

The Quest Chronicles

**October/
November**

2011

The Divine Vine

(Ms. Connie Divine: Quest Administrator)



It seems impossible that Halloween is behind us and we are approaching the holidays. Good attendance, good citizenship, and good study skills continue to be necessary foundations to success even through the excitement and/or the uncertainty of the winter holidays. Quest teachers and staff are committed to assisting our students with these key characteristics so that students can continue to work toward the CPS district-wide School-Improvement Goals:

- Increase student achievement
- Eliminate achievement disparities between groups of students
- Maximize resource efficiency

To realize the goals above, positive school and classroom environments are critical. We continue to model, teach, and practice the expectations of being students that are safe, responsible and respectful. Achievement with these goals could dramatically improve students' success in life. Please continue to discuss these expectations with your student and how these principles can apply at home and in the community.

On *November 10*, Quest faculty and staff would like to extend an invitation to all CPS faculty and staff and parents of Quest students to attend our annual Fall Festival. You can join us any time between the hours of 11:00-1:00. This is a great time to visit classes to view projects and activities presented by the students. Following your tour through the building a class will serve a light lunch, prepared by students to send you on your way full of warm chicken soup to finish your day. We hope to see you here. Please respond to Quest as soon as you can so that we can have accurate numbers for the preparations of the lunch.

As always, we look forward to our continued work together in support of your child. Do not hesitate to call your child's teacher, staff, or myself with questions or suggestions. Together is the best way to make the most dramatic changes in your child's life. (573-214-3740)

Ms. Slusher: (Program Nurse)



I would like to introduce myself. My name is Paula Slusher R.N., MSN. I am the new nurse for C.O.R.E./ Quest this year. Those letters behind my name just mean that I am a registered nurse in the state of Missouri and I have my graduate degree in Pediatric Nursing Education. Most of my experience to date has been in a Pediatric Intensive Care Unit. I also taught Pediatric Nursing at the University of Missouri-Columbia. I enjoy research and most of my publications are in regard to child safety and child maltreatment. That said, I am very happy to be here this year and I enjoy everyone one of the students and staff. This is a great place to work and is very rewarding.

- *I would like to remind everyone that when a student's medication runs out or is getting low, I will send a reminder or call. It is imperative that an adult / guardian bring the refill in the proper prescribed bottle or blister pack.*

Quest is a program offered by Columbia Public Schools for at-promise children with special needs.

We are housed at the **(C.O.R.E.)** Center of Responsive Education building.

Quest
Center for Responsive
Education
4600 Bethel Road
Columbia, MO
65201

Secondary (Junior High/ High School)

Secondary Successes and Other Tidbits

The beginning of the 2011-2012 school year has been filled with lots of hustle and bustle beyond the "blue mile". This is a great thing; partly because it means the transitioning of students back into their homeschools. The high schools and Junior High Schools have worked very well with us placing students back into the flow of the general education campuses.

This is always exciting but it is also a very busy time for everyone. The other part of the hustle and bustle incorporates the wonderful learning taking place! 8th-12th graders are involved in Core math classes such as Pre-Algebra, Algebra and Integrated Math; core social studies classes such as Government, World History and US History; and core science classes such as Biology, Physics and General Science. Strategic Reading, Language Arts and Literature are helping students to access books and allow for reading on varied levels. We

are now more than half way through the first semester and looking forward to the things that the end of the semester will bring. Yep, that's right; we are looking forward to mid-term exams, and lots of studying. After all, what teenagers wouldn't be?? Of course, there is time for a little bit of fun, too. The Fall Festival will be happening soon and the secondary classes are preparing some fun and interesting lessons to show off! Be sure to come join us!

Ms. Fitzmaurice: Elementary

We are very proud of one of our students; he was able to fully transition to his home school in October! We had a party to celebrate his achievement. We have been studying skeletons, bones, and muscles in Science. We had a great puzzle to work one that was almost the size of us!

We have been working hard on subtraction and addition in Math and are writing great stories in writing. We have been focusing on short vowel sounds and blends in Reading. In November we look forward to parent/teacher conferences and our first report cards! We will also have our Fall Festival

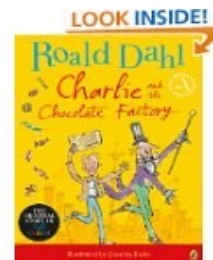
where we will share our big book about skeletons and bones.

Ms. Rippstein: Elementary

Our class has a great group of students who love to read! We have completed two classroom read aloud books and have begun the third. We are currently reading How To Steal A Dog. Further, we are studying living/non-living things as well as learning about ecosystems in science. In social studies we have learned about land forms, natural resources and renewable resources. Currently we are

learning the capitals for each state, and where states are located. Our classroom has had two celebrations this year. For our first one, students made a pizza in our classroom, and watched Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory, a book we completed in our read aloud time. Next month we will begin studying different regions of the United States and learning how animals adapt to survive in their environments. Our students are looking

forward to the Fall Festival, and have been working hard on a project for our classroom. We work hard, and play hard!



