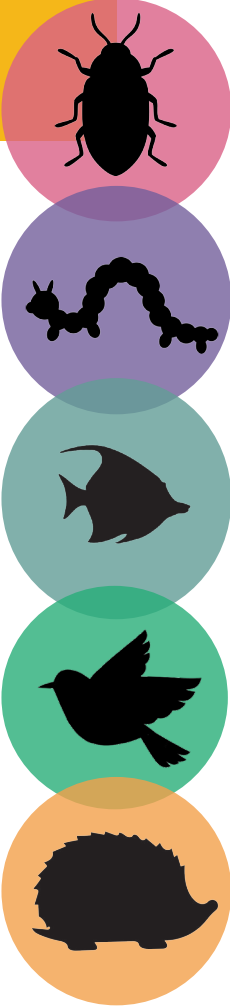


Sprouts student creating their very own recipe.



Sprouts student creating stained glass using a coffee filter.

MUMS AND THE VERTEBRATES



We noticed an interest in animal groupings as students began to sort animals and build out their habitats during our free choice exploration. This became a recurring theme in their play; we observed and listened as other students began to join and discuss the groupings. We began our study with two main groups: vertebrates and invertebrates.

We learned that while the majority of the Earth's creatures are invertebrates, most animals that we know and love are vertebrates. From there, we studied each group of vertebrates more in depth. We began with reptiles, then moved to amphibians, mammals, birds, and finally, fish.

To deepen our understanding of what the word vertebrate means, we looked at x-rays of animals to see what their skeletons looked like. Students studied the skeletons and were eager to guess which creatures each skeleton belonged to. After we studied each animal group, we engaged in a guided drawing to create an illustration of an animal from that specific group and drew 4 qualities that helped us to understand what makes each animal group unique. As a culminating activity of our study, we plan to have each student compile their work and create a book of vertebrates.



Mums students painting a "brate".



Mums student drawing an invertebrate.



Types of "Brates" depicted by the Mums class.



In Enigma, we have been learning about Indigenous Peoples. We've read nonfiction texts together to identify text features, watched videos and recorded the important information we learned. We mapped vocabulary words and took notes about our learning to build our knowledge. We read the story, *Fry Bread*, which helped us understand how food is an important part of culture and keeping traditions alive. We then got to make and eat fry bread with Sarah Kate in Culinary Arts!



Enigma student enjoying fry bread.



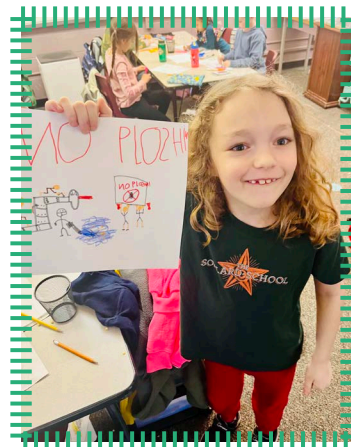
Enigma students learning how to make fry bread in Culinary Arts.



Enigma + Explorer students working together collaboratively on a clean water project.

We read the story, *We Are Water Protectors*, by Carole Lindstrom. We admired the beautiful watercolor illustrations and discussed how water is essential to life. We discussed how Indigenous cultures settle around bodies of water because it's necessary to fuel all living things. We learned about oil pipelines (called "the black snake") and how they threaten land rights and ecosystems. We watched videos about the oil refining process to understand the gravity of its devastation across the country and illustrated our learning in watercolor paintings. We learned about an Indigenous and youth-led protest at Standing Rock which aimed to stop building the Dakota Access Pipeline. This inspired us to make our own protest posters.

