

Minutes of the Swedish Partners' Visit to Alicante
within the Framework of the European Hippokrates II Program

Timoneda Association

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1. Participants

Visitors: Per Horneij – Sofielundskolan
Gabriela Semelius / Sofielundskolan

Hosts:

Amparo Benadero
Maria Jose Botella
Andres Cervera
Jerusalen Lassaletta
Maria Jesus Martin
Rosario Miranda
Lola Planelles
Maria Viciano

2. Record of Activities

Monday, November 10, 2003

Goals and objectives

- √ To determine how diversity is handled at a school attended by students who live in : residential area and are from middle- to upper-middle class families. A specific program has been developed and a space for this optional program assigned.

Activities

At approximately 9:15, Rosario Miranda, a teacher at the Playa de San Juan Secondary School, picked up Per Horneij and Gabriela Semelius at their hotel and drove them to the school.

When they arrived at the school, they went into an English class in the Alternative Educational Program. The students had prepared some questions to ask their Swedish guests. Later, these same students explained the characteristics of their program to Per and Gabriela.

The next class visit was to an elective course called "Other Peoples, Other Cultures." This provided a good opportunity for our guests to provide some information about Sweden.

At approximately 10:45, we took a coffee break and a tour of the school. Our guests from Sweden were interested in visiting the multiple purpose room where a class in Relaxation was being held as part of the Drama program.

At noon, several 10th grade classes were visited. The class which seemed to be of most interest was the elective course called "Writing and Design for Journalism" course, and even though visits had been scheduled to other elective courses so that our visitors could get an idea of the variety of offerings we provide (labs, computers, languages), we simply ran out of time.

At 1:30 p.m. we returned to the hotel, ending the day's activities.

Tuesday, November 11, 2003

Goals and objectives

- √ To become familiar with a school that serves students who come from economically depressed areas of Alicante.
- √ To become familiar with the workshops and programs that are available for use with these students.
- √ To visit the socio-cultural environment in which our students live.

Activities

The day began at 10 in the morning. At about this time, Per Horneij and Gabriela Semelius were picked up by Lola Planelles, accompanied by Maria Jesus Martin and Andres Cervera. They then proceeded to the Nazaret School.

At this school, we were received by the Director, Leoncio ... and the Dean of Studies, Maria Jesus who accompanied us during our entire visit.

The visit began in the auditorium where a Power Point presentation was given on the school's characteristics, programs, projects and student body.

The Nazaret School is a subsidized school under the CAES program (in English: Unique Educational Action School). The student body comes from mostly marginal, low income families and from culturally poor environments. This school has developed a program that was specially designed to meet the needs of its student body. The program

comprises a two year cycle, and each of the years is divided into trimesters. During each session, students participate in a tutorial group called “everyday living.” They also take academic subjects such as math and language and workshop courses. There is one “workshop” course per session (mechanics, electricity and cooking) and students participate in one each trimester.

One very noteworthy aspect is the use of space and the resources available in the school. Tutorial sessions, for example, take place in a room that looks more like the living room of a typical home than a traditional classroom. The academic courses and workshops are also held in spaces that have been appropriately adapted to the goals of the course being taught in them. It was quite evident throughout the entire visit that relational activities took precedence over purely academic activities.

Today’s activities ended at 2:00 p.m.

Wednesday, November 12, 2003

Goals and objectives :

- √ To become familiar with an approach to evaluation of the students enrolled in “Social Skills” class based on a roleplaying activity which required the students to demonstrate “certain communication skills.”
- √ To participate actively in an evaluation exercise which required the students to be able to exhibit certain skills such as starting up a conversation with strangers who, in this case, didn’t even speak the same language.
- √ To learn about the programs that the Alicante City Hall is offering through its Social Action Department to prevent everyday violence (absenteeism at school, youth center programs).
- √ To observe the work done by students in the cooking classes and to try the dishes the Dining Room Staff (waiters) served.

Activities

Wednesday the day began at 8:00 a.m. when our guests visited a testing session at the Luis Garcia Berlanga Secondary School for a class called “Social Skills”. A few days earlier, the class had completed a unit of study on “Communication Skills” and it was now time to demonstrate how much they had learned about the topic. The teaching method used in this class was role playing or the dramatization of a situation in which the students helped develop the scene itself. The teacher, Lola Planelles, together with the school’s counselor, Maria Viciano, prepared a series of dramatizations so that the

students could evaluate the communication skills that were established in different situations and thereby show how much they had learned. One of the topics that the students had studied in this lesson was "Initiating Conversations with Strangers". The class was able to take advantage of having our Swedish guests in class by involving them in this exercise. The outcome was very positive because the students were able to achieve a friendly and relaxed atmosphere in the classroom in spite of the fact that there were experiencing a little stress given that this was indeed a type of test for evaluation purposes.

