



Imagination Express

2012- 2013 Program Outline

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What is Imagination Express?

We are an after-school program based in Lawrence, Massachusetts with a focus on using art to change the way our city is viewed. Many art programs have been removed from public schools due to budget cuts and we want to give the students in the Lawrence and Greater Lawrence areas a means to express themselves and stress the necessity of art. We also want to change the way Lawrence is viewed and shift the focus onto the positive things going on within the city. Essentially, we are an on-going, living art project.

Our Mission

To preserve arts and get people involved in their community. We wish to inspire the youth of Lawrence to reclaim their city and bring about the positive change we want to see. The media inaccurately portrays Lawrence as an impoverished slum where nobody works and murder is the norm. We believe that there is more than meets the eye. We aim to get kids involved with volunteer work and to show them that one person can make a difference as well as to give them a place to express themselves freely.

Student activities, projects, & more

With art as the core focus, students will be encouraged to venture into all kinds of mediums. Along with various activities, students will go on miniature field trips into the city and work on projects reflecting the positive aspects of Lawrence. There will also be homework help, tutoring, and college prep and information sessions. Students will be given information on volunteer work and together will show that there is more to Lawrence than guns and violence. Students are not bound to activities and can dabble in anything they find interesting. Groups will work on mini projects which will then be displayed. Our goal is to take all the artwork students produce and bring it to the internet via social media to paint a new perception of Lawrence. We also want students to see what is going on beyond Lawrence and to understand current events and the world around them to better prepare them for the future.

Writing

After homework help, students will be brought together into a group and will be given a prompt to inspire them to write creatively, although they can write about anything. Afterward, students will be given time to present their work to the other students. Writing is one of the most important skills a person can have and we want to develop that skill. Kids are only limited in writing by their own imagination.

Art

Students will use pencil, clay, charcoal, paint, markers, and other art supplies to create drawings and paintings to be put on display during an art exhibition as well as on our Tumblr and Facebook pages. Kids will be given a theme (such as Lawrence, for example), and will occasionally work on a single project together, such as a poster.

Music

For students who opt for the music activity, they will be able to meet other people who are also interested in music. Students will be allowed to bring in their own instruments and will work on writing original songs, which will be uploaded onto Youtube (and possibly iTunes). A musical background is not required and students who are simply interested in learning how to play are welcome to sign up. Besides writing their own songs, kids will also perform during talent shows and star in their own music video.

Theater/ Film

Theater is exactly what the name implies. Students will act in skits and improve shorts. They will also write their own plays for the talent show and learn about acting. Performances will be recorded and uploaded on to our Youtube channel. Besides acting in plays, students may also work on a mini Youtube series or a short “movie” which they will write themselves.

Dance

Kids will create their own dance routines to be showcased during the talent shows as well as on Youtube. They will also create dance routines which will be accompanied by music created by the music activity.

Use of Social Media

The purpose of Imagination Express is to use social media to bring exposure to the talented youth of Lawrence as well as to show the good things going on in the city rather than the negative attention the media has placed on us. We hope to give kids an incentive to work hard and change their own community. Through Twitter, Tumblr, Youtube, Facebook, and other social media platforms we want to show firsthand how amazing the youth in Lawrence is. That way the media can no longer deny it.

Schedule & Dates

Imagination Express will run every Tuesday until the third week of May after school from 4pm to 6pm. Homework is important to us and we are very strict with students getting their work done during the homework period above anything else. Our goal is to eventually increase the amount of days we meet. The **schedule** is as follows:

4pm-4:45pm: Homework help

4:45pm-5pm: Group writing and sharing

5pm-6pm: Activities

Special Workshops

In addition to homework help, students will be able to receive tutoring from older students (“teachers”) as well as work in study groups with their peers. We aim for all students to achieve success and be able to reach out if they need help. During this time, we will also hold workshops focusing on how to fill out applications for high school and college and help with writing college essays and applying for financial aid as well as information on MCAS and SAT prep. We will also hold special sessions with parents to get them involved in their community both locally and worldwide and workshops with other groups.

Field trips

We will occasionally hold field trips for students to learn about Lawrence's history, such as city walks. Students will be encouraged to take what they learn through the streets of Lawrence and transfer it to their activities and projects.

Along with these “city walks”, we will also encourage students to participate in city clean-ups, soup kitchens, and other voluntary events.

We feel that it is important to support local businesses and will also hold events where students and their families will be asked to visit restaurants and cafes on a specific day for lunch. More information will be provided later on.

Projects

Students will, in their activities, work as a group on a specific project which they will decide on for 3-4 weeks. These projects will then be uploaded to the web and shared. Some groups will need less time to complete projects than others. They will also be displayed during talent shows as well as at the end of the year on the final day.

Documentary

Besides individual projects, we will also be working on a documentary about Lawrence. Students will be given the chance to speak their minds and interview local residents as well as form a deep connection with their city. This documentary will be the major project of the year.

Students

Imagination Express is open to students from the Lawrence, Greater Lawrence, Andover, and Methuen area in grades 5th to 11th.

Transportation & Location

Transportation is **NOT** included.

Location: El Tialler. 275 Essex Street, Lawrence, Massachusetts 01840

Writing Leaders

The most important part of the program is the group of individuals who take charge – writing leaders. Writing leaders can be anyone who is in at least 11th or college-aged. Writing leaders are in charge of activities as well as mentoring students and providing help with homework.

Teach Lawrence

Imagination Express is part of a program called Teach Lawrence, which aims to raise teachers from youth into adulthood so that they can come back to Lawrence and revolutionize the way education is handled.

Get Connected

You can find us at:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ImaginationExpress>

Tumblr: <http://imaginationexpress.tumblr.com>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/IMEXLawrence>

Youtube: <http://www.youtube.com/user/IMEXLawrence>

Email: IMEXLawrence@gmail.com