

Kathleen Meade



Kathleen Meade’s career as a world language teacher is a testament to her enthusiasm for languages and cultures, as well as her commitment to her students. With a background in Russian, Spanish, and French, Mrs. Meade brings a unique perspective shaped by her travels and experiences to Ursuline Academy.

From a young age, Mrs. Meade knew she wanted to be a teacher. “I think I wanted to be a teacher and a mom before I even went to school,” she recalls. “With the goodness of God, I got both of my blessings.” After finding her passion for teaching language in high school, she went on to major in Russian and minor in Spanish and French in college. Since graduating, she has traveled extensively and immersed herself in many cultures, including trips to Mexico, Puerto Rico, Ecuador, and the recent Ursuline trip to the Galapagos islands. Mrs. Meade also spent a summer in France, where she further developed her French skills. This year, she has taken the initiative to organize a trip to Washington, D.C. for eighth-graders at Ursuline Academy. “They’re just very nice girls, so I thought, ‘We have to do something to treat them.’”

Mrs. Meade firmly believes in immersion as the key to language proficiency. Emphasizing the importance of using language beyond the classroom, she draws from her own experiences. Every month, she volunteers at a food pantry where she regularly communicates with those who only speak Spanish. “I recently had students who used [their language skills] in real life,” she says. “They went to help out at a school, and there was a girl there who only spoke Spanish, and they

said ‘We really talked to her!’ When you use it in real life, it just hits home; like ‘Oh, I can really do this!’”

In her teaching approach, Mrs. Meade values acceptance and interest over correctness. “It comes back to not saying ‘That’s right’ and ‘That’s wrong’: it comes down to ‘Oh, that’s interesting!’” By sharing her travel experiences and presenting a variety of cultures to them, she encourages students to respect differences.

Mrs. Meade’s travels to the Soviet Union and France have enriched her with stories of understanding and kindness. Her interactions with people of different backgrounds and perspectives have shaped her belief in the positive connections that come with speaking a foreign language, cultivating mutual respect and understanding.

Using creativity in her classes, Mrs. Meade also celebrates holidays and incorporates crafts and videos into her lessons. By making lessons personal, she instills a love for language and culture. “A parent of an older student was telling me that they still go outside on September 15th [for the Cry of Dolores] and scream ‘Vive Mexico!’ because that’s what I do with my students.”

While Mrs. Meade is looking forward to the upcoming Washington, D.C. trip with Ursuline students, her dream vacation involves a twelve-day cruise exploring the Hawaiian islands and visiting Tahiti.