



CURRICULUM HIGHLIGHT

October 29, 2021

Students and staff celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month from September 15-October 15, 2021. Book Buddies featured activities focused on this celebration. The Middle School Spanish students had an exciting opportunity for a unique and valuable Beyond the Book experience to enhance their study of Hispanic culture, specifically art. “La Comunidad” (The Community) is an exhibit featuring local Hispanic artists, showcasing a shared experience of community.

Early in September, Mr. Jay Carter, MS Spanish instructor and the Museum Educator at Sabatini Art Gallery at the Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library, began communicating regarding an exhibit they were featuring. The potential for our entire middle school student body to visit the gallery was too good to pass up. Mr. Carter began making plans for scheduling, transportation, and then for the tour itself. The parents, our best partners at Topeka Collegiate, made sure every child had a ride to and from the library, simplifying the planning for us.



So on Friday, October 15—the last day of Hispanic Heritage Month—each class made a separate visit to the exhibit. While there, Jay Carter partnered with Zan Popp, curator of exhibitions at the library, to lead the students on an exploratory tour of the art. Student groups used a survey in Spanish (prepared by the library specifically for our students) to analyze and present their assigned work of art to the rest of the class. Mr. Carter then led a conversation about the art in Spanish, building upon words from the survey to ensure comprehension. Students were asked to consider the type of art, medium, elements of artistic expression, and how the art made them feel.

The next week in Spanish class, the students revisited the things they learned at the gallery. Thanks to our parent photographers, the students were able to refer back to actual art pieces they remembered from their visit. This effort between the school and public library allowed for an interactive and memorable experience for our students.

Would you like to suggest a topic for the Dean’s Report?

Email Academic Dean, Mr. Flax, at mflax@topekacollegiate.org.