

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Vin Ko

St. Louis Mosaic Project

vko@worldtradecenter-stl.com

314-615-3900

Mesnier Primary School of Affton School District Becomes a Mosaic Ambassador School

The St. Louis Mosaic Project is pleased to announce Mesnier Primary School as the newest Mosaic Ambassador School. The Mosaic Ambassador Schools program encourages member schools to reinforce an internationally welcoming and inclusive culture through pledges unique to each school. Mesnier Primary School, a part of the Affton School District, has a total student body of 627 students with 102 students participating in English Language Learning (ELL) program. By becoming a Mosaic Ambassador School, Mesnier Primary School is committing to creating a more diverse and inclusive environment for foreign born families.

Mesnier Primary School has already been a great advocate for promoting diversity in their school prior to joining the Mosaic Ambassador Schools. They welcome international families who visit the school with the international flags that adorn the entryway of the facility. In the past two years, Mesnier participated in a Heritage Festival that represented 15-19 countries offering a variety of cultural learning experiences. The parents and family members of Mesnier students participated in the event as well as the Affton High School's Bosnian-American class, and volunteers shared many aspects of their culture such as geography, food, clothing, music and games from their countries. This year, instead of the Heritage Festival, Mesnier Primary School initiated a Cultural Highlights Program where parents are invited to his or her child's classroom to share their culture.

About 24 different languages are spoken by the students at Mesnier Primary School. Mesnier offers English Language Learner (ELL) courses, and in addition to the regular ELL program, Mesnier Primary School also provides after school tutoring for ELL students who need extra support in reading. There are several staff members at Mesnier Primary School who are foreign-born and speak a second language; they are from Bosnia, Ukraine, and Albania. Many school documents at Mesnier are translated into multiple languages, and students' works are shared via social media that every Mesnier family can access. Mesnier teachers use telephonic translator or use apps such as Talking Points to efficiently communicate with parents who are not native English speakers.

Mesnier is hoping to continue to find ways they can expand their community outreach to the St. Louis foreign born communities.

About the St. Louis Mosaic Project

The St. Louis Mosaic Project was launched in 2012 in response to an economic impact report, outlining St. Louis to be lagging in immigrant growth as well as highlighting the economic benefits of increasing its foreign-born population. The Mosaic Project is a regional initiative that is professionally managed by St. Louis Economic Development Partnership, World Trade Center St. Louis and a 32-member committee. Its goal is to transform St. Louis into the fastest growing major metropolitan area for immigration by

2025, to add 25,000 more foreign born to the region from 2016-2025 and to promote regional prosperity through immigration and innovation. Learn more at www.stlmosaicproject.org