Using the XQ Design Principles to Strengthen Remote and Hybrid Learning:
A Tool for Discussion and Self-Assessment

How well are you meeting the needs of students as your school community adapts to remote and hybrid learning?

The XQ Design Principles can help you explore how students are experiencing school right now, so you can make informed decisions about how to improve and refine your approach.

Step 1
Start by talking through our Questions to Think About and Discuss with stakeholders: educators, families, students, and community members.

Step 2
Then work together—students and adults— to answer the essential questions in our Self-Assessment.

Step 3
Decide on the steps you'll take to strengthen students' experiences with remote and hybrid learning.

Using the XQ Design Principles to Strengthen Remote and Hybrid Learning:
Questions to Think About and Discuss

CARING, TRUSTING RELATIONSHIPS

Consistent emphasis on truly getting to know students, both inside and outside the classroom, and on building positive relationships among students and between students and adults

- Before COVID, could students in your school identify an adult who knows them well and to whom they can go with a problem or for advice on academic or other choices? How will your school organize to make this possible in full-or part-time remote and hybrid learning environments?

- Will the new structures you organize ensure that every student experiences the warmth of a consistent and personal invitation to learn?

- What practices will you institute to build community and ensure that every student feels included as a member of the school community?

- How will new ways of organizing adult roles, programs, and practices, such as advisory, ensure that every student has a "primary person" who knows them well and keeps in contact in remote and hybrid environments?

- How will students see members of the school community acting kindly and respectfully toward each other?

STRONG MISSION AND CULTURE

A unifying set of values and principles that provide common purpose, express belief in the potential of every student, and define every aspect of a school

- How can your school invigorate its mission and culture to inspire and unify the school community after the disruptions of spring 2020 and as you face ongoing challenges?

- How will your school articulate its core values and beliefs, and promote affiliation with its norms and expectations, so that they are shared among students, staff, families, partners, and other stakeholders?

- How will your school work to establish an inclusive and supportive community and culture, with common goals and priorities among all members, when many members are not in touch in person?

- How will your school innovate in its structures and practices to support a culture that handles conflicts and problems positively and equitably?

MEANINGFUL, ENGAGED LEARNING

Innovative approaches to curriculum and teaching that use real-world, interdisciplinary learning experiences to enable students to develop and apply deep content knowledge and complex skills

- New kinds of learning often require new modes of instruction. How will teachers learn about and try new instructional practices in their classrooms and remotely?

- How can your school support teachers with technology, access to just-in-time professional learning, and other resources?

- What learning experiences does your school need to develop to increase engagement in remote and hybrid learning? How will you support teachers and students to engage in projects, research, and collaborative learning in this new context?

- How should differences in student interests, skills, and learning preferences be accommodated? What structures are needed to understand differences and respond to them?

- How can your school help students who are significantly behind catch up and keep up?

- How can your school connect with resources and people from across the community to enrich student learning?

SMART USE OF TIME, SPACE, AND TECH (PLUS ROLES AND FINANCE)

Non-traditional, flexible uses of time, technology, space, place, financial resources, and roles to increase the effectiveness of teaching and learning

TIME

- How can your school develop creative and innovative ways to organize and use time when students are not in classrooms to help them grow as self-directed learners?
- How can teaching strategies be adjusted to help students develop curiosity and skills such as research and writing?
- How can schedules be organized to help students fill academic gaps and accelerate?
- How can remote and hybrid learning and variable schedules provide more learning time for students who need it?

SPACE

- How can space outside or beyond the school building be used differently to enhance learning?
- Can partners' spaces be accessed at different times for small groups or pods of students for enrichment or tutoring?

TECH

- What technology tools are available to support student engagement and learning? Which are most effective?
- What resources and expertise are available to teachers to help them learn about what they can do to enrich remote and hybrid learning?
- Can teachers and students use social media and other technology to promote and support collaboration in learning activities and projects?

FINANCE

- What costs are involved in creating remote and hybrid learning environments that are consistent with your school's mission and advance equity?
- Who has the financial and fundraising expertise needed to access resources to meet your school's needs?
- Are there community partners or stakeholders who can provide help and support in accessing additional public and private resources?

ROLES

- How can your school think creatively about new roles to support remote and hybrid learning? What do nontraditional educators—mentors, artists, youth workers, STEM professionals—have to offer at this time? What new roles might paraprofessionals play to support students?
- What new structures or systems are needed to help educators work together, learn together, and continuously get better at remote and hybrid teaching and learning? What specialized knowledge and skills do teachers need?
- How can your school foster a strong professional learning community?

YOUTH VOICE AND CHOICE

An approach to teaching, learning, and an overall school culture that focuses on giving all students opportunities to build their identities as learners and develop the capacity for agency and autonomy.

- How can your school invite honest input from students about their experience of remote learning last spring? How can you invite meaningful input on what they want to see happen differently? How can your school respond to student input meaningfully and continuously?
- What would it mean in terms of practice change or structures to truly listen to young people? How can student contributions have a real influence on decisions and outcomes?
- What role can students play right now, in defining and structuring their learning experiences?
- How can students provide meaningful feedback on a regular basis about their own learning and how their school is implementing a remote or hybrid model?