When this activity was over, we proceeded on to the Gaston Castello Community Center at the school. A meeting with representatives of the Alicante Town Hall's Social Action Department was scheduled for 10:30. This meeting was coordinated by Rosa Rovira, Director of the Prevention Program. Others in attendance included: Pere Baeza (social worker), Jose Navarro (street educator), Asuncion Blasco (School Director), Inigo Benitez (Secondary School Inspector for the Dept. of Education), and Lola Planelles and Maria Jesus Martin, both secondary school teachers and members of the Timoneda Association. The meeting lasted some three hours during which time the programs, actions, difficulties, achievements and expectations of both the school's work team and the visitors from the Swedish school were presented.

Next we went to the Center for the Development of Tourism (CDT) in Alicante. The school's directors showed our Swedish guests the facilities and explained the type of educational program that was offered and the general characteristics of the students for whom the courses had been developed. When the visit was over, we had lunch at the CDT and enjoyed the meal prepared and served by the students.

This meal was complements of the CDT and was offered to our Swedish friends and members of the Timoneda Association.

Thursday, November 13, 2003

Goals and Objectives

- √ To find out what attempts are made to adequately serve the diverse student population at a school attended by students from many different socio-cultural areas, by implementing both a program to teach successful living skills and special education programs.

Activities

Maria Jesus Martin picked up Per Horneij and Gabriel Semelius and took them to the Luis Garcia Berlanga School where today's activities took place.

When they arrived at the school, they were taken into the regular meeting of the school counselors and tutors during which they plan the school's tutorial actions within the

framework of the project entitled “Improving our sense of community at the Luis Garci Berlanga School”

First of all, an introduction to the activity was given and then the activity itself began. This activity was scheduled to last the entire week. Its purpose was to emphasize the importance of visual communication, i.e., eye contact, when conversing with someone. When the activity was finished, it was evaluated and each of the participants talked about how he/she felt during the exercise.

At the end of the meeting, our guests visited a 9th grade English class. The teachers from Sofielundskolan introduced themselves and answered the questions that the students asked. The possibility of establishing an exchange with the students from Malmo was discussed. After addressing the questions that came up, it was agreed that we would begin to communicate by mail or e-mail.

The next class to be visited was the 12th grade English class. Students were sitting in a circle and introduced themselves one-by-one to the Swedish teachers. Once the introductions were done, the students asked several questions about Sweden and the professors also asked some questions. This class ended in the same way the previous one had: with the hopes of beginning some type of communication with Malmo.

After a short break, more classes were visited. Our guests saw a 8th grade math class and observed how the lesson was carried out in class and the group work that was done. At the end of the class, several students approached the Swedish professors to say goodbye to them.

A visit to the culinary class was next on the agenda. During this visit, the students explained how they had prepared their Spanish omelette and the sweets that were on the menu. The guests tried the food that had been prepared and really enjoyed the sweets, which had come out particularly well.

The cooking class was the last class of the day at this school. Our guests then left the school and were given a tour in the cars of the area known as *Parque Ansaldo*, an economically depressed neighborhood where many of the students attending the school live. The purpose of the visit was to allow the Swedish teachers to understand the social reality surrounding some of our students. The trip through this neighborhood was led by street educator from *the Alicante Acoge* program. He offered a very interesting explanation of the area's history and the policy of demolition and relocation that is affecting the area at the current time.

3. Conclusions, Observations, Assessment

Those of us in the Timoneda Association believe that this exchange has been very fruitful for our Swedish counterparts given the comments that they have made throughout the week. In some cases, they have surpassed us, such as in the fact that they already have social workers in their school and work in networks. However, in other ways, such as:

what must be done to solve the problems that are coming up everyday, we are basically on the same path. It is very important to work on relationships, on immediacy and on coordinated group work implicating all of the groups involved.

Just as was the case when we visited Malmo in October, we all mentioned the significant degree of concurrence on methodological and theoretical bases. Our subsequent visits with our partners we have been able to conclude that only by implementing relational contents, can we tackle other educational problems.