



## High School Guidebook



Peoria's School for Science, Technology,  
Engineering & Math (STEM)

Updated January 2016

# Expect More

Dear Students and Parents,

Today, those who live within District 150's boundaries have the power to choose a public high school. With that choice comes responsibility and opportunity: the responsibility to determine the best fit for you and your family, and the opportunity to select the best path for a successful future. We believe Quest's high school program is the right choice on both accounts.

As you weigh your options, please take the time to learn what makes us different and discover how our curriculum and culture will prepare you to succeed in college, career, and life. Remember, Quest is not a school for the gifted. Anyone can apply, regardless of race, socioeconomic status, or past school performance. That's the beauty: We don't choose our students—you choose us!

> **High Expectations.** We believe all students should have the opportunity to attend and succeed at a four-year college. Our goal is 100% college acceptance, and our dedicated team will help you on your path to college and careers. From applications to financial aid to scholarship assistance, we ensure you have the support you need to pursue your next steps after high school.

> **Rigorous, College-Prep Curriculum.** A focus on science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM), combined with innovative teaching methods and academic support programs, ensures you're ready to succeed in the college of your choice.

> **Customized, Personalized Learning.** Your Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) will help you fill in gaps in your educational skills or accelerate your learning to higher levels and, through daily Custom Learning Time (CLT), we'll help you meet your unique needs. You'll also have access to 1:1 technology. We've partnered with a number of online resources that customize paths for students, so you'll have exactly what you need to be successful. In addition, you'll be able to participate in clubs and tutoring built into our school day.

> **Personal Attention.** A graduating class of just 75 students means smaller class sizes, more one-on-one attention, and greater opportunities to get involved in classes, clubs, activities, and sports. Our extended school day and year provide more time to acquire the skills necessary to succeed in college. Research shows an extended school day consistently improves student performance—and it's a feature most common in successful charter schools.

> **Respect for Diversity.** Our core values include responsibility, integrity, effort, courage, curiosity, and respect—respect for diverse cultures and for one another. Together, our students, teachers, parents, and administrators form a positive, dedicated team committed to results.

Academic achievement, leadership development, and college acceptance are the cornerstones of Quest's high school program, as we strive to give you the tools to realize your talents, achieve your goals, and fulfill your dreams. We hope to welcome you into our family. Join us on our Quest to be the best! We're available for tours—call 309.402.0030 to schedule your appointment.

Sincerely,

**Nicole Couri Wood, Ph.D.,**  
*Executive Director*  
*Quest Charter Academy*

**Tom Fliege, Chairman**  
*Peoria Charter School Initiative*  
*Board of Directors*

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# Graduation Requirements

To prepare students to meet top colleges' entrance requirements, Quest's graduation requirements exceed those of traditional Illinois public high schools and include:

## ▣ **28 credits of coursework**

- 4 credits in math
- 6 credits in English / language arts
- 3 credits in science
- 3 credits in social studies

## **Required courses in addition to core courses**

*in math, science, English and social studies*

- Project Lead the Way
- Problem, Design, Solve
- Seminar
- College and career exploration
- World language
- Health / PE

## ▣ **Job shadowing / career exploration (minimum 10 hours)**

## ▣ **40 hours of community service**

## ▣ **Senior capstone project**

# Academic Programs

Students attending Quest have access to traditional face-to-face classroom experiences and online classes, as well as a combination of online content delivery systems within the classroom setting. Courses offered at Quest are listed below. Those marked with a dot (•) are full-year courses required for graduation. Those marked with an asterisk (\*) are available through online programs.

## English

- English I – Survey Literature
- English II – World Literature
- English III – American Lit.
- English IV – British Lit.
- Writing I & II
- Journalism
- Drama
- Speech & Debate
- College Readiness Reading

## Math

- Algebra I & II
- Geometry
- Pre-Calculus
- Calculus
- AP Calculus
- Math of Personal Finance
- College Readiness Math

## STEM-Related

- *Project Lead the Way:*  
Intro to Engineering Design
- Project Lead the Way:*  
Principles of Engineering
- Project Lead the Way:*  
Computer Science
- Problem, Design, Solve (0.5)  
21st Century Problem Solving
- Intro to Programming\*
- Intro to Webpage Design\*
- Alice Programming

## Science

- Intro to Physical Science
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Physics
- Astronomy\*
- Meteorology\*
- Oceanography\*
- AP Biology\*
- AP Chemistry\*
- AP Physics I\*

## Social Studies

- World History
- American History
- American Government (0.5)
- Economics (0.5)
- Psychology/Sociology
- AP Psychology\*
- AP U.S. History\*

## Fine Arts

- Art I & II
- Ceramics
- Media
- Intro to Broadcasting
- Band I & II
- Choir I & II
- Digital Photography\*

## World Language

- Spanish I, II & III
- German I & II\*
- French I, II, III & IV\*

## Other

- Physical Education (0.5)
- Health (0.5)
- Driver's Education
- College & Career Exploration



### Sample College-Prep Pathway

Here's an example of the classes you might take each year to earn the required number of credits and prepare for college.

