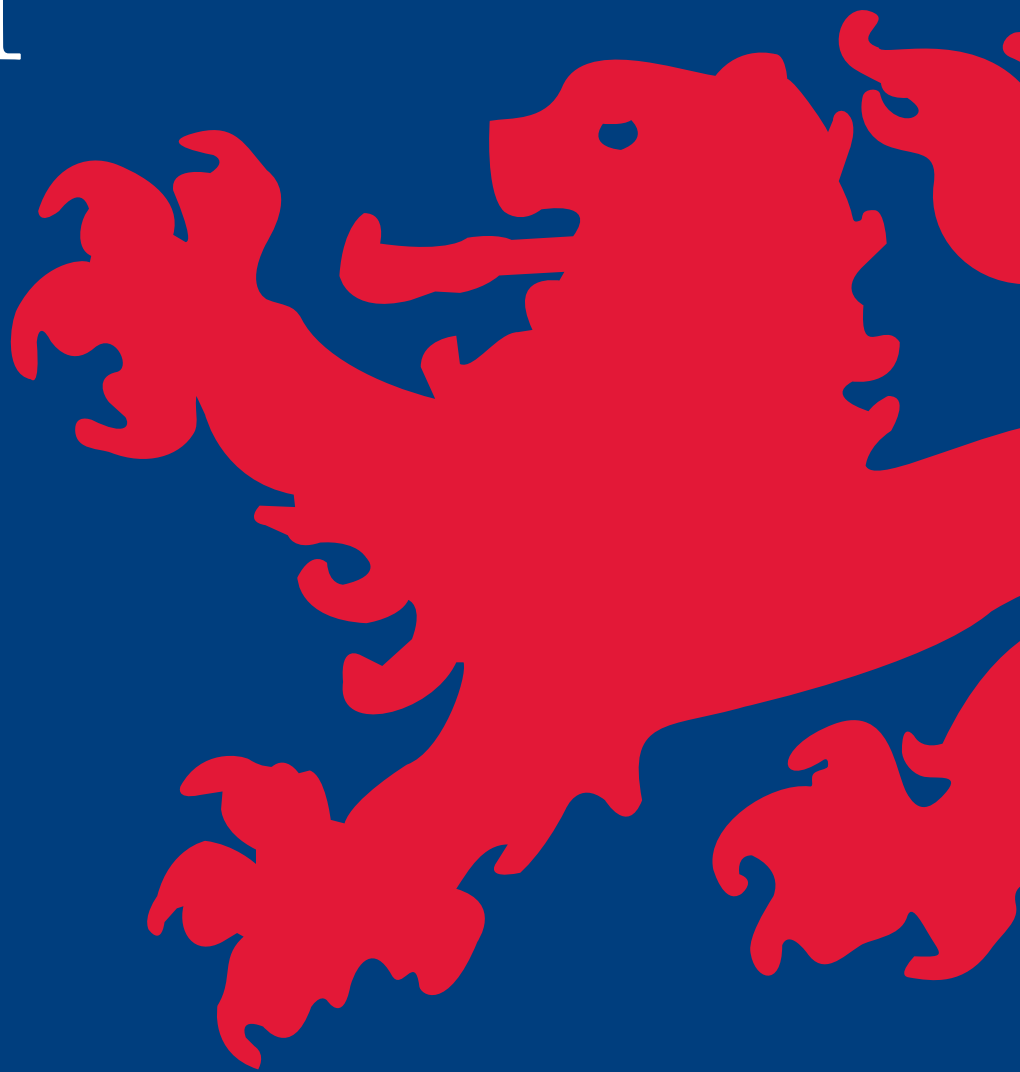


DWIGHT SCHOOL GUIDE to QUEST



DWIGHT SCHOOL

Igniting the spark of genius in every child

PERSONALIZED LEARNING • COMMUNITY • GLOBAL VISION

WHY CHOOSE QUEST?

Quest is far more than academic support. The program combines convenience and reliability of on-site support with the efficiency of a teacher well-versed in the Dwight culture, curriculum, and program expectations.

Extensive Support for the Whole Child

- Students are observed in the classroom setting by Quest teachers when needed.
- Quest teachers coordinate with deans and other members of the student support team to provide support in all facets of school life.
- Quest teachers help every student understand his or her learning style and become self-advocates.

Data-based Progress Reporting

- Annual reports chart student progress on the IB Approaches to Learning, a comprehensive toolbox of skills needed to provide a solid foundation for learning independently.
- Quest teachers work with parents and students to set specific measurable goals, monitor progress, and revise goals throughout the year.

Intensive Academic Support and Skill Building

- Strategic remedial instruction is built into the existing curriculum.
- Students are able to build skills or refine their strategic approach while interacting with material they need to know.

A Large Support Network

- Students have access to the whole Quest team, including specialists in all curricular areas.
- Upper Quest teachers receive ongoing training in special education and learning differences. Training covers specific research-based teaching strategies found to be effective for students with language-based learning differences and attention deficits.
- Lower Quest teachers all have Master's Degrees in Special Education.



WHY CHOOSE QUEST OVER PRIVATE TUTORING?

At Dwight, Quest provides the individualized attention and comprehensive level of support that tutoring does not.

At the most basic level, Quest teachers provide direct support for students in areas of academic weakness; however, Quest is much more than tutoring and offers many unique advantages.