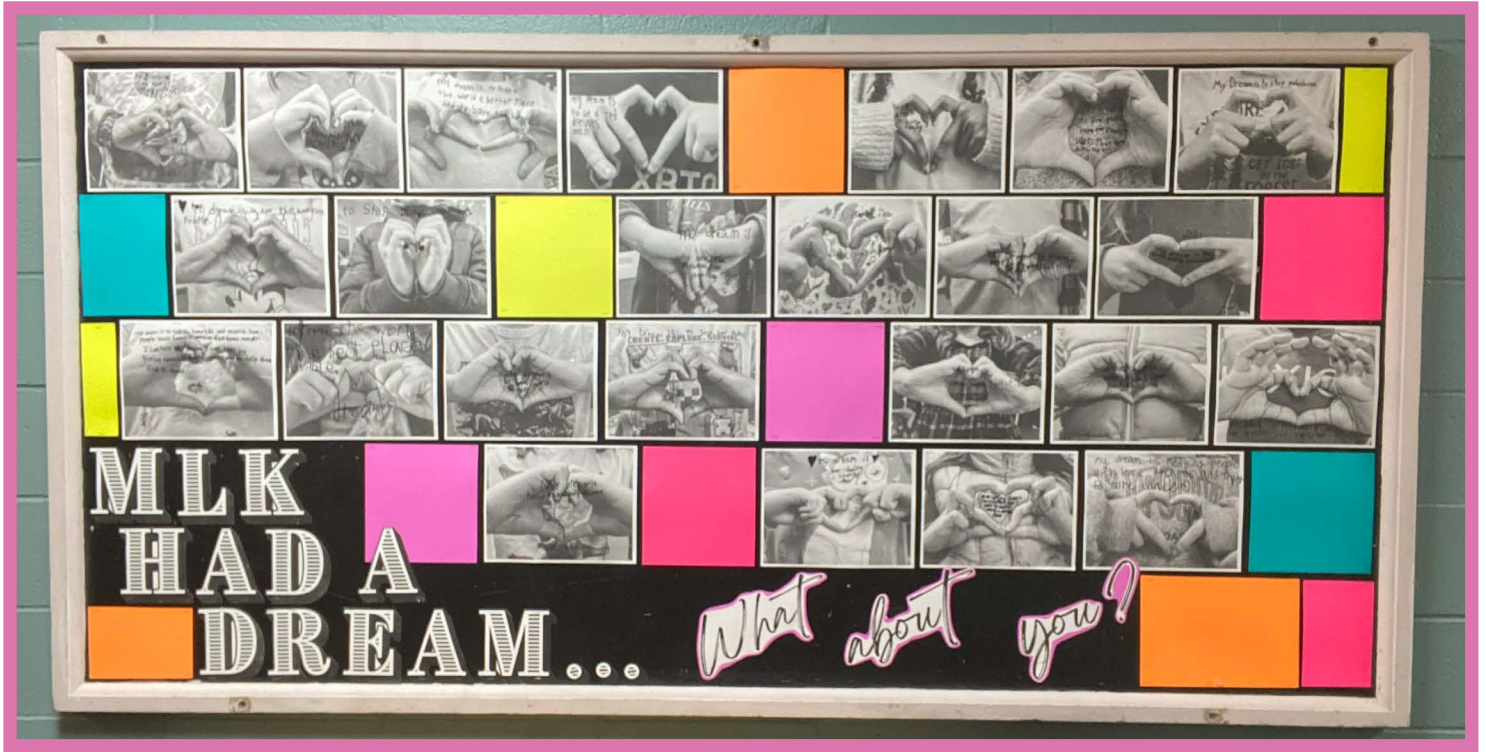
We researched which tribes formerly lived in the St. Louis area, and we learned two major tribes were the Osage and the Kickapoo. Enigma connected with our 5th grade Explorers friends who have been learning about the Osage tribe and Water Protectors. We partnered with Explorers in a science experiment where we tried to use various tools to help clean water that had been "polluted" with food coloring, wood chips, leaves and plastic waste. This led us to understand how hard it is to clean water once it's polluted. We reflected on what worked best and how we can make a change through protesting, contacting government officials, and voting for people who will stand up for what's right.



Enigma student's protest poster



Enigma student illustrating an oil rig.

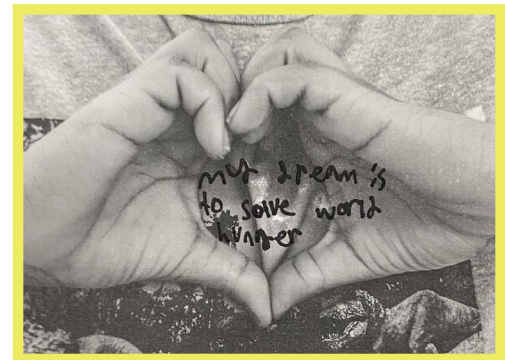
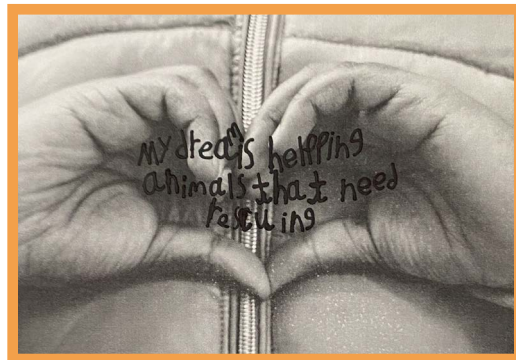
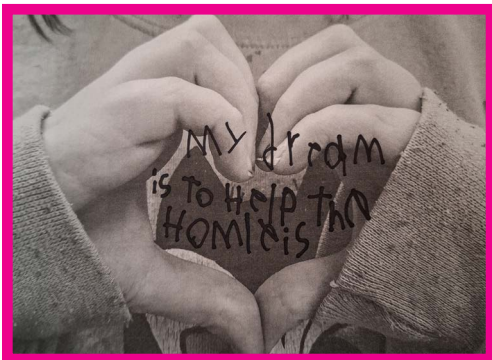