Freshman 7+1	Sophomore 7.5+0.5	Junior 7+1	Senior 5+?
Algebra I / Geometry English I Writing I Intro to Physics PE / Health Freshman Academy · Problem Solving · Test-Taking Skills · Study Skills Elective Custom Learning Time (CLT)	Geometry / Algebra II English II Writing II (0.5) Elective (0.5) Biology World History <i>Project Lead the Way:</i> Intro to Engineering Design Spanish I Custom Learning Time (CLT)	Algebra II / Pre-Calculus English III Chemistry American History <i>Project Lead the Way:</i> Principles of Engineering OR Elective Principles of STEM (0.5) Writing II (0.5) Spanish II Custom Learning Time (CLT)	Pre-Calculus / Calculus / AP Calculus English IV Seminar American Government (0.5) Economics (0.5) College & Career Exploration <i>Project Lead the Way:</i> Computer Science Physics Elective Custom Learning Time (CLT)

## Teaching Strategies

Rather than adhering to a single teaching philosophy or instructional model, our teaching strategies draw on best practices from the field. Quest teachers use a unique mix of data-driven, research-based techniques, including:

- Differentiated instruction
- Problem-based learning
- Project-based learning
- Collaborative learning

Quest teachers have the flexibility to adapt their teaching strategies to meet students' needs. Plus, they work to integrate technology into the classroom not just to enhance, but to transform learning. Quest students have access to Chromebooks, iPads, laptops, and desktop computers throughout the day.

## Advanced Study Teams

Specifically designed for students who are performing at higher levels and need more advanced academic activities, our study teams participate in local, regional, or state competitions—such as a science project team that competes in local and state science fairs. Quest advanced study teams include:

- Ivy League
- Technology Student Association
- Robotics
- Spoken Word

## Student Support

At Quest, we don't let students who may be struggling fall through the cracks. We continuously monitor grades and standardized test scores and conduct interim assessments. The following support programs are offered to students who need extra help:

**Custom Learning Time (CLT)** ■ All students have time AND opportunities built into the schedule each day to support individual learning needs, whether they be academic or social-emotional. Using NWEA MAP assessment data and behavior data, each student will have an Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) monitored by his or her advisory teacher.

Quest utilizes adaptive learning programs to support students in the areas of reading (Lexia) and math (ALEKS), as well as Compass Hybrid Learning, which provides instruction aligned to the student's NWEA MAP scores.

Small group instruction and tutoring are provided for students who need additional support beyond the class period.

**Advisory Teacher** : Each student is assigned a teacher to serve as his or her coach or mentor. This teacher holds the student's Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) and meets with the student on a regular basis to ensure learning goals are met. In addition to supporting the student, the advisory teacher establishes a relationship with the student's family and may serve as the "go-to" person when needed.

**Saturday School** : Students who need significant assistance to achieve the required levels of success in major subjects will attend school for half-days on Saturdays to work with teachers on fundamental skills.



# College Preparation Programs

Preparing every student to succeed in post-secondary education is at the center of Quest's high school academic program. You, your parents or guardians, and our teachers and college guidance staff are all involved in helping you achieve that goal from freshman through senior years. As a Quest student, you will have the opportunity to visit a variety of public and private colleges/universities during your high school career.

## College Guidance System

**Freshman year** : Our counselors begin laying the foundation for your high-school career. They help you make sense of college and career options. Now is the time to begin thinking about college and create a timeline to help with the college search.

**Sophomore year** : Our counselors make sure you're enrolled in the courses needed to prepare you for college or a career. You'll follow your college planning timeline to stay on track. The classes you take in grade 10 will determine the courses you qualify for in grades 11 and 12.

**Junior year** : Our counselors help you start the college planning process with standardized testing, narrowing your college list, and investigating financial aid. You'll take the PSAT test, which qualifies you for the National Merit Scholarship program, as well as the ACT/SAT test.

**Senior year** : Our counselors make sure you're on track with the college admission process. In the fall, you'll use information you gather from college visits, interviews, and your own research to decide to which schools you will apply. Our counselors will help you apply for federal student aid by filling out FAFSA.

## ▷ Freshman Year

- **Meet your guidance counselor.** Set up a meeting to talk about your plans for high school and the future.
- **Get involved.** Make an effort to get involved with groups, clubs, or teams that interest you.
- **Select the right mix of classes.** Make sure you're enrolled in the appropriate college-prep classes and that you're taking key core requirements, such as English, math, science, history, and foreign language.
- **Make the grade.** Get off to a good start with your grades because they impact your GPA and class rank. Grades do count toward college admission and scholarships.
- **Explore your interests and possible careers.** Discuss your skills and interests with your counselor.
- **Build your credentials.** Keep track of academic and extracurricular awards, community service, and any additional activities.
- **Start learning about college.** Look at the college information available in our counselors' office.



## ► Sophomore Year

- **Start getting ready for PSAT and ACT/SAT tests.** Ask your counselor about how to prepare as a sophomore for the real thing next year.
- **Stay on track with your courses.** Work with your counselor to make sure that you're enrolled in the courses needed to prepare you for college or a career. Move on to the next level of classes in the core subjects of English, math, science, history, and a foreign language.
- **Take on new roles.** Be involved in community service and other volunteer activities. Stay involved with your extracurricular activities and work toward leadership positions in the activities you like.
- **Read, read, read.** Develop your reading skills to prepare you for tests. Read as many books as you can and read the newspaper to learn about current affairs.
- **Practice your writing.** Work on your writing skills. You'll need good writing skills no matter what path you choose.
- **Get advice from your counselor.** Meet with your counselor to make sure you're on track. Discuss your post-secondary enrollment options and Advanced Placement (AP) options.
- **Keep your grades up.** Your grades affect your GPA and class rank—two factors that colleges consider in the admission process.
- **Start your college search.** Talk with your counselor about college search tools to decide what factors are important to you and make a list of colleges that match your criteria.
- **Contact colleges that interest you.** Write to schools and ask for information about academic requirements and any programs or activities in which you're interested.

