Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your student will soon have the opportunity to visit the Sheldon Museum of Art. Fourth Grade’s Beginner Tour features an introduction to art museums, museum manners, the Sheldon building and staff, and important objects in the collection. It includes historical background and fun conversations about a variety of art works. Fifth Grade’s Permanent Collection Tourexplores the current exhibition of works from Sheldon's permanent collection, focusing particularly on paintings and works on paper. Volunteer docents lead small groups to showcase a variety of artworks.

During the tour some students may have an opportunity to see the special exhibit on Social Justice. This exhibit includes works by Gordon Parks, James VanDerZee and Black Fire. These works depict art of segregation and a revolutionary change for African Americans. The images present narrative threads of the African American experience in in the United States during the late 1960’s to early 1970’s. If you have questions about what your child will be observing, please visit the museum or the Sheldon website at: http://www.sheldonartmuseum.org/

Students have been preparing for the exhibit by going to the Sheldon website, discussing the etiquette of visiting a museum and how to be ok if they see something that they do not appreciate. In social studies student learn how to use Historical Thinking and these tools assist them when looking at art. Docents use Visual Thinking Strategies that help students look for contextual clues allowing students to find relevance to art from their life experiences. This learning experience is one that students remember for years to come. You can view the PowerPoint used for teaching here: <http://www.sheldonartmuseum.org/education/guides.html> .

Please remember to ask your student about their favorite piece of art, an important fact that they learned while visiting the Sheldon, or which art trading card is their favorite. An amazing follow-up activity for this learning experience is to have your child be your docent on a family visit to the Sheldon!