Thrive's class bulletin board showcasing all of their dreams.

Martin Luther King Jr. + Thrive have a Dream ...

Coming back from Winter Break, Thrive began a study of civil rights and Martin Luther King Jr. Students watched short video clips highlighting and detailing MLK's life. Students also read parts of MLK's "I have a Dream" speech. This led us to discuss not "What do we want to be when we grow up," but rather "What problems do we want to solve or help solve as we get older?" Once we changed the question, students' minds began to explore the endless possibilities and they started looking at the bigger picture, just as MLK did. Students expressed their love for others and the environment, their hopes to stop pollution, and their wish to help others with limited resources. All of this led to a hallway display board in which the students wrote about their dreams.

Our hope as educators is that we allow our students to explore and think outside of the box, we encourage their minds to flourish and dream of the impossible. We all have dreams that may seem far off, distant, or maybe even unattainable - but sometimes we just need the right people to come along to cheer us on. MLK had a dream - what about you?



A closer look at some of the Thrive students dreams.



Embark on TSS Concerto! Winter Concert

“The Winter Voyage of TSS Concerto”
 Reflections on our Winter Concert
 at The Palladium

recognizing the instrument families of the orchestra.

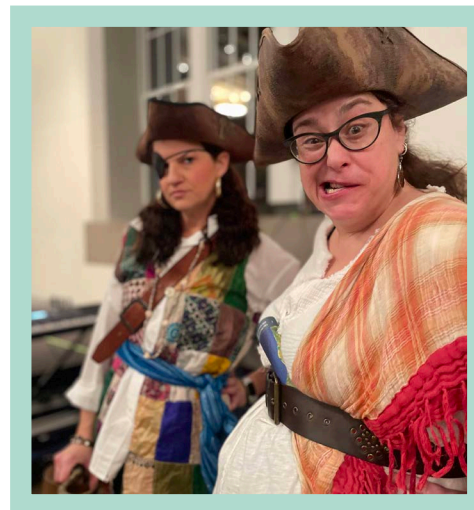
The *Thrive* 3rd grade class staved off the now-hungry pirates with the pop hit *Cake by the Ocean*. Their newly acquired knowledge of song structure helped them memorize playing out the verses on their instruments, while singing the chorus and bridges. After the 4th grade *Mosaic* class hit Courtnelius



Explorers & Mosaic students performing together.

Pirate pals Courtnelius (Courtney, STEAM) and Scurvy-Kate (Sarah Kate, Culinary Arts) may have originally set sail looking for treasure, but they discovered much more along the way!

The Sr. Pre-K *Quietude* class began the show with a familiar tune, *Baby Beluga*. The *Mums* kindergarten class kept it *Under the Sea* with the Disney favorite, remixed to feature the students' strings knowledge of rest position, playing position, and pizzicato on all four open strings! *Enigma* 1st grade class “hung loose” with *Surfin' USA*, never breaking a sweat when it came to their new left hand technique and vocal dynamics. The 2nd grade *Alchemy* class brightened the stage with their version of *Yellow Submarine*, with some comic choreography that hinted at their work



Alchemy students showing off their strings skills.

and Scurvy-Kate with *Rock You Like a Hurricane*, they were almost ready to give up the journey. Luckily for the audience, the school favorite sea shanty *Grumpy Pirate*, performed by the combined 4th and 5th graders, was the perfect remedy for their frustration. The *Explorers* 5th grade class helped guide the pirates' way with Rihanna's *Diamonds*, and eventually they discovered the true treasure...their friendship with each other, and all their newfound pirate friends.

Thanks to parents Matt Sawicki for providing sound, Gym Hinderer for filming, and staff member Jacci Ross-Hertel for stage decor!



Vincent Van Gogh's famed Starry Night.