## ▶ Junior Year

- **Stay on track with your classes and grades.** Meet with your counselor to see what you need to take. Check on your class rank and GPA.
- **Take the PSAT.** Taking the PSAT qualifies you for the National Merit Scholarship program.
- **Evaluate your education options.** Now is the time to follow a more specific path. Decide whether you want to pursue a career college or a two- or four-year college. If you're interested in attending a military academy, talk to your counselor about starting the application process.
- **Make a college list.** Your list of colleges should include schools that meet your most important criteria—size, location, cost, academic majors, or special programs, for example.
- **Continue gathering college information.** Attend college nights, go on college visits, and speak with college representatives who visit Quest.
- **Organize a testing plan.** Mark important test dates like SAT, ACT, SAT Subject Tests, and AP exams on your calendar.
- **Make sure you are meeting any special requirements.** If you want to play Division I or II sports in college, start the certification process and check with your counselor to make sure you're taking the core curriculum that meets NCAA requirements.
- **Stay involved with extracurricular activities.** Colleges look for consistency and depth in non-academic activities.
- **Begin narrowing down your college choices.** Make sure you have all the information you need about the colleges you're interested in, including entrance requirements, tuition, room and board costs, course offerings, student activities, financial aid, etc. Begin comparing schools by the factors that are most important to you and rank your choices.
- **Prepare for standardized tests.** Determine the SAT, ACT, and SAT Subject Test requirements of the colleges you're interested in. Take the tests you need. You can take them again in the fall of your senior year if you're unhappy with your scores.
- **Talk to your family.** Discuss what colleges you're interested in with your family. Get their input about any concerns or suggestions they may have.
- **Learn more about financial aid.** Gather information about financial aid from your counselor and the colleges in which you're interested.
- **Prepare a challenging schedule for senior year.** Meet with your counselor to determine what classes you'll take next year and make sure you're on track for graduation. Remember that colleges consider your senior year courses and grades, so have a schedule that challenges you.

- **Start a scholarship search.** There are a great number of scholarships available. Check with your guidance office for scholarships from local organizations and use online scholarship search tools to find a wide range of options.
- **Contact your recommendation writers.** Teachers and counselors are often asked to write recommendations for lots of students. Consider whom you want to ask now and give them time to prepare before getting tons of requests in the fall. Ask teachers who know you well and who will have positive things to say.

## ► Senior Year

- **Continue to visit schools.** Fall is a great time to look at schools on your college list because classes are in session and you can meet with students and professors.
- **Finalize your college list.** Use information you've gathered from college visits, interviews, and your own research to decide which schools you'll apply to. Talk to counselors, teachers, and parents about your final choices.
- **Stay on track with your grades and extracurricular activities.** Colleges will look at what you do your senior year, so stay focused on doing well in your classes and maintaining a commitment to extracurricular activities.
- **Take standardized tests.** Register for and take the ACT, SAT, or SAT Subject Tests as necessary. Be sure you have requested either by mail or online that your test scores be sent to the colleges of your choice.
- **Keep track of deadlines.** Make a calendar showing the application deadlines for admission, financial aid, and scholarships.
- **Ask for letters of recommendation.** Give letter of recommendation forms to the teachers you have chosen, along with stamped, addressed envelopes so your teachers can send them directly to the colleges. Discuss your goals and ambitions with your teachers so they will be more prepared to write about you.
- **Meet with your counselor.** Your counselor can help you stay on track with admission requirements. Make sure he or she knows to which colleges you want transcripts, score reports, and letters sent.
- **Complete applications.** Finish application forms for the schools you're interested in. Make sure your counselor has sent necessary materials, including test scores, recommendations, transcripts, and application essays.
- **Continue your scholarship search.** Apply for scholarships whose deadlines are approaching and keep searching for more scholarship and grant opportunities. Ask colleges about scholarships for which you may qualify.

- **Act on the results of early decision applications.** If you've applied for early decision, you'll find out soon if you're accepted.
- **Follow up on your applications.** Verify with your counselor that all forms are in order and have been sent out to colleges. Check with the schools to make sure they have received all your information, including test scores, transcripts, and recommendations.
- **Submit financial aid forms.** Fill out FAFSA. No matter what your family's income level is, FAFSA is your main priority for financial aid purposes because it will determine how much you're expected to pay. Forms cannot be processed before January 1 each year.
- **Send mid-year grade reports.** Ask your counselor to send your mid-year grade reports to the colleges where you applied. Keep working hard throughout your senior year. Colleges will continue to keep track of your grades.
- **Watch your mail for notification from colleges.** If you applied under the regular application process, you should receive an admission decision by March or April. Notifications of financial aid awards should arrive by the end of April.
- **Compare financial aid packages.** Make sure to consider each financial aid award carefully. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact the financial aid office of the college to get more information. Financial aid is a key factor in deciding where you will attend.
- **Prepare for any last standardized tests.** You may be taking AP tests to earn some college credit as the school year winds down.
- **Make your final college decision.** Notify all schools of your intent by May 1. Make sure to send your deposit to your chosen school and ask your counselor to send your final transcript to the college in June.
- **Follow up on financial aid information.** Make sure you have received a FAFSA acknowledgement. If you applied for a Pell Grant, you'll receive a Student Aid Report statement. Review this notice, make a copy for your records, and send the original to the college you plan to attend. If necessary, apply for loans.
- **Complete enrollment paperwork for the college you will attend.** Once you accept an offer, you should receive information from the college about course scheduling, orientation sessions, housing arrangements, and other necessary forms. Be sure to complete all required paperwork by appropriate deadlines.
- **Congratulate yourself!** You've finished high school and are about to embark on an exciting new phase in your life.

## College Advisory Groups

Our college counselor isn't the only one helping you on your journey. Throughout high school, you'll also be part of a 15-student Advisory Group, headed by a Quest teacher, that meets daily to talk about college and careers and develop personalized plans to reach your goals.

## College Readiness Courses

During your junior year, you'll take college readiness courses that will help you do your best on standardized college entrance exams like the ACT and SAT. Available for English, math, and science, these courses let you "practice" before test day—so you're familiar with the tests, what they measure, and how they're scored. You'll learn test-taking strategies as well as how to process information efficiently, manage time effectively, improve concentration and listening skills, and prepare for and perform well on tests with a variety of question formats.

