### SALINE COUNTY SCHOOLS SPOTLIGHT PAGE

# THE SCHOOL CANAGOLIC SCHOOL



## RESPECT:

### Poetic Knowledge

Classroom lessons, faculty meetings, and parent gatherings have started to look different at St. James School this year. Coming to a close of it first year of transitioning into what some call classical or liberal arts education, the school family has been learning about scientia poetica or poetic knowledge. The idea behind scientia poetica (St. Thomas Aquinas' term) is that real things ought to be experienced in themselves rather than by mere representation or abstraction. Such direct experiences lead to joy, marvel, and an eagerness to learn more.

Children who fill in the correct circle on a test stating that a mammal is "a warm-blooded vertebrate animal of a class that is distinguished by the possession of hair or fur" have one kind of knowledge. Children who cuddle a pet guinea pig, stroke a purring kitten, sink their hands into the wool of sheep, or curry comb a horse have quite another. Which of these experiences would bring a smile to a child's face? Which would motivate a child to study to become a veterinarian?

Emphasizing facts without taking time to gain delight in the subject through experience often leads to boredom and a sense of futility. Engaging the senses and emotions through direct experience leads to delight, and inquiry. Suddenly there is a thirst for information and an eagerness to learn more. Facts become fascinating!

Exploring the idea that advancement in knowledge best begins with wonder and delight, teachers spent a portion of their March faculty meeting trying their hand at various musical instruments some of which they had never touched before. Parents, who had earlier in the year line danced together after learning to recite a poem by Chaucer, felt the pull of the string and heard the whiz and thud of the arrow as they participated in the ancient sport of archery.

If, as St. Thomas Aguinas believed, the controlling motivation for advancement in learning is delight and love, St. James School is well on its way!





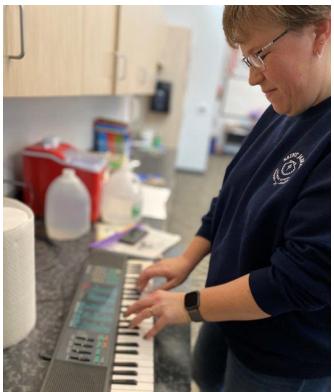
Above Left: Karina Adame Beltran holds Lowly, the St. James pet guinea pig. Above Right: Teacher Assistant, Hannah Tichy, strums the ukulele.



5th and 6th grade Science and Math teacher Sister Mary Ruth tries her hand at the xylophone.



Stella Havlat (left) and Sofia Molina Cruz (right) enjoy some gymnastic moves.



Pre-K teacher, Karla Tranmer has fun on the keyboard.



Ricardo Colindres takes aim for a bullseye shot while



Sister Marie Amata, teacher of 5th and 6th grade students, takes up the violin for the first time.



Above: Leandro Lopez Rodriguez enjoys a pony ride at school! Below: Elizabeth Rosales Arciga rides a pony.





Third grade teacher Avery Uhing tries out the violin during a St. James Professional Development day.



Ranae Ward gives pointers to the parents as they tried out archery during the School Family meeting.



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