Quest Teachers Are

- Connected with a student's teachers and administrators on a daily basis
- Well-versed in the IB curriculum
- Knowledgeable of Dwight-specific assignments and expectations
- Informed, caring, expert mentors for students
- Experts in specific fields of study at Dwight

Quest Teachers Will

- Maintain active communication with families
- Initiate ongoing communication with classroom teachers
- Know the expectations of each student's individual program of study
- Help students navigate specific situations that pose a challenge in school

HOW QUEST TEACHERS WORK

Students are paired with Quest teachers for the duration of the year. Students are sometimes assigned to specific teachers to address specific curricular needs. Quest support is embedded throughout the school day and each student meets with his/her Quest teacher three times per six-day cycle.

All Quest teachers help each student to better understand his/her learning style and challenges, which is useful in overcoming or compensating for learning differences. We believe this understanding is essential to empowering the student. Quest teachers also work with students to identify strategies that best suit their individual learning styles.

In addition to direct one-on-one academic support, Quest teachers consult with students' classroom teachers on an ongoing basis. Quest teachers and classroom teachers work together to implement simple adjustments to greatly improve the quality of instruction for learning differences and students with attention issues. Quest teachers are also in frequent communication with parents, delivering comprehensive updates on student progress every two weeks.



THE REFERRAL PROCESS

Every Dwight student has a learning profile and in many cases, the learning needs of the student are met solely by classroom teachers. However, in some cases, there are children with unique needs who require support from teachers with specific expertise beyond that of a general education classroom teacher.

The referral process often begins with the observations of the classroom teacher who recognizes that a student is facing consistent and ongoing challenges. This observation of a gap between the student's development or academic ability and his/her age may indicate a learning or attention difference, and thus the need for additional targeted academic intervention or support. It is possible that the learning needs can be met by the classroom teacher, working in conjunction with school administration. When necessary, our Quest Program can provide additional special education support for the child and classroom teachers.

Early Intervention/Referral Process in Lower School

In Lower School, grades 1-5, classroom teachers are often the first to identify a student who may exhibit learning challenges. They inform the Head of the Lower School of these concerns and the Head would observe the student in his/her academic and specialist classes.

If all agree that there appears to be learning issues, the Head of the Lower School communicates with the Head of Lower Quest, who will also observe the student in his/her classroom environment. The Head of Lower School, the School Psychologist, and the Head of Lower Quest will then discuss if Quest is an appropriate program for the student.

The Head of Lower School and the School Psychologist invite the family in for an initial meeting. They discuss the need to acquire additional information regarding the child's academic profile through a neuropsychological evaluation. The School recommends various professionals in this field, who are also familiar with Dwight's curriculum and its Quest Program.

At this time, or after the results of the evaluation, the School will discuss with the family how the Quest Program will complement this student's learning profile. If the family would like to proceed, they will meet with the Head of Lower Quest to discuss an individualized program in detail.

Referral Process in Middle and Upper Schools

The classroom teachers are often the first to identify a student who may exhibit learning challenges. Once a teacher informs the appropriate Division Head of these concerns, the Head inquires about this student in all of his/her classes. Concurrently, the Division Head, the School Psychologist, and the Head of Quest meet to discuss this student and to devise a plan. If the student is in Upper School, the dean will be present as well.

When the issue is learning-based, the Head of Quest will observe this student in his/her core academic classes. The Division Head and Head of Quest will meet to discuss observations, and review report cards and recent standardized test scores. They will discuss having the student evaluated, and simultaneously, whether Quest is the next step for this student.

The Division Head and the Head of Quest will invite the family in for an initial meeting to discuss the strengths and concerns they have observed in the classroom. The next step is a conversation,



including the need to acquire additional information regarding the child's academic profile through a neuropsychological evaluation. The School recommends various professionals in this field, who are also familiar with Dwight's curriculum and its Quest Program.

At this time, or after the results of the evaluation, the School will discuss with the family how the Quest Program will complement their child's learning profile.

WHO ARE QUEST STUDENTS?

In any random sample of students, the educational needs will be diverse. Quest students at Dwight are no different. They present with a variety of learning styles, strengths and backgrounds in different grades. Some begin their education at Dwight, some come from special education schools and are ready for a more inclusive education, while others have come from mainstream schools where they struggled with the curriculum. Quest students are able to succeed in a mainstream school with a rigorous curriculum from Quest.

Dwight's Quest Program is designed to help two types of students. The first are students whose learning issues were diagnosed early in their schooling. These students often come from a full special-education setting and have received support throughout their school careers. The second type of student has progressed through lower and middle school without solidifying his/her basic skills set.

Quest students are eager for mentorship and willing to accept help. Working with students with learning differences often requires flexibility, imagination, and creativity on the part of the teacher. Though many of our students have areas of common difficulty, each one requires a unique approach. When working with Quest students, it is useful to take a long view of their progress; we are not going to undo years of academic frustration overnight. It may take an entire year for a student to internalize one learning strategy. Progress for Quest students is rarely, if ever, linear. There will be steps forward and steps back.

Most of the students in Quest have been diagnosed with a language-based learning difference (LBLD). Quest is not designed to support a student with profound emotional or attention issues.

Measures of Success

Just as every student is unique, so are his/her accomplishments. Quest students are on the Dean's List, finalists in school-wide essay-writing contests, receive academic awards across subjects, serve on student government, appear in school plays, star on athletic teams, and are awarded IB diplomas at graduation.

College matriculation for Quest students is similar to that of non-Quest students. The strongest and most academically inclined go to top-tier colleges, including Harvard, Yale, Cornell, the University of Pennsylvania, and Duke. Some Quest students have a particular spark of genius in the arts and go to Rhode Island School of Design or Bard. Others attend Skidmore, Syracuse, George Washington, and Rollins. The common thread is that Quest students find the perfect fit for them, alongside non-Quest peers.

A Quest Alumnus Shares His Experiences

For an in-depth look at just one of Dwight's successful Quest graduates, please visit www.dwight.edu/quest-success.