Plus, as a senior, you'll take "College Pathway," a course designed to help you prepare for life after high school graduation. It provides a foundation for successful school-to-college or school-to-career transitions and covers:

- Self-assessments to analyze interests and skills
- College search strategies (rank, tuition, housing, etc.)
- College application process, including interviews and essays
- Resume building
- Job shadowing and internships

## College Testing

During your freshman and sophomore years, you'll take assessments to identify your strengths and weaknesses on the skills necessary for success in college. The results of these assessments will help guide you and your teachers as you prepare for college.

During your junior year, you'll take ACT practice tests three different times in preparation for this important college entrance exam.

## Ivy League Mentorship Program

The goal of the Ivy League Mentorship Program is to empower and enable more students to reach top universities. This free mentoring program is available to selected students based on GPA, teachers' recommendations, and an exemplary score on the Measurement of Academic Progress (MAP) test. Participating students work in small groups, mentored by volunteer teachers, to enhance academic achievement and personal development.

## 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning

The gap between what most students learn in school and the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in the community and workplace is profound. Quest is committed to closing that gap. We put major emphasis on STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) coursework aligned with real-world environments to help you manage rigorous college classes, career challenges, and a globally competitive workforce.

### **Problem, Design, Solve**

During your high school career at Quest, you'll undertake a problem where you'll use your skills to research its impact, brainstorm alternatives, and determine the best solution. It's a great opportunity for you to:

- Build self-confidence through an independently created project
- Get individualized attention and express your individual differences
- Shine outside the classroom
- Further develop reading, writing, and communication skills
- Apply important math concepts (estimating, measuring, using algebraic and analytical methods, predicting results, and collecting, organizing, and analyzing data using statistical methods) to real-world situations
- Improve your understanding of scientific inquiry and technological design (investigating questions, conducting experiments, examining the interconnections between sciences, and exploring relationships between science, technology, and society)

### **21st Century Problem Solving: Flat Classroom Project**

The Flat Classroom Project is part of the emerging trend in internationally aware schools to embrace a holistic, constructivist educational approach, working collaboratively with others worldwide to create students who are competitive and globally minded. One of the main goals is to "flatten" or lower classroom walls. Instead of each class working in isolation, two or more classes combine virtually to become one large classroom, using Web 2.0 tools such as Wikispaces, Skype, and Ning. You'll collaborate to research recent topics in technology and education, collect your research, and create videos to show what you've learned. Videos are submitted to a panel of international judges and winners are chosen. You'll capstone the class by meeting in real time with another classroom and presenting your experiences to them.

## Project Lead the Way (PLTW)

PLTW is designed to serve high school students of diverse backgrounds—from those already interested in STEM-related fields, to those who are more inspired by the application of STEM than by traditional math and science courses. PLTW's comprehensive curriculum emphasizes critical thinking, creativity, innovation, and real-world problem solving.

The PLTW classroom is an engaging and thought-provoking place, where you'll develop critical-thinking skills through hands-on, project-based learning that prepares you to take on real-world challenges. You'll have the opportunity to create, design, and build things like robots and cars—applying what you're learning in math and science to the world's grand challenges.

**Introduction to Engineering Design (1 year)** : You'll dig deep into the engineering design process, applying math, science, and engineering standards to hands-on projects. You'll work both individually and in teams to design solutions to a variety of problems using 3D modeling software, as well as use an engineering notebook to document your work.

**Principles of Engineering (1 year)** : Through problems that engage and challenge, you'll explore a broad range of engineering topics, including mechanisms, the strength of structures and materials, and automation. You'll develop skills in problem solving, research, and design while learning strategies for design process automation, collaboration, and presentation.

**Computer Science & Software Engineering (1 year)** : Using Python® as a primary tool and incorporating multiple platforms and languages for computation, this course aims to develop computational thinking, generate excitement about career paths that utilize computing, and introduce professional tools that foster creativity and collaboration. It can be your first course in computer science, although we encourage students without prior computing experience to start with Introduction to Computer Science. This course will help you develop programming expertise and explore the workings of the Internet. Projects and problems include app development, visualization of data, cybersecurity, and simulation.

## Community Service

Throughout high school, you'll complete 40 hours of community service to help you build social skills and develop civic skills and attitudes.

### **Senior Capstone Project**

The senior capstone project is the culmination of your academic experience at Quest, building on the skills you've developed in pursuing original research. As a senior, you'll explore an idea, problem, or theory in depth and conduct research to present a college-level thesis that meets the standards of a freshman composition course at the university level. Successfully completing this project is another key indicator of your college readiness.

### **Online Education**

Every Quest student has the opportunity to take an online course from the Illinois Virtual School (IVS) prior to graduation. This online learning opportunity lets you take world language, AP, or other classes not offered on our campus—or enroll in classes that interest you but don't fit into your daily school schedule. IVS's online classes offer individualized instruction that can take place anytime, anywhere, and at any pace. A Quest administrator will be happy to discuss these courses and the associated costs with you.

# Sports & Extracurricular Activities

Quest isn't all about classroom work. Athletics and extracurricular programs play a significant role in the culture of our school.

## Activities

We encourage you to take part in our clubs, special interest groups, annual school-wide events, and field trips. Quest offers many different clubs and groups, such as:

Art ■ Dance ■ National Honor Society ■ Pep Band ■ Scholastic Bowl ■ Spoken Word  
Student Senate ■ Technology Student Association ■ Yearbook

## Athletics

Sports are an integral part of our overall educational plan because they help develop mature, responsible young adults. Participation in sports enriches personal growth and development, sets standards for leadership and excellence, and requires dedication and hard work.

