



Learning for All the Future Has to Offer

An update on XQ initiatives to transform high school learning for every student



XQ Institute is the nation's leading organization dedicated to rethinking the high school experience so that every student graduates ready to succeed in life.

We work in communities throughout the country, with individual schools and entire school systems, to help them dream big about what high school could be, turn their innovative ideas into action, and create more rigorous and equitable schools. We share what's working with other schools and districts, so they can tailor new models to the needs of their own students and communities. We know that seeing is believing, so we meet

people where they are to share the importance and possibility of change through listening, learning, and storytelling. And our open-source tools, based on research and design thinking, empower people to take up the challenge of transforming their high schools with a unifying goal: unlocking the American promise of a high-quality education for everyone.

What is XQ Learning?

A new architecture for learning that prepares students for all the future has to offer.

XQ defines student learning in terms of the five XQ Learner Outcomes, encompassing the full, rich array of adolescent learning and development.

XQ Learners are:

Holders of foundational knowledge

Masters of all fundamental literacies

Original thinkers for an uncertain world

Generous collaborators for tough problems

Learners for life

Our current educational system is not designed to support student learning and growth across all those dimensions. Instead, for more than a century, our system has relied on the Carnegie Unit as the bedrock currency of the educational economy, undergirding almost every aspect of secondary and higher education.

It's time to initiate a significant shift—away from time-bound conceptions of what knowledge is and how it is acquired—to a new educational architecture, one where engaging and effective learning can happen anywhere, and where learning is well-validated, outcomes-based, and better-matched to the full range of knowledge, skills, and capacities students need to thrive in the 21st century.

To help get there, XQ is creating—and co-creating with the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and other partners—the necessary elements of a new approach to student learning. As you'll see in the pages that follow, these include clear and persuasive learner outcomes; a competency-based student performance framework; powerful student learning experiences, including full courses, with supports for teachers; and technology-enabled badging, assessment, and transcript systems.

We call this XQ Learning.

XQ Learner Outcomes

Everything begins with students.

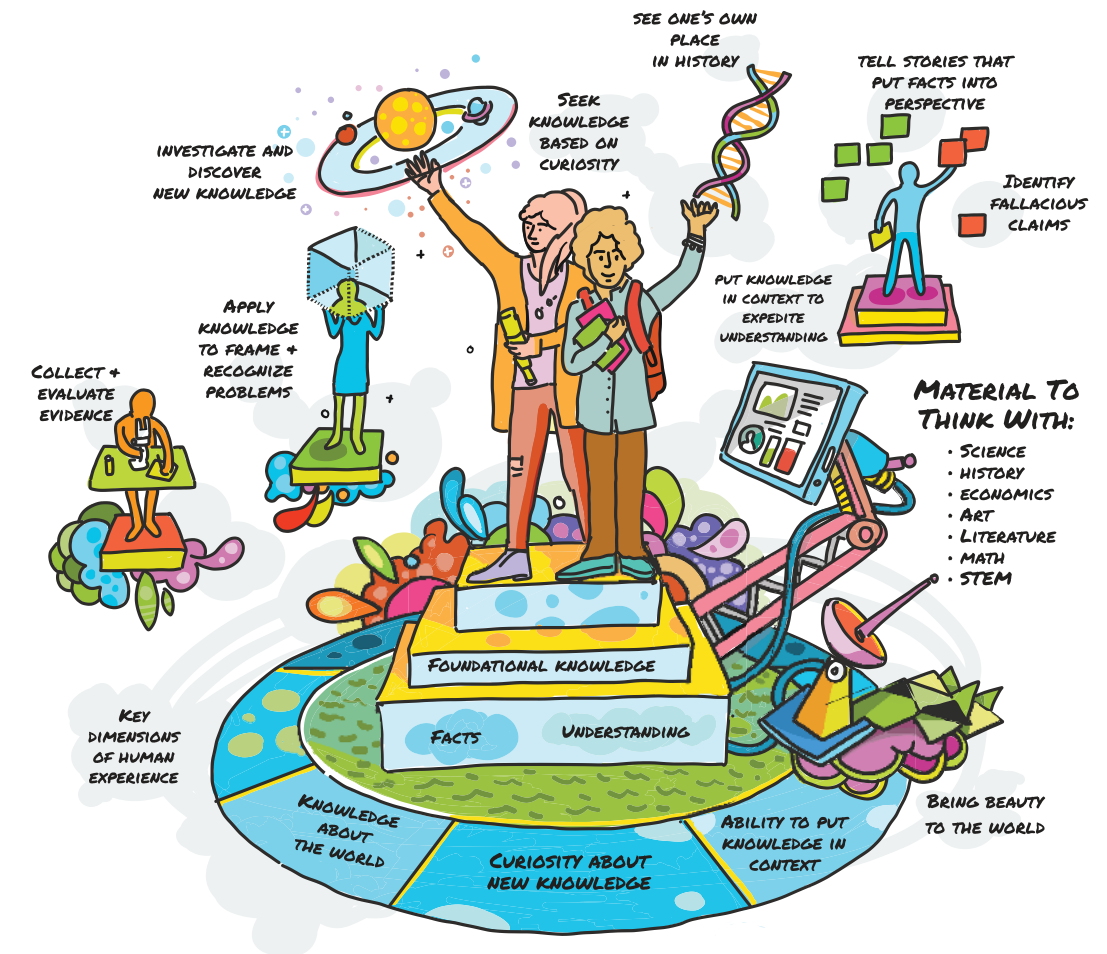
What do young people need to really thrive in today's complex and rapidly changing world? The answer is our rigorous, scientifically-based XQ Learner Outcomes showing what all young people should know and be able to do.