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Powerful partnerships—with community and cultural institutions, business and industry, higher education, nonprofit organizations, and health and service providers—that provide support, real-world experiences, and networking opportunities for students, enabling them to envision and set goals for the future.

- Are there untapped resources in your community that could enrich learning for young people and expand the boundaries of learning beyond the classroom? What ideas do members of the school community have for accessing these and other resources? Are there connections that can be activated in this challenging time?
- How can your school engage nonprofit, community, and cultural organizations, businesses, and higher ed institutions in supporting and enriching student learning in remote and hybrid learning environments?
- How can your school engage partners to help your students envision a future beyond their immediate circumstances and challenges?
- Are there new ways to access vital services that health, youth, and social services agencies are developing that your school can facilitate for students?
- Are there organizations with remote or hybrid services that could enable students to explore college and career options and help them develop their talents?

XQ

Using the XQ Design Principles to Strengthen Remote and Hybrid Learning:

A Tool for Self-Assessment

Use the XQ Design Principles to understand and take action to improve students' experience in your school.

- **Caring, Trusting Relationships**

- **Meaningful, Engaged Learning**

- **Youth Voice and Choice**

- **Community Partnerships**

- **Smart Use of Time, Space, & Tech**

- **Strong Mission and Culture**

Caring, Trusting Relationships

Consistent emphasis on truly getting to know students, both inside and outside the classroom, and on building positive relationships among students and between students and adults

Can every student agree with this statement?	ASSESS	TAKE ACTION
	• Why or why not? • For which students is this true? • For which students is this not true? • Think of specific examples.	• What strategies can we try or practices can we put in place to meet students' needs better and more equitably? • What allies can we engage—families, partner organizations, educators, students? • What barriers do we anticipate? • What are our next steps? And who will take them?
There is at least one adult in my school whom I trust, who has my back, my best interests in mind, and who is available to me when I need help.		
My school helps me set clear goals for my academic and personal growth.		

Meaningful, Engaged Learning

Innovative approaches to curriculum and teaching that use real-world, interdisciplinary learning experiences to enable students to develop and apply deep content knowledge and complex skills

Can every student agree with this statement?	ASSESS	TAKE ACTION
	• Why or why not? • For which students is this true? • For which students is this not true? • Think of specific examples.	• What strategies can we try or practices can we put in place to meet students' needs better and more equitably? • What allies can we engage—families, partner organizations, educators, students? • What barriers do we anticipate? • What are our next steps? And who will take them?
I am being taught the complex information I need to succeed in a 21st century society.		
I see myself—my background, my culture, my generation's experience—in the materials my teachers use.		

Youth Voice and Choice

An approach to teaching, learning, and an overall school culture that focuses on giving all students opportunities to build their identities as learners and develop the capacity for agency and autonomy

Can every student agree with this statement?	ASSESS	TAKE ACTION
	• Why or why not? • For which students is this true? • For which students is this not true? • Think of specific examples.	• What strategies can we try or practices can we put in place to meet students' needs better and more equitably? • What allies can we engage—families, partner organizations, educators, students? • What barriers do we anticipate? • What are our next steps? And who will take them?
My school supports me in figuring out my own learning journey, while keeping me on the path to success.		
I know how to make my voice heard in the activities and structures of my school.		

Community Partnerships

Powerful partnerships—with community and cultural institutions, business and industry, higher education, nonprofit organizations, and health and service providers—that are integral to the school's mission and provide support, real-world experiences, and networking opportunities for students, enabling them to envision and set goals for the future and advance their learning

Can every student agree with this statement?	ASSESS	TAKE ACTION
	• Why or why not? • For which students is this true? • For which students is this not true? • Think of specific examples.	• What strategies can we try or practices can we put in place to meet students' needs better and more equitably? • What allies can we engage—families, partner organizations, educators, students? • What barriers do we anticipate? • What are our next steps? And who will take them?
My school connects me to organizations that have resources to offer and from whom I can learn.		
My school sets up experiences with outside partners that are meaningful to me.		

Smart Use of Time, Space, & Tech

Non-traditional, flexible uses of time, technology, space, technology, place, financial resources, and roles to increase the effectiveness of teaching and learning

Can every student agree with this statement?	ASSESS	TAKE ACTION
	• Why or why not? • For which students is this true? • For which students is this not true? • Think of specific examples.	• What strategies can we try or practices can we put in place to meet students' needs better and more equitably? • What allies can we engage—families, partner organizations, educators, students? • What barriers do we anticipate? • What are our next steps? And who will take them?
My school is creative and thoughtful about how we use our time and how to make the most of the spaces available to us.		
My school is using technology strategically in ways that take my learning to new levels.		

Strong Mission and Culture

A unifying set of values and principles that provide common purpose, express belief in the potential of every student, and define every aspect of a school

Can every student agree with this statement?	ASSESS	TAKE ACTION
	• Why or why not? • For which students is this true? • For which students is this not true? • Think of specific examples.	• What strategies can we try or practices can we put in place to meet students' needs better and more equitably? • What allies can we engage—families, partner organizations, educators, students? • What barriers do we anticipate? • What are our next steps? And who will take them?
The adults in my school believe that I can grow and learn, and they support me in believing in myself.		
My school feels like a place that is structured and organized to prioritize students' needs.		