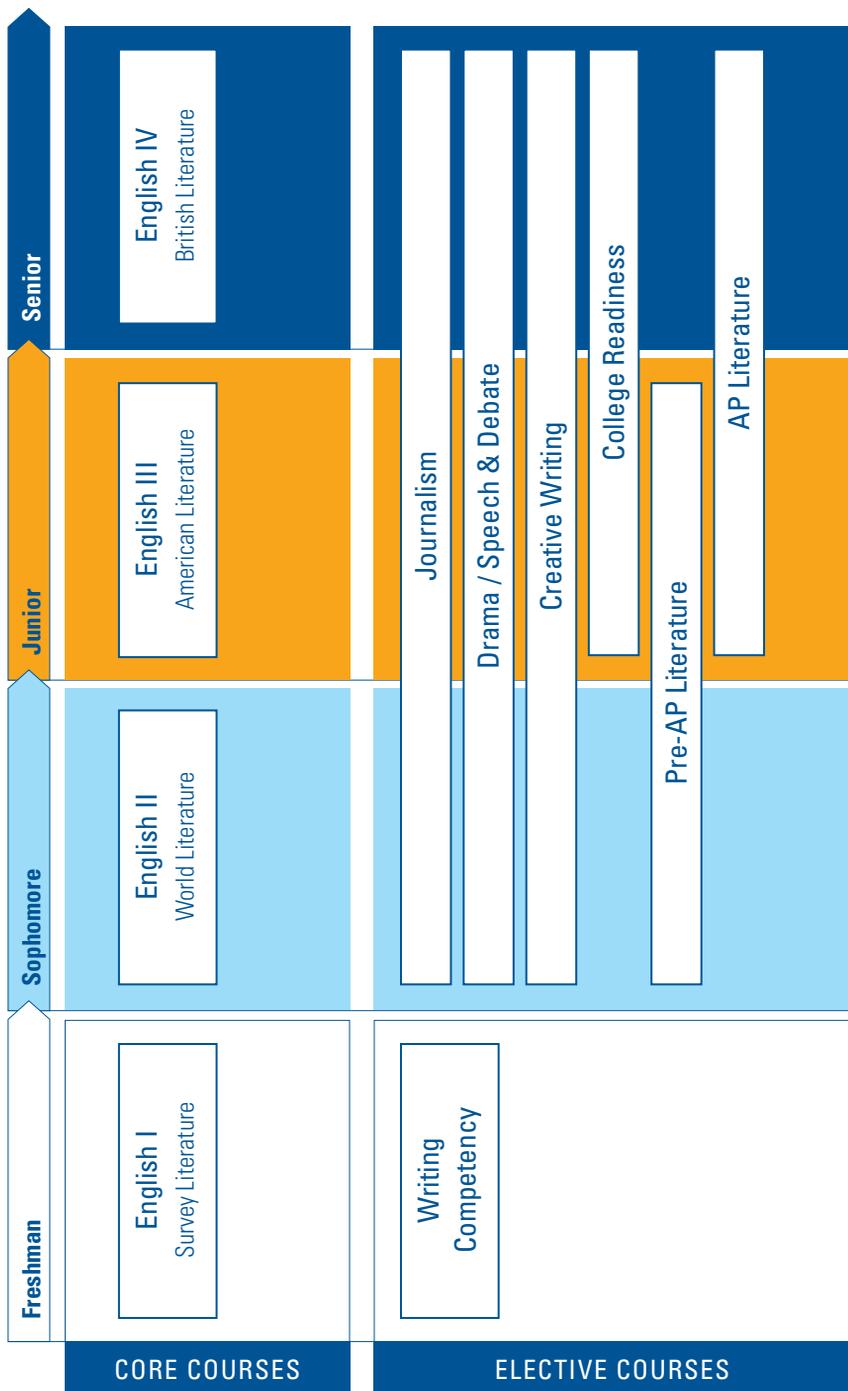
Quest is a member of the Illinois High School Association (IHSA). Our sports programs include: Boys' Basketball ■ Cheerleading ■ Cross Country ■ Golf ■ Soccer ■ Track & Field

We also offer the following sports as a co-op with Peoria Heights High School: Bowling ■ Football ■ Girls' Basketball ■ Wrestling

We'll consider additional sports as interest increases and funding allows.



# English Pathway



# English Curriculum

## Core Courses

**English I** : Survey Literature is a year-long survey of American and British literature and its elements, incorporating reading and writing skills in analyzing the various genres of literature and allowing the student to build a foundation of reading experience. Students also experience a wide variety of writing assignments that promote the development of good writing skills and habits. Grammar and vocabulary development are incorporated throughout the year to enhance fluency and understanding.

**English II** : World Literature introduces a wide range of genres from short story and poetry to novels and drama. The timeline spans from the first written stories to contemporary literature. The class also includes intensive research and creative writing. Upon completion of this course, students have a broad knowledge of influential world literature and a strong grasp of the written language. Grammar and vocabulary development are enhanced with special emphasis paid to ACT/SAT preparation.

**English III** : American Literature is an intensive curriculum that includes a thorough study of American literature, composition, grammar, and vocabulary, with an emphasis on developing clear and effective composition through logically developed expository essays. A variety of cultural and historical literature with universal themes is analyzed to assist in developing students' interpretive and analytical thinking. Vocabulary and grammar are studied within the context of written expression.

**English IV** : British Literature encompasses a year-long survey of British literature, including works of William Shakespeare, Mary Shelley, and George Orwell. In addition, it combines the continuing development of critical reading and writing skills for the college-bound student. An emphasis is placed on writing papers using critical research skills and employing a higher degree of sophistication in writing and vocabulary. Grammar and vocabulary development are further sophisticated with special emphasis paid to ACT/SAT preparation and the foundational skills students need to succeed in college.