Scan this code to learn more, download resources, and sign up for updates.

Holders of foundational knowledge

- Curious people who are knowledgeable about the world. Its history and culture. Its sciences and underlying mathematics. Its biology and cultural currency.
- Engaged participants who are key to creating a more just and functional democracy—who participate fully in all America has to offer.



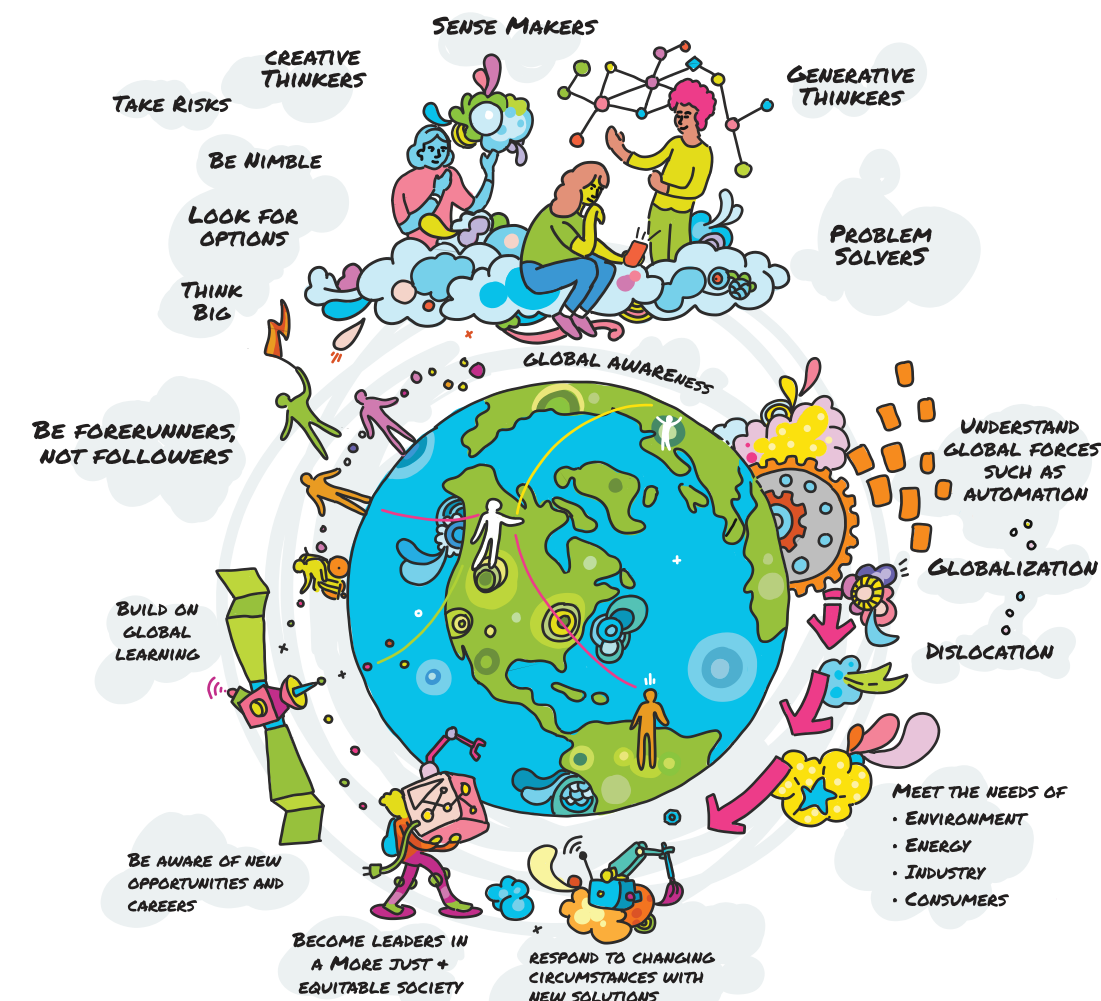
Masters of all fundamental literacies

- Building the academic core necessary to prepare for college, career, and life.
- Critical readers.
- Compelling writers.
- Mathematical and numeric thinkers.
- Data and visual thinkers.



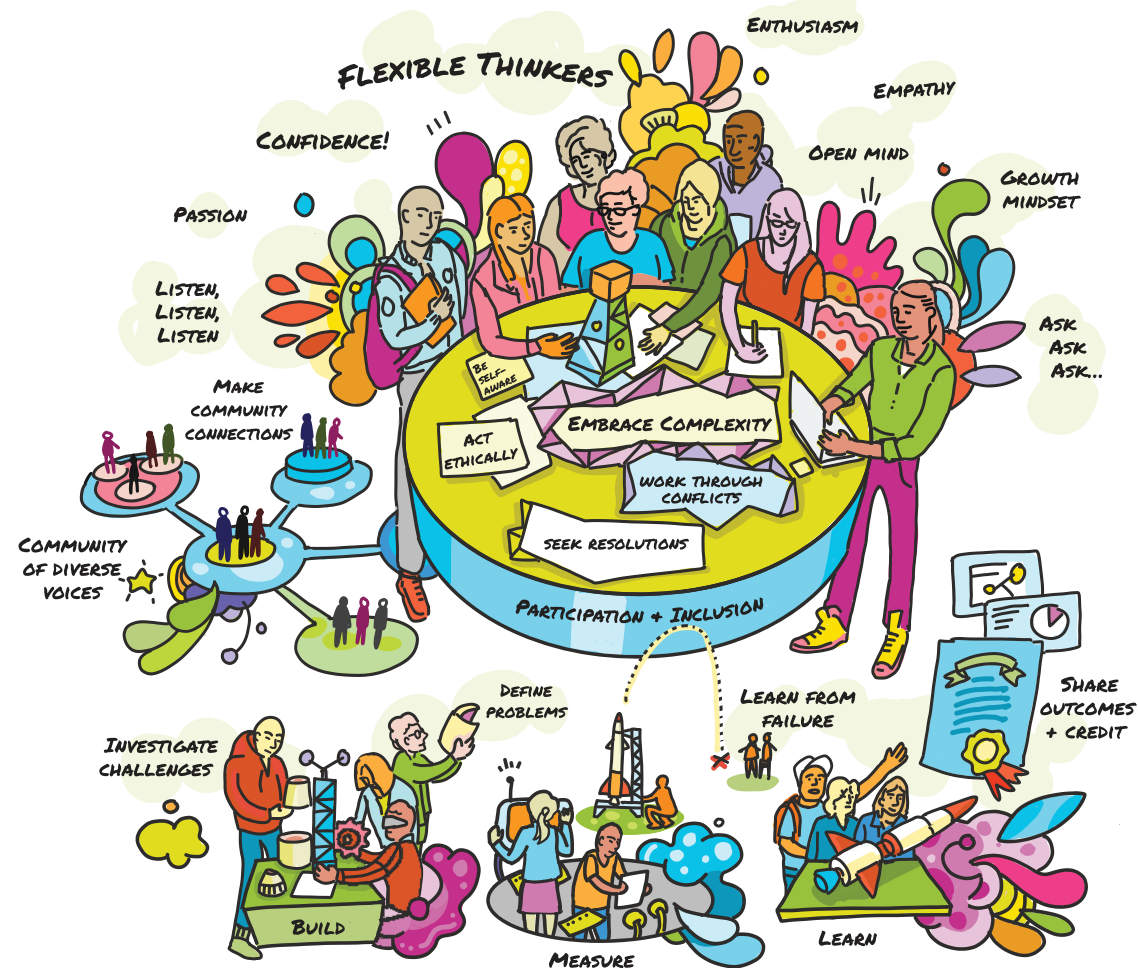
Original thinkers for an uncertain world

