

QUEST Contact Information

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Hackettstown High School

QUEST

Life Skills and Transition Program



Created by:

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The QUEST program integrates traditional academics – English, science, history, and math – with the Hackettstown High School Life Skills curriculum. Students are actively involved in their education as they develop into contributing members of society. Over the course of four years, students will learn the tools to live self-sufficiently. The goal of QUEST is to effectively teach students how to live and work independently. This goal is accomplished through hands-on learning experiences in real life settings. Through Community Based Instruction, students will develop everyday life skills from food preparation to banking. The Structured Learning Program prepares the students for the expectations of the workplace. Upon completion of the program, students will feel confident completing daily tasks at home and at work autonomously.

Community Based Instruction

Community Based Instruction (CBI) takes students into the local community to acquire and practice every day practical skills. The activities in CBI encourages students to be self-sufficient through structured everyday experiences in the community. Students are taught in real world settings by their teacher. CBI is not field trips, but thoughtful, planned encounters that students will face on a regular basis after high school. All facets of daily living are addressed through CBI. Examples of locations for CBI include: grocery stores, restaurants, post office, banks, retail shops, libraries, recreational activities, public transportation, and more. Through these activities, students are able to experience different social interactions in a safe environment.

Structured Learning Experience

As students prepare for life after public school, they will need to be ready to enter the work force. The Structured Learning Experience (SLE) gradually prepares students to work independently. The program starts with business touring and job readiness in the first two years. Students are able to see different career options within the community. While at school, students will develop and hone social, computational, and tactile skills necessary to obtain and keep a job. The next step is job shadowing. At this stage, students follow in the footsteps of employees at various locations. Students start working through job sampling. A job coach helps guide students to fulfill the expectations of the employer. Students will be able to work at a variety of locations throughout the school year.

Freshman Year

The first year of the QUEST program helps the students transition to high school. The classroom teacher discusses the expectations of high school and its hidden curriculum. The hidden curriculum consists of the unwritten social expectations of a school that can cause students to stand out if they do not conform. In addition to academics, the following topics are addressed through CBI and in the classroom:

- Responsible habits of grooming and hygiene
- Nutrition
- Food and kitchen safety
- Managing personal health care
- Interest and abilities inventory
- Communication, personal, and social skills
 - Role playing
 - Social stories
 - Journaling
 - Body language
 - Telephone, e-mailing, and texting etiquette
 - Personal space



Sophomore Year

The second year emphasizes job readiness and financial literacy through QUEST. With a strong focus on Community Based Instruction, the students will explore the community and hear guest speakers address the class on such topics as:

- Business tours
- Jobs within the school
- Consumer skills
 - Credit vs. debit cards
 - Budgeting
 - Writing checks and ATM use
 - Depositing money in a bank
 - Saving vs. checking accounts
 - Comparing values of products
 - Unit pricing
 - Coupons
 - Online shopping
 - Monetary exchanges
 - Gratuity



Junior Year

This third year focuses on employability. As a group, students will start job sampling through volunteering in the community. In cooperation with local organizations, the class will participate in community projects. This year's topics include:

- Exploring careers
- Job searches
- Job preparation
 - Resume and cover letter writing
 - Mock interviews
 - Filling out applications
 - Filling out government paperwork
- Work challenges
 - Role playing
 - Appropriate behavior
 - Problem solving skills
 - Analyzing a paycheck



Senior Year

The fourth year of QUEST focuses on individual job sampling in the community with the guidance of a job coach. The transportation to job sites will be provided by the high school. Students will attend classes part of the day and work the remainder of the school day. Students will have a class in school so that they can discuss any concerns that arise while on the job with the SLE coordinator. Additional topics addressed this year will include:

- Community resources for people with special needs
- Recreational activities
- Job expectations
- Appropriate dress
- Social interactions in the workplace
 - Talking to a superior
 - Answering consumer questions
 - Appropriate conversations with co-workers



Beyond High School

The QUEST program is designed to prepare students with special needs to live independently after four years in high school. However, some students may need an additional year or more to further develop life and work skills. While the students will be able to participate with their classmates in senior activities, their Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) may specify attending public school for an additional year or more. This time will continue preparing the students for independent life after school. Students will be able to continue working with a job coach at their work site. While at school, the staff will focus on having the student perform everyday tasks independently. The goal of QUEST is to educate every student to be successful in life upon completing school.

Social Considerations

Students in the QUEST program may face challenges in social situations. Special consideration is taken to address any issues the students may face. The curriculum incorporates reflection journals, social stories, role playing, group discussions, social skills games, sensory breaks, and real life encounters. In addition, the student has access to additional resources in the high school such as a full-time social worker and psychologist. If necessary, these professionals can work with students individually or in a group setting. Students are encouraged to join extracurricular activities based on their interests. In addition, the teacher will be able to pair students in the QUEST program with a peer for both educational and social support. The QUEST program fosters positive social behaviors that can transfer to everyday life.