## Elective Courses

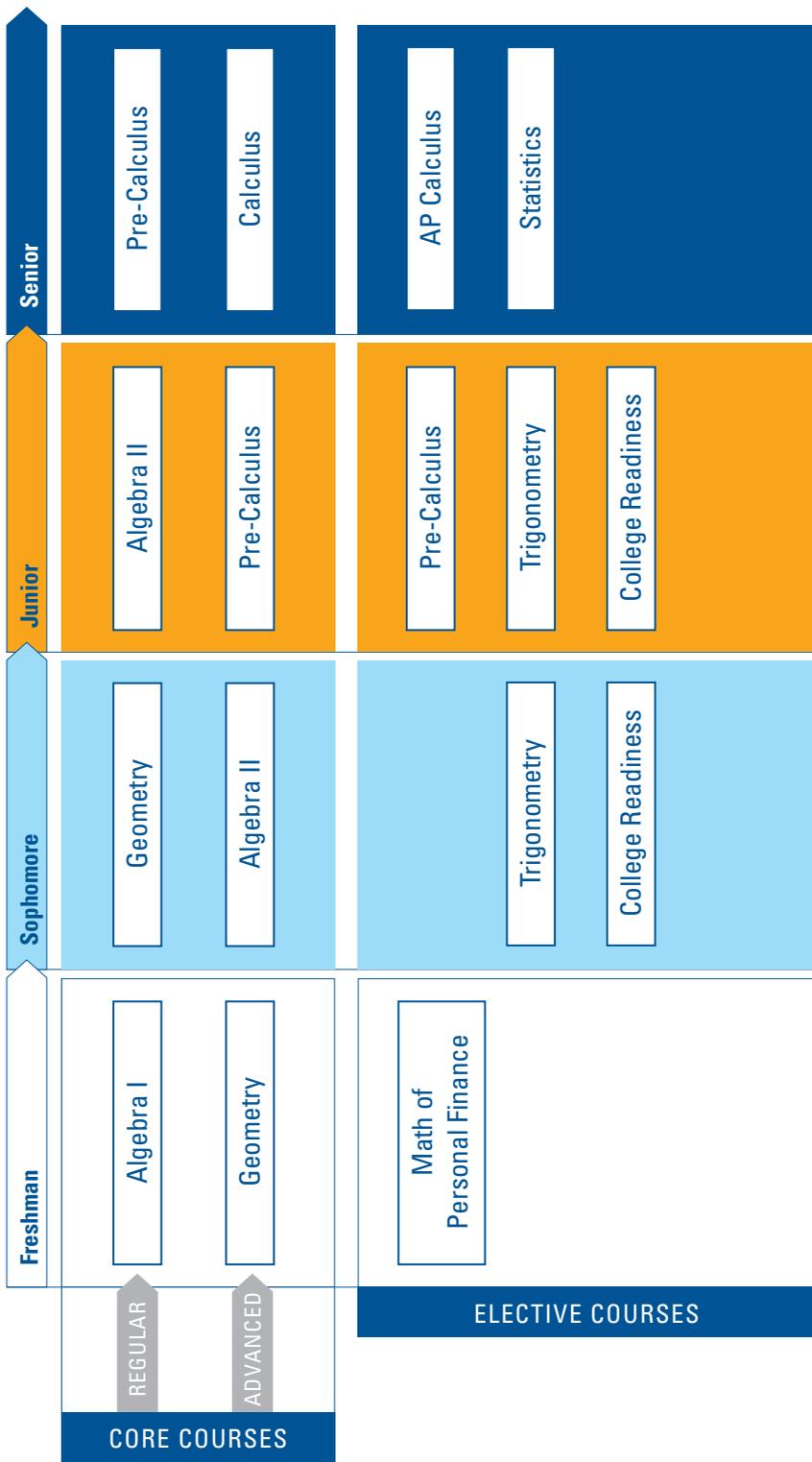
• **Drama / Speech & Debate** is for students interested in pursuing a career in drama or other careers in which research and public speaking are mandatory. Students have the opportunity to practice creative writing skills and to perform and critique a variety of types of theatre as well.

- **Journalism** is an introductory course that entails studying journalistic writing, terminology, and publication to complete journalism-related assignments. Students apply these skills and learn to use software to produce a student newspaper or newsletter. Emphasis is placed on developing critical-thinking skills by analyzing the news media and current events and by applying that knowledge to hands-on activities. Expository writing skills are emphasized—how to, cause and effect, compare and contrast, problem and solution, to inform.
- **College Readiness** relies heavily on ACT’s college readiness standards and the CCSS College and Career Readiness standards to prepare upper-level students for college coursework. Focusing on both reading and writing skills, students read a broad range of nonfiction and practice writing extended essays that go far beyond the standard five-paragraph essay. Test-taking skills are also addressed.





# Math Pathway



# Math Curriculum

## Core Courses

- **Algebra I** provides the basic concepts and skills for solving problems algebraically. The course covers the properties and basic operations of real numbers, polynomial and rational expressions, solutions of equations and inequalities, systems of equations and inequalities in one and two variables, and graphing on a number line and in the coordinate planes.
- **Geometry** is an in-depth course designed for those students who have already displayed an aptitude in mathematics. It covers all the traditional topics of Euclidean Geometry with particular emphasis on inductive and deductive reasoning. Formal geometric language, theorems, constructions, and proofs are emphasized. Algebraic skills and technology are incorporated throughout the course. Calculators and computers are used to enhance mathematical understanding and improve problem-solving skills.
- **Algebra II** reviews the fundamental concepts introduced in Algebra I and develops these concepts to a more advanced degree. Radicals, exponents, quadratics, logarithms, relations and functions, series and sequence, complex numbers, conics, and graphing of quadratic equations are introduced and expanded.
- **Pre-Calculus** is an extension of Algebra II with emphasis in trigonometry, limits, and introductory calculus topics. All major areas covered in Algebra II are reinforced at a greater depth with additional applications aided by the use of calculators and computers. The course is designed to encompass all those topics necessary to be successful in a college calculus course.
- **AP Calculus** has been authorized by the College Board to use the AP designation. Students learn to understand change geometrically and visually (by studying graphs of curves), analytically (by studying and working with mathematical formulas), numerically (by seeing patterns in sets of numbers), and verbally. Instead of simply getting the right answer, students learn to evaluate the soundness of proposed solutions and to apply mathematical reasoning to real-world models. Calculus helps scientists, engineers, and financial analysts understand the complex relationships behind real-world phenomena. The equivalent of an introductory college-level calculus course, AP Calculus AB prepares students for the AP Exam and further studies in science, engineering, and mathematics.

