

“Lights, Camera, Confidence: 9th Graders Shine with Public Speaking and Creativity”

Mrs. Irene Santiago's visit to Wallace Elementary was an inspiring and educational experience for the 8th grade students. With her extensive background in acting, including roles in *High School Musical 1* and *Providence*, as well as her work in commercials and voice overs, Mrs. Santiago brought a wealth of knowledge and hands-on experience to the classroom. Her session not only focused on the importance of perseverance and determination but also offered valuable lessons in public speaking, scriptwriting, collaboration, and acting.

The students were introduced to the fundamentals of enunciation, learning how to speak clearly and with confidence. Through a series of interactive exercises, Mrs. Santiago taught them how to project their voices and express their ideas effectively. She emphasized the role of body language, posture, and movement in conveying messages, helping the students feel more confident in their public speaking abilities.

A central part of the workshop involved creating 30-second public service announcement (PSA) commercials. Each group of students chose a topic they felt passionate about and worked together to write scripts that would raise awareness for the issue. Mrs. Santiago worked closely with each group, offering guidance on how to refine their scripts and improve their delivery. Once the scripts were finalized, the students had the opportunity to film their PSAs, putting into practice everything they had learned about speaking with clarity, confidence, and purpose.

The collaboration between Mrs. Santiago and Mrs. Murray from the English Language Arts department ensured that the students gained not only valuable communication skills but also a deeper understanding of how to work together in teams and bring their creative ideas to life.

By the end of the session, the 8th graders had a greater appreciation for the power of effective communication and the importance of perseverance in achieving their goals. The commercials they created were a testament to their hard work, creativity, and newfound skills, and they had the opportunity to share them with their peers, celebrating their accomplishments as a group.

Mrs. Santiago's visit was made possible through her work with the Wallace-Rose Hill Friends of the Arts and Mrs. Jan Zoesch, reflecting the community's commitment to enriching students' educational experiences and fostering creativity in the arts.