Student's renditions of Vincent Van Gogh's Starry Night.

Studio Arts

:::: goes ::::

Van Gogh

THE LESSON

We began our study with a video on the biography of Vincent Van Gogh. 1st grade Enigma then compared and contrasted the colors and mood of his first painting and his later, most famous work, Starry Night. Students noticed how sad the mood in the first image was, and the lack of bright colors. They made connections to how Van Gogh's emotions affected his art and how when he sought help for feeling depressed, his paintings became a lot different.

THE PROCESS

Students first drew designs in yellow paint that they then printed onto their paper. Printmaking is different from painting in that you lay your paper onto a design or material and the impression is copied onto the paper. After the yellow dried, they printed a blue design on their paper. When all of the paint was dry they cut out houses and trees from black construction paper and decorated them using oil pastels. Although this process is different from how Van Gogh painted with oil paint, it replicates the Impressionist feel of creating art.

THE OBJECTIVE

The goal of the lesson was to be able to identify the painting Starry Night and also discuss how emotions and certain elements of art, such as color, affect the mood of an artwork.



Our Explorers 5th grade class began 2024 with Baking Bootcamp, a crash course in cooking up delicious baked goods that culminated in students working in groups to make cookies, scones and muffins for our Open House for Prospective Families in January.

The class spent their Culinary Arts lessons studying the chemistry of baking; applying multiplication, division and fraction math skills to adjust recipes; and using their social-emotional skills to work together and delegate tasks to create delicious treats.



Here is our adapted Gingersnap Cookie recipe, which we served to our guests at Open House.

Oh Snap Gingersnaps!

1 hour and 15 minutes Yield: about 2 dozen

Dry Ingredients:

- 4 Cups All Purpose Flour
- 4 tsp Baking Soda
- 1 tsp Salt
- 2 tsp Cinnamon
- 1 Tbs Ground Ginger
- 1 Tbs Groud Cloves

Wet Ingredients:

- 3 sticks (1 ½ Cups) Unsalted Butter, Softened
- 2 Cups Granulated Sugar
- 2 Eggs
- ½ Cup Blackstrap Molasses

Final Ingredients:

- 1 Cup Granulated Sugar
- Cooking Spray
- Drinking Glass

Directions:

Heat oven to 350. Line baking sheets with parchment

Combine dry ingredients in a large mixing bowl and set aside

Beat butter and granulated sugar until light fluffy and pale in color.

Add eggs, beat until smooth.

Beat in half of the dry mixture until smooth, then scrape the sides of the bowl.

Beat in the molasses until smooth, then scrape the sides of the bowl.

Beat in the rest of the dry ingredients until smooth.

Form into 1 inch balls, roll in finishing sugar and place on parchment-covered baking sheets about 2 inches apart.

Spray bottom of a glass with cooking spray, dip in finishing sugar and flatten the balls into disks about ¼ inch thick.

Bake at 350 for 15-20 minutes, cool on a wire rack.



PA MEETINGS

-- ALL ARE WELCOME --

EVERY
2ND THURSDAY AT 7PM
(watch Friday Notes for updates)

MARCH 14TH

VIRTUAL ONLINE

APRIL 11TH

MEET US AT RILEY'S PUB

MAY 9TH

MEET US AT RILEY'S PUB

**JOIN US, ASK QUESTIONS
& BRING YOUR IDEAS!**

PAST PA EVENTS

--- UPDATES ---

mardi gras

THANK YOU to all our families that helped with this year's Soulard Mardi Gras Beer Tent. This was no small feat and we appreciate you greatly!

Pasta Sale

This year's pasta orders will be available for pick up on **FEBRUARY 23**.

Thank you to all who supported this year's fundraiser.

Yummy meals are in your future!

PA EVENTS

--- WATCH FOR DETAILS ---



Morning Mingle

8:15-9:15 AM, LUNCHROOM

APR 5

hosted by Mums & Enigma

MAY 10

hosted by Quietude & Sprouts

Morning Mingles are a time for parents & caregivers to enjoy conversations over coffee, tea, and potluck breakfast treats.



**BIRTHDAY BASH
TALENT SHOW**

The Social Committee is gearing up for an exciting Birthday Bash in **LATE APRIL**.

The committee is diligently working to organize a special TSS Talent Show Birthday Party.

It's sure to be a memorable filled with talent, laughter, & unforgettable moments!