## Elective Courses

- **Trigonometry** focuses on nonlinear functions, right triangle properties, trigonometric functions, and advanced algebra. Through the study of trigonometry, students develop proficiency in using mathematics to solve problems in everyday life; gain an understanding of trigonometry as a study of triangle and angle relationships using radians and/or degrees; apply advanced algebra techniques to solve problems including identities, logarithms, and exponents; apply statistical methods to analyze data and make predictions; and gain an appreciation of how advanced mathematics relates to the world of work.
- **College Readiness** helps students prepare for ACT-SAT testing and work on practice ACT-SAT math questions.
- **Statistics** introduces students to the major concepts of probability, interpretation of data, and statistical problem solving. Students learn the course concepts through hands-on experimentation and investigation. They analyze existing data as well as data collected through a survey, observational study, or experiment. They then display the data in different ways, analyze it, and draw conclusions based on the results. The four main components of the course are exploring data, data collection, probability, and inference.
- **Mathematics of Personal Finance** focuses on real-world financial literacy, personal finance, and business subjects. Students apply what they learned in Algebra I and Geometry to topics including personal income, taxes, checking and savings accounts, credit, loans and payments, car leasing and purchasing, home mortgages, stocks, insurance, and retirement planning. They then extend their investigations using more advanced mathematics, such as systems of equations when studying cost and profit issues and exponential functions when calculating interest problems.



# Science Pathway

Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior
<p>Physical Science</p>	<p>Biology</p>	<p>Chemistry</p>	<p>Physics</p>
		<p>AP Physics</p> <p>Anatomy &amp; Physiology</p>	<p>AP Biology</p>
CORE COURSES		ELECTIVE COURSES	

# Science Curriculum

## Core Courses

- **Physical Science** is an introductory class examining the relationships between matter and energy. The class is a combination of fundamental physics and chemistry. Some of the topics covered include motion, simple machines, states of matter, properties of matter, waves, and basic concepts of chemistry.
- **Biology** provides a background in all areas of methods of science, ecology, ecosystems, biodiversity and conservation, cells, cellular energy, cellular reproduction, sexual reproduction, genetics, inheritance, evolution, primate evolution, classification, and animal systems.
- **Chemistry** provides a background in all areas of methods of science, the study of nomenclature, atomic and molecular structure, stoichiometry, bonding, chemical reactions, atomic structures, periodic table, electrons in atoms, chemical names and formulas, chemical quantities, nuclear chemistry, and hydrocarbon compounds.
- **Physics** provides a background in all areas of scientific methods, the fluid mechanics, thermal physics, electricity and magnetism, waves and optics, mechanics, motion and Newton's laws, and energy.

## Elective Courses

- **Anatomy & Physiology** covers the study of human biology, with focus on the structures (anatomy) and functions and processes (physiology) of the human body. Topics include, but are not limited to, cytology (the study of different human cells), histology (the study of different human tissues), characterization of different organs and organ systems, and life functions such as respiration, digestion, and reproduction. This course is designed for juniors and seniors who are interested in pursuing a career in the field of health or medicine.
- **AP Physics** prepares students for college-level physics courses. It studies vectors, kinematics, Newton's laws of motion, work, energy, power, linear momentum, Newton's law of gravitation, oscillations, fluid mechanics, thermal physics, electric forces and fields, electric potential and capacitance, electric circuits, magnetic forces and fields, electromagnetic induction, waves, optics, and atomic and nuclear physics.
- **AP Biology** is the equivalent of a college introductory biology course, usually taken by biology majors during their first year. It differs significantly from the usual high school biology course with respect to the kind of textbook used, the range and depth of topics covered, and the time and effort required of students. AP Biology provides students with the conceptual framework, factual knowledge, and analytical skills necessary to deal critically with the rapidly changing science of biology. The goal of a college introductory biology course, and therefore of an AP Biology course, is to provide a learning environment that enables students to develop a solid understanding of the principal concepts in biology.

# Social Studies Pathway

	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior
<b>CORE COURSES</b>	Modern World History	American History	American Government	
<b>ELECTIVE COURSES</b>	Current Events	African-American History		Psychology / Sociology

# Social Studies Curriculum

## Core Courses

- **Modern World History** focuses on world events from the 15th century Age of Enlightenment to the Cold War of the 20th century. The goal for this course is to gain a comprehensive understanding of major world events and the related impact on the development of global connections. Writing, both formal and informal, is a strong component of this course. Students prepare a formal research paper with a bibliography, as well as complete a social justice project and other related projects throughout the year.
- **American History** focuses on the development of the United States, including 19th century industrialization into the Cold War, and concludes with the current century. Goals for this course are to gain an understanding of the connections between the United States and the rest of the world and the events that have shaped the country, as well as to develop a knowledge and appreciation of cultures. Students learn note-taking, studying, writing, researching, group cooperation, and higher-level thinking skills through this course. Instructional methods include lectures, small group work, class discussion, primary source documents, audio and video supplementation, and research projects to increase students' learning experiences. (This course is available to sophomores who have passed World History.)
- **American Government** focuses on political science, helping students gain an understanding of what government is and why it's necessary. The course focuses on how government has changed over time, how it's organized, and how it deals with issues facing our society today. Students learn how to participate in the democratic process through various means of instruction, including possible site learning opportunities at the local, state, and national levels of government, participation in the election process, analysis of Supreme Court cases, and interactions with legislators. Students refine basic skills, such as note-taking, researching, organizing, studying, participating in class discussions, analyzing primary source documents, and working within a group. (This course is available to juniors who have passed American History and seniors.)

