

enlightenmentproject

dare to know

ABOUT THE ENLIGHTENMENT PROJECT:

The Taunton Public School's Enlightenment Project aims to introduce students prior to their high school careers to the academic skills, patterns of thought, and habits of mind that will enable them to become exceptional high school students. Although a conscious goal of the program is to improve students' future readiness for advanced coursework, the program's larger goal is to introduce younger students to the principles of inquiry, evaluation, and argument, as well as to give them practice in blending critical and creative thought. Above all, the Enlightenment Project aims to do this in a fun, engaging way, fostering in participants a desire to learn more and achieve at the highest levels.

The younger division of Enlightenment Project is intended for students who have completed the 6th or 7th grade (a separate upper division serves 8th and 9th graders) and are interested in pursuing honors level work in high school. Students who participate in the program should demonstrate a combination of academic and intellectual ability, and should possess both an interest in learning and a curiosity about their world. The program will run from 8 am to 12 noon, Monday through Friday, from July 18th through August 5th. Several bus routes will provide transportation, although stops may be further apart than during the regular school year. Up to two days during the program may be set aside for field trips; on these days, students will return to THS in the late afternoon and will need to have their own transportation home.

The theme for this summer will be "Lens." Lenses, in their literal and figurative forms, are the frames through which we see the world; whether made of glass or formed from our individual cultural experiences, lenses shape our very experience of the world and make our perspective on and experience of the world uniquely individual. Using the tools and approaches of literary and cultural analysis, scientific inquiry, and the social sciences, students will learn how individuals' differing lenses can produce differing views, interpretations, and opinions. Over the course of three weeks, working in both lecture and seminar formats, students will learn to recognize the effects of changing lenses, become adept at identifying the characteristics of their own cultural lenses, and work collaboratively to present their conclusions to their peers.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PROGRAM:

- All students will read the same "Core Text," a book encompassing the summer's theme
- Students will work with other participants to develop weekly presentations that demonstrate their understanding of the theme
- All students will take part in a hands-on, team-building group activity during the first week
- Each day will begin with engaging exercises intended to improve academic ability
- Instructors will impart an understanding of the skills necessary for advanced high school work, including the level of reading and argument necessary for eventual Honors and AP study

OUTCOMES:

Participants will increase their:

- Understanding of the summer's theme
- Facility with advanced texts
- Capacity for reasoning logically and debating intellectual points
- Ability to write from evidence and in support of an argument
- Proficiency using academic vocabulary
- Comfort with presenting their thoughts to a group
- Enthusiasm for advanced high school work

COST:

The Enlightenment Project is completely free to all participants. A modest fee may be collected to defray the cost of field trips.

SIGNING UP:

Interested students and families should contact their current school's guidance counselor or one of the Enlightenment Project's directors:

Mr. Peter Gillen, THS Social Studies Department Curriculum Supervisor
Ms. Elizabeth Pawlowski, THS Science Department Curriculum Supervisor
Dr. Christopher Scully, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction

Or, parents and students may fill out the attached sheet and return it to their guidance counselor, who will forward it to one of the directors.

Or, parents and students can visit the website, projectenlightenment2016.weebly.com and fill out a form there.

ABOUT THE NAME:

The thinkers of the Enlightenment, figures such as John Locke, Isaac Newton, Voltaire, and Benjamin Franklin, sought to champion the use of reason and intellectual skepticism in an effort to make the world better. In trying to describe their view of the world, the German philosopher Kant adopted an old Latin phrase, *sapere aude*, which can be roughly translated as "Dare to Know." Kant wanted his readers to use Reason to bring about their own intellectual liberation. The Enlightenment Project hopes to instill intellectual curiosity, reason, and argument in its students to help make them better students and better citizens.

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DETAILS:

- Runs from July 18th through August 5th
- Meets Monday through Friday, 8 am to 12 noon
- Open to current 6th and 7th grade students
- No tuition or other charges, although a small field trip fee may be collected
- Transportation from different parts of the city available
- Located in Taunton High School B House
- Daily skills practice coupled with collaborative project work
- "Core text" provided by end of school year, to be read before start of program
- Relaxed but intellectually engaging atmosphere

INFORMATION:

STUDENT NAME: _____ CURRENT GRADE: _____

STUDENT EMAIL: _____ CURRENT SCHOOL: _____

STUDENT T-SHIRT SIZE: _____

PARENT OR GUARDIAN'S NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

BEST PHONE NUMBER: _____

PARENT EMAIL: _____

SCHEDULING CONFLICTS: _____

ALLERGIES: _____

WRITE A BRIEF PARAGRAPH EXPLAINING WHY YOU WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ENLIGHTENMENT PROJECT THIS SUMMER ON THE BACK OF THIS PAGE.

