

BEF Post- event summary : Mexican Artists Visit MSMS

Date of event: 4/10/2018

Grant recipient: Ellen Abrams

Dear BEF Chairperson Ullman,

In fulfillment of the post-project requirement, this document contains a summary of the event that took place at MSMS on April 10, 2018. I am not aware of who is the BEF Grant Liaison or the Parent Outreach Liaison but would be happy to share feedback with them once they are identified to me. I have no additional requests for funds.

The event went off without a hitch and exceeded my expectations! They two artists and the leader/ translator arrived at 7:00 am Tuesday and promptly set up in the Media Center ready for the first group of 65 eighth grade Spanish students. The leader/ translator introduced the artists, explaining their trade, tools, customs, family background, and the area where they are from. During the day, one of the artists carved from a block of wood the figure(s) and the other artist painted intricate designs. During each presentation, students viewed a brief video showing the craft from start to finish as well as scenes from the artists' workshop and family members at work. MSMS students were encouraged to speak Spanish when asking questions, and several students did so successfully. Our students were also able to understand some of the Spanish answers given. Samples of the figures in various stages of completion were explained and passed among the student audience, and students were able to view a wide variety of finished works on display. In addition to 7th and 8th grade Spanish students attending, an art class also joined one of the sessions.

As the presenter noted, our students were very well behaved and asked lots of good questions. This is an indication of the high level of interest and engagement. The live visit and demonstration was a very different experience for our students, so much more powerful than just watching a video or reading about it. Students could touch the products and ask whatever was on their minds. Our Spanish curriculum now includes the recent movie "Coco" and along with some relevant Mexican traditions, figures (alebrijes) are prominent in the movie. The significance was discussed and explained during the demonstrations. Clearly, all five of the Massachusetts Foreign Language Curriculum Framework competency areas of communication, cultures, comparisons, connections, and communities were involved. Please see some sample photos by clicking on the links below:

<https://mail.google.com/mail/ca/u/0/?ui=2&ik=9919f7813f&view=att&th=162b08ffae628b1&attid=0.11&disposition=safe&zw>

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The experience will be a most memorable one for all students attending. I am hoping to have the opportunity to invite other craftspeople from Mexico who may be available in future years.