## Elective Courses

- **Current Events** has students research current economic, political, social, and cultural issues and explore how ongoing conflicts affect groups as well as individuals. Emphasis is on America as a dynamic society in the 21st century, witnessing changes involving community, state, nation, and world. Students conduct research, participate in class discussions, and give oral presentations. A variety of technologies is integrated throughout the curriculum.

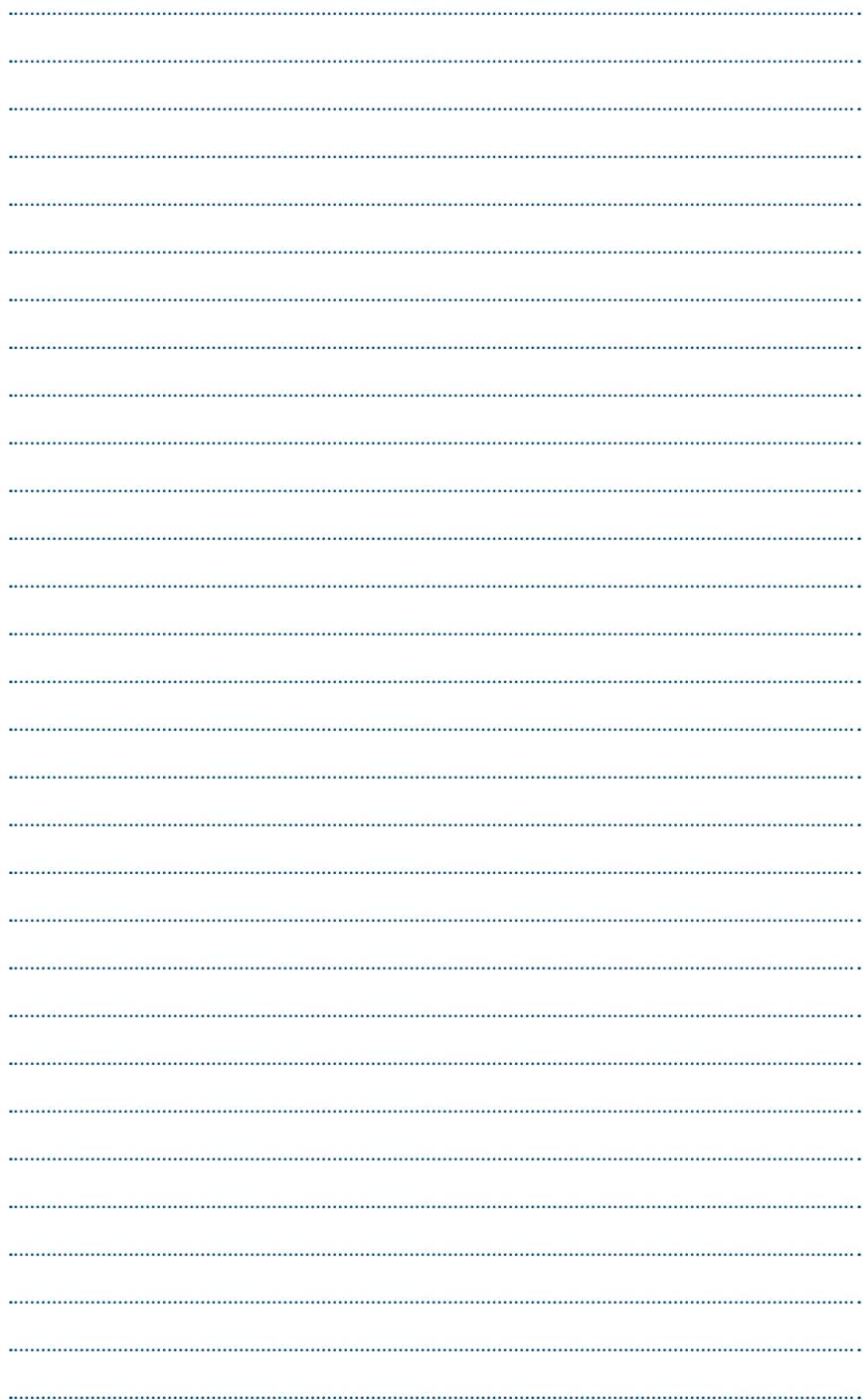


## Expect More

## as a Quest Student

- : Challenge
- : Longer school day
- : Longer school year
- : Uniform required
- : Up to eight courses per day
- : Custom Learning Time
- : Smaller school environment
- : Emphasis on home-to-school relationship—including home visits by teachers
- : More personal attention
- : Advisory system
- : Mid-quarter parent-teacher conferences
- : Community partnerships
- : FTC Robotics
- : Athletics
- : Job shadowing/career exploration
- : Opportunity to take college-level courses
- : Required community service





## About Quest

Quest Charter Academy opened in August 2010 offering 5th, 6th, and 7th grades. We added a grade each year and now offer 5th-12th grades. As a charter school, Quest is an independent public school open to all students in District 150, regardless of academic achievement, race, or economic background. There are no entrance exams or tuition.

**Questions?** Please call 309.402.0030 or email [info@questpeoria.org](mailto:info@questpeoria.org).



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