

QUEST Teacher Contact Information

Ashley Ferguson

ashley.ferguson@sumterschools.net

Alice Drive Elementary (775-0857)

Crosswell Drive Elementary (775-0679)

Toni Mahoney

toni.mahoney@sumterschools.net

Millwood Elementary (775-0648)

Rafting Creek Elementary (432-2994)

Kayla Caughman

kayla.caughman@sumterschools.net

High Hills Elementary (499-3327)

Shaw Heights Elementary (666-2335)

Oakland Primary (499-3366)

Shamarla Hart-Brisby

shamarla.hart@sumterschools.net

Cherryvale Elementary (494-8200)

R.E. Davis Elementary (495-3247)

Manchester Elementary (452-5454)

Angela Hart

angela.hart@sumterschools.net

Kingsbury Elementary (775-6244)

Wilder Elementary (773-5723)

Lacey Berry

lacey.berry@sumterschools.net

Pocalla Springs Elementary (481-5800)

Willow Drive Elementary (773-5796)

Lemira Elementary (775-0658)

QUEST

Handbook

2024-2025



Sumter School District Gifted and Talented Program

Quality and Unique Experiences in Study and
Thought

Supplies

Supplies to be used during the year will be provided by the *QUEST* teacher. There may be times throughout the year where your child's *QUEST* teacher may ask parents to voluntarily donate special materials to be used for various projects. Parents will be made aware of these items in advance should the need arise.

Media Release

During the school year, articles and news releases are written about and for the *QUEST* program and may appear on the district's website or in local, state, or national news media. Often these articles are accompanied by photographs of students. Parents who do not want to have their child's picture taken or have their child interviewed for articles and news releases should send the *QUEST* teacher a written request, including the child's name, grade, homeroom teacher's name, and a parent signature.

Acceptable Use Policy

In accordance with District Policy, parents must sign a release form to permit Internet access. Students will be monitored while accessing the Internet at school. All Internet access should be curriculum related.

The following behavior guidelines should be applied in the classroom and while participating in field studies:

- * Good citizenship, respect for property, and cooperation should be demonstrated at all times.
- * Hurting or harassment of others is not allowed.
- * Disrespectful language, body language, or gestures are not allowed.
- * Any behavior that interrupts or disrupts teaching or class progress is not allowed.
- * Students are required to follow the dress code (when participating in field studies outside of the regular school day).

We have high expectations for our students in regards to both curriculum and behavior. We ask for the cooperation of parents and students in reaching our goals. Parents will be notified if a pattern of behavior problems or nonperformance issues occur that may result in the loss of field study privileges. Students with three or more days of suspension within a semester may be ineligible for upcoming field studies. Final decisions about participation in field studies and/or the *QUEST* program due to excessive behavior problems will be made following due process.

Pursuant to due process, each parent and child have the right to appeal the disciplinary action taken. A written appeal must be filed with the Coordinator of Gifted Education within 10 days of notification by the *QUEST* teacher of the action taken.

All *QUEST* students and their parents are asked to sign a *QUEST* Student Contract each year.



What is the QUEST Program?

QUEST is a **weekly enrichment pull-out program** that promotes the development of gifted students by addressing their individual needs while providing personalized opportunities to explore their diverse interests and unique talents.

QUEST serves state identified gifted & talented students in grades 2-5. The QUEST Program is designed to meet national and state program goals by providing gifted students with unique experiences via a quality inter-disciplinary curriculum emphasizing creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills.

QUEST students will explore the world of engineering through a variety of problem-based learning units designed to strengthen math, science, and reading skills taught in the regular education classroom.

How are Students Selected to Participate?

Gifted and Talented students may be found within any racial, ethnic, or socio-economical group; within any nationality; within both genders; and within populations with physical disabilities, or behavioral problems. Identification is a multi-step process which consists of screening and referral, assessment of eligibility, and placement. South Carolina has mandated three dimensions of giftedness as criteria for placement in the academically gifted program. Students must meet two of the three dimensions: aptitude, achievement, and performance. See the Sumter School District website for more detailed information on referring students and identification criteria.