- Sense-makers—dealing with conflicting knowledge.
- Generative thinkers—creating many ideas in ambiguous and new situations.
- Creative thinkers—reframing, imagining, and seeing problems from different perspectives.



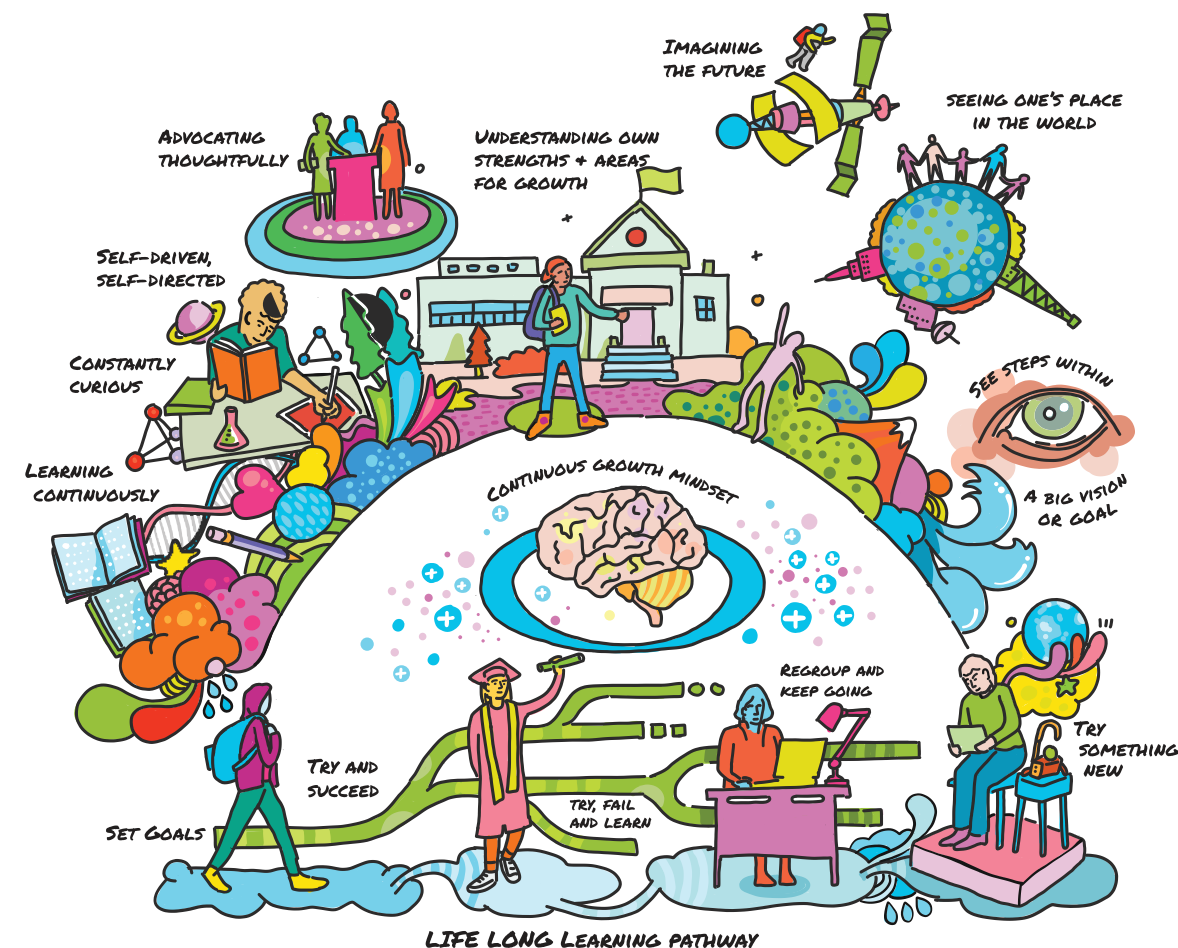
Generous collaborators for tough problems

