



Bridgeport Regional Aquaculture Science & Technology Education Center

60 St. Stephens Road Bridgeport, CT 06605
Phone: (203) 275-2926 Fax: (203) 337-0168

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Frequently Asked Questions

What exactly is 'aquaculture'? Aquaculture is the science of farming fish, crustaceans, mollusks, algae, seaweeds, and other aquatic plants and animals in water environments.

What towns do you serve? Bridgeport, Fairfield, Trumbull, Shelton, Milford, Monroe, and Stratford.

Is there transportation? Yes! All students have transportation provided by their sending town.

How does the program work in conjunction with the home school? We have Fairfield, Stratford, and Bridgeport Central students in our morning cohort, and the remaining schools/towns in our afternoon cohort. Each cohort is appropriately scheduled by the home school. Over 4 years, Aqua students would earn a minimum of 8 STEM credits toward the STEM credit of the total 25 needed for graduation.

Is there a tuition? No. Aquaculture is free to attend because it is a public school.

Is Aqua only for academically advanced students? No-There is no GPA requirement. Our program is one of the 20 Agriculture Science Technology Engineering (ASTE) centers in the state, and we are open to **all learners**.

What criteria are considered for acceptance? In rank order from highest to lowest priority:

- 1) Demonstrated interest in a career in an agricultural related field
- 2) Personal meeting and/or interview with ASTE staff and/or school personnel
- 3) Counselor, teacher, personal recommendations
- 4) Attendance record
- 5) Academic records
- 6) Behavioral records
- 7) Standardized assessment scores

Are there opportunities to visit the school and learn more about the program? Yes! We do an open house each semester for interest students and parents. We have an event upcoming on October 20th, 2022, from 5-7 PM at our school.

What do Aqua graduates do? Many attend colleges and universities, both local and national, small and large. Some continue with a marine-science based course of study, while others utilize the skills they've learned at Aqua to pursue other majors, such as engineering or business. Other students have leveraged their successful Sikorsky internship into a full-time job with Sikorsky and entered the work force after high school. We encourage all students to carve their own path and have many avenues and tools to help them along the way.



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How is it different than science at my home school? We take a very hands-on approach to our learning and generally have smaller class sizes. We also offer unique opportunities to our students, most notably the ability to study Biology, Ecology, and Oceanography aboard our state-of-the-art research vessel, the R/V Kaye Williams. We also offer technology classes that blend science and technology (Marine Construction and Marine CAD/CAM are examples). These courses can be one of 9 STEM credits that students need for graduation.

Are there work or internship opportunities? Yes! We have a long-standing relationship with the Sikorsky Teamsters internship program that has led to many successful experiences for Aquaculture students over the years. We also have in-house employment opportunities through Angie's Fish Market and our hatchery.

Are there research opportunities for students? Yes! We have students currently participating in the Unified Water Study as concerned citizen scientists. We also have a research-intensive program for seniors who crave a deeper dive into a specific topic. This course of studies provides students more time at our center to conduct their research. Students from this program compete in local, state, and national level science fairs highlighting their research projects. Students learn about this program both informally through sharing a school with these students, and formally through a presentation by the instructor, as they progress through our program.

What is the day-to-day schedule for a student like at Aqua? We have a semester-based schedule that mirrors a college schedule, so students take one course each semester. A freshmen schedule may include Aquaculture Biology in the Fall semester, and then Marine Construction I in the spring semester. On a given day, AM students are dismissed and return to their high schools to attend the remainder of their classes. PM students do the opposite and end their day with us, returning to their home schools to engage in afterschool activities or get back home.

Do I need to wear a uniform? There is no uniform requirement; however, students are expected to dress appropriately given the experiential nature of our program. Depending on their class, students could be working around water, with power tools, and aboard vessels. Teachers will outline appropriate/safe clothing and footwear for their classes.

Are there clubs? We have several extracurricular programs facilitated by our staff, such as the Sikorsky STEM Challenge and the Unified Water Study. These are great opportunities for students to pursue and explore their passions in a very real, but fun, way.

Do you have sports? Aquaculture does not have its own sport teams; however, we have many student-athletes from our 11 sending high schools. Attending Aqua does not impact afterschool activities. Our students benefit from being part of the Aqua community while also staying connected to sports and other activities offered by their sending school.

How can students apply? All instructions and forms necessary to apply are on our website, www.bptaqua.org. If accepted, students can confirm their seat and will then be enrolled in our program.