Teacher & Staff holiday gift giving was a HUGE success this year due to the incredible support from our TSS community. Not only did we surpass our fundraising goal by \$1500, we also collected MANY gifts & goodies that the bags had to be wheeled into the school! Our teachers & staff were overwhelmed by the generosity. The extra funds collected allowed us to give full-time teachers \$100 cash & \$50 cash to all other staff members.

Any funds remaining will be used to surprise teachers & staff with additional treats throughout the year. It's no secret that we love the incredible teachers and staff that make our little school such a wonderful place for our kids to learn, grow and thrive. Thank you to our community for allowing us to give them gifts in appreciation of the love and time they pour into our school.

20 *Great Together* 24
Wine Dinner
at The Leona

Saturday

FEB. 3

A food and wine pairing
that brings out the best
of flavors and friends

A MIDWEST
INSPIRED MENU

CURATED BY
BRENDAN KIRBY OF
SEED SPROUT SPOON

WITH SOMMELIER
Jason Main
of The Wine Merchant

7:00 PM

5700 LEONA
STREET SAINT
LOUIS, MO 63116
\$125/PERSON



BENEFITING

THE
SOULARD SCHOOL

&

 Soulard Education Center

RESERVATIONS &
MORE INFO

soulardschool.org/events



Held on February 3rd, our taste buds were in store for an extraordinary evening at the Annual Wine Dinner, a sumptuous food and wine pairing fundraiser in support of The Soulard School!

This five-course dinner of locally sourced Midwestern fare was crafted with love by TSS parent and culinary maestro Brendan Kirby from Seed Sprout Spoon and paired exquisitely with wines curated by parent and renowned sommelier Jason Main of the Wine Merchant. The elegant Leona, our premier event venue, provided the perfect backdrop for this upscale evening of gastronomic delights in an exclusive atmosphere.

It was an unforgettable celebration among good friends, both new and old. An evening of culinary excellence, fine wines, and a sense of community that will be remembered throughout the year.

Our Community is generous and kind!

Soulard School's Annual Spring Fund Drive Starts April 1

It's the extras that make us special: extra teachers in every classroom, extra classes that enrich student learning, extra helpings of free lunches and snacks, and extra funding for our affordable preschool tuition. The Soulard School relies on your donations to fund our AMAZING staff and signature programs.

Here's where your money goes when you donate to our Spring Fund Drive:

- Teacher salaries to maintain our co-teaching classrooms with low student-teacher ratios (maximum 12:1)
- Free lunch and snack every day for every student
- Culinary Arts Classes
- Strings & Performing Arts Classes
- Studio Arts Classes
- STEAM Classes
- Social Emotional & Wellness Programming
- Sliding-scale equitable tuition for Pre-K classrooms



Knowing your money always supports the school in the form of these EXTRAS makes donating much more meaningful!

our calendar

FEB

- 3 Wine Dinner Fundraiser
- 8 PA Meeting
- 9 End of 2nd Trimester
- 9 **RECORDS DAY, NO SCHOOL**
- 10 Mardi Gras in Soulard
- 15 Pre-K Enrollment Deadline
- 19 **PRESIDENT'S DAY, NO SCHOOL**
- 22 TSS Board Meeting
- 29 **NO SCHOOL**
- 29 Parent Teacher Conferences

MAR

- 1 **NO SCHOOL**
- 1 Parent Teacher Conferences
- 2 Trivia Night
- 7 SEC Board Meeting
- 14 PA Meeting
- 15 **Elementary 1st Round Lottery Pull**
- 18-22 **SPRING BREAK**
- 25 Classes Resume

APR

- 11 PA Meeting
- 12 **PD DAY, NO SCHOOL**
- 15 **Elementary 2nd Round Lottery Pull**
- 19 Teaching Peace Parade
- 25 TSS Board Meeting
- 30 State of Learning



The utmost heartfelt

Thank You

to Kelly Von Plonski
and her amazing staff
at Subterranean Books
for making our
annual book fair such a
wonderful success.

In addition to the books
purchased for our school
library, the Book Fair
generated in-store credits for
our Teachers + Staff to use
towards stocking the
school library.

We're so fortunate to have
such a great partner in

subterranean
BOOKS

IN PURSUIT OF GREAT TRIVIA

AN EVENING OF QUIZZICAL FUN

MARCH 2

DOORS 6PM

TRIVIA 7PM



**ADULT BEVERAGES INCLUDED,
BYO SNACKS!**

TABLES OF 10 FOR \$250

SOULARDSCHOOL.ORG/EVENTS

IN SUPPORT OF



816 ALLEN AVE

**GET
YOUR
TABLE
HERE!**