Policy on Missed Work

Classroom teachers are asked to be flexible and selective in assigning homework and makeup work for classes missed due to gifted students' participation in QUEST. Students should be required to complete only the classwork necessary to be prepared for the next day's class and maintain progress. Students should not be required to miss recess period when making up any incomplete classwork due to their participation in QUEST.

Students are expected to maintain their progress in the regular classroom. This can best be accommodated by means of regular communication between students and teachers concerning instruction that has been missed due to Gifted Education participation. It is the student's responsibility to find out what is expected of them by classroom teachers. It is expected that Gifted Education students will have reasonable additional responsibilities as a result of their placement in the Gifted Education Program.

Behavior Expectations

The purpose of the QUEST program is to provide qualifying students with challenging curriculum beyond the regular classroom. In order to have the best teaching and learning environment in the classroom, appropriate behavior is necessary on the part of all students. Students will not be allowed to disrupt learning opportunities of others.

Field studies are an integral part of the QUEST curriculum and students are expected to participate. All classroom work must be completed at a satisfactory level and cooperative behavior is expected both in the classroom and during field study.

Field Studies

QUEST field studies are an integral extension of the classroom curriculum and may be local or out of town. The field study allows for increased synthesis and experiential learning. Parents, classroom teachers and administrators will be notified in advance of any field studies that affect the normal school day's schedule.

How are Students Evaluated?

Student performance is evaluated in a variety of ways including: self-evaluations, teacher evaluations, checklists, narrative assessments, rubric assessments, and pre/post assessments. Students will receive a progress report each quarter that will require the signature of a parent. These reports will go home on/around the date of each quarter's academic report card and should be returned to your child's *QUEST* teacher in a timely manner.

Pull-Out Model Attendance

Since some *QUEST* classes meet only once a week for pull-out model, regular attendance is crucial. Each absence results in a student falling a week behind in his/her work. Consequently, in the event of excessive absences, parents will be notified. If it is determined that a student's performance has been significantly affected, he/she may be dropped from *QUEST* temporarily or become ineligible for field studies.

Gifted Program Goals

Goal I : Standards

To support mastery of core areas of learning at a pace, complexity, abstractness, and depth appropriate for gifted learners

Goal II: Big Idea

To develop understanding of concepts, themes, and issues that are fundamental to the disciplines as well as society and to develop an appreciation of the interrelationships among them

Goal III: Inquiry

To develop inquiry skills at a level of complexity, abstractness, and depth appropriate for gifted learners

Goal IV: Thinking

To develop the skills of critical thinking, problem solving, and decision-making at a level of complexity, abstractness, and depth appropriate for gifted learners

Goal V: Communication

To develop proficiency in communicating abstract and complex ideas, relationships, and issues

The QUEST Learning Experience

Integrated curriculum

Differentiated learning

Critical, logical, and flexible thinking skills

Creative thinking: fluency, flexibility, elaboration & originality

Shared inquiry skills

Higher level thinking skills

Problem-based learning

Hands-on learning

Experiential opportunities

Connecting community and world

Exploring past, present & future

Developing college & career readiness skills

Emphasis on art integration

Independent and self-directed skills

Life skills: feeling, thinking, communicating & choosing

Research, media production, and technology skills

Components of a Differentiated Curriculum

CONTENT (*Themes and Big Ideas*): Students are presented with broad-based issues through problems or themes that are abstract and complex, require interdisciplinary connections, and are varied for regular curriculum.

PROCESS (*Skills Inherent in Disciplines*): The differentiated curriculum requires higher cognitive processes, problem-solving, inquiry and discovery, evidence of reasoning, creative thinking, higher affective processes, is open-ended, often provides choice of topics, performance through a variety of methods, rapid pacing, group interaction, and stimulation.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT: The learning environment coupled with a differentiated curriculum will be complex, often requiring independence, a growth mindset, high mobility, an acceptance by students and their peers, and is student-centered.

STUDENT PRODUCT (*Demonstrate Creative & Higher-Level Thinking*): Students produce solutions to real-world problems to present to an audience, often providing a transformation in student thinking (tangible, intangible).