Ms. Crowley: Literacy and Assessment

For those students who have Ms. Crowley for reading, there have been a few new items that are worth mentioning. The middle school and secondary students have begun using "Learning Earnings" incentives and rewards to spur them on. I am already seeing an increased level of homework completion as well as greater effort during class time. Also,

we are finally able to participate in the districts new "progress monitoring" system for reading called Star. In our building, the students who are participating in a separate reading class are involved in this progress monitoring. This technology based system enables us to see how our students are doing, and whether or not, what we are doing is working

so that we can adjust as needed. I am looking forward to the charting that will be available to make the best use of this innovative diagnostic tool.



Mr. Green: Secondary Community Skills

Our class consists of High school students that have a primary goal of advancing and expanding their Life, Vocational and Social Skills to improve opportunities for their future. Does that surprise you? I bet not, we are working hard daily on refining and learning new skills that will give us the greatest opportunities after Graduation.

Last year our class really began to see themselves as a part of a larger community, not just students at Quest. We

started working on an Adopt-A Spot and have taken on keeping Bethel Park clean, by picking up trash 2 times a week. We are also working toward our Post Secondary Goals by learning and refining our Job skills by working for the Boone Country Food Pantry and the Central Missouri Humane Society, We have found great satisfaction helping those in need and look forward to working hard and reflecting daily on how to improve ourselves in every area of our lives.

"Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do. If you haven't found it yet, keep looking. Don't settle. As with all matters of the heart, you'll know when you find it. "

Steve Jobs



Ms. Williams: Administrative Assistant/ Secretary

Hello, my name is Lisa Williams. I am the new secretary for the Quest Program located at the CORE Building. I have been in the field of education for the last 23 years; as a teacher and a paraprofessional and secretary. The students and staff here at Quest have been awesome, helping me settle in and learn the ropes. I'm loving it! If you have any questions for me please call the school at 573-214-3740. If I am away from my desk, please leave a message and I will get back to you as soon as possible. Thank you for letting me interact with your students each day.



Ms. Broderick: Middle School

We are off to a great start of the year!

Since the beginning of the school year, we have been very busy. We began a program called Learning Earnings, which is an online-based program in which we can earn and spend money for things like completed homework, 100% attendance, and having no major referrals. We're excited to have the availability of Art, PE, and Music

classes this year. We are learning about light, shape, and value in Art, have been learning new games in PE that are both fun and are definitely a work-out! In Music, we've been singing and also learning about and playing drums.

We are looking forward to seeing all of you at the Fall Festival on *November 10th between 11:00 and 1:00!*

Middle School Classroom motto

*"You make the choices,
but you do not get to choose the
consequences."*

Mr. Kuster: Primary Community Skills

We have had a great beginning. We've brought in new students and are preparing to say good bye to others. We have practiced our skills in the community and have taken opportunity to work at the Food Pantry. Our class has settled into a diverse and productive routine. We are making great progress and look forward to making more.



Ms. Sisson: Music Specialist



What a great opportunity to be the Quest music teacher this year!

The students have been very responsible, respectful and safe drummers, all have had fun learning to create music on the drums and all have shown they can be good musicians with other rhythm instruments as well. The Quest High School Drum Ensemble performed amazingly for Rep. Chris Kelly who enjoyed a tour of the CORE Building and Quest classrooms. Middle school and elementary students performed the work song, *Take This Hammer*, with great skill in singing and choreography. A fun time was had by students and teachers alike when blues musician, Tj Wheeler, came for an assembly and all hope he comes to visit again. Great to be at Quest!!

Administrator
Connie Divine

Secretary
Ms. Williams

Social Worker
Ms. Tyler

Nurse
Paula Slusher

School Resource Officer
Officer Ash

Literacy Support
Ms. Crowley

Elementary Teacher
Ms. Rippstein

Elementary Teacher
Ms. Fitzmaurice

Middle School Teacher
Ms. Broderick

High School Teacher
Ms. Rieken
Ms. Bivens
Mr. Duchmann

Community Skills Teacher
Mr. Green



Quest Mission

**To create an environment
that empowers
individuals' learning and
decision making which
leads to success in school
and beyond.**



What's Happening at Quest: <http://service.columbia.k12.mo.us/quest>

November 2011:

Fall Festival
*November 10th between
11:00 and 1:00!*

No School:

November, 11th
**November, 23rd-
the 25th**

The Continuous Quest for knowledge

Current Topic:

We are working on Social boundaries using a Program called "Circles".

The CIRCLES Program teaches social distance and levels of intimacy through the use of six color coded concentric circles. Starting from the center circle, which is the self, each new colored circle represents behaviors, feelings, and actions appropriate to the distance from the center, or self. For example, a person may hug and kiss members of the family, people in the Blue Hug Circle, but only wave to the mailman, who is in the distant Orange Wave Circle.

The CIRCLES Program assists students to discriminate different degrees of intimacy and to adapt their behaviors accordingly. The program teaches students how relationships can be formed and maintained according to the social norms of our day. Thus, the CIRCLES Program lays the foundation for people with social deficits due to their disabilities to manage the amount of personal responsibility and social integration in their lives.