- Self-aware team members who bring their strengths. Talent-seekers who find the expertise of others.
- Essential co-creators—because of what they bring, and how they show up.
- Inquisitive world citizens who seek out—and respect—diversity and diverse points of view.



Learners for life

- Self-driven, self-directed. Curious learners—about themselves, and the world.
- Inventors of their own learning paths, careers, and lives.



Student Performance Framework and Competencies

A new way to define, capture, and certify learning.

The XQ Student Performance Framework (XQ SPF) defines student success not by test scores or Carnegie units, but by the achievement of meaningful outcomes across academic content, cognitive skills, and social-emotional competencies. The framework provides a new way of “doing school,” from the design of student-level learning experiences, to assessment of student learning, to credentialing, ultimately culminating in an XQ Transcript that certifies students’ successful acquisition of accredited skills and knowledge toward graduation. The XQ SPF is designed to work in any state, in any school, and in any outside-of-school education setting—alongside and integrated with existing state content standards.

At the core of the SPF are the XQ Competencies. Drawn from research and practice expertise, these competencies align with the five XQ Learner Outcomes and articulate a series of skill-based, cognitive, and social-emotional progressions that

offer a new way to assess, document, and certify students’ learning. These competencies reframe core content in terms of active learning and mastery, and build out areas of learning that are missing from existing standards regimes and curricula—like civics and arts.

The XQ Competencies are accessible in rubric form and as a deck of cards that educators and students can use dynamically to design classroom experiences and build students’ learning journeys. The XQ Competency Cards are an actionable tool, designed to be accessible to all members of the learning community—teachers, students, families, plus local partner organizations and businesses.



Scan this code to learn more, download resources, and sign up for updates.

The right page features a collage of images and graphics. At the top, a student is shown working on a laptop. Below this, a large graphic displays various XQ Competency Cards, each with a unique icon and title. These cards are arranged in a circular pattern around a central graphic. The central graphic is a circular diagram with a rainbow-colored hexagon in the center, surrounded by icons representing different competencies. The cards include titles such as 'Generous collaborators for tough problems', 'Wellness', 'Politics', 'Diverse Perspectives', 'Sharing Ideas', 'Masters of fundamental literacies', 'Navigating Power', 'Original thinkers for an uncertain world', 'Learners for life', 'Holders of foundational knowledge', 'Social Awareness', 'Social Systems', 'Persuasive Communication', 'Generating Ideas', and 'Wellness'. The bottom of the page shows a student building a model with sticks and glue. The entire right page is framed by a blue border with the text 'STUDENT PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK AND COMPETENCIES' running vertically along the right edge.

CF+XQ Learning Experiences

The learning experiences young people need to thrive today and in the future.

Through our partnership with the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, we are producing and testing a collection of curricular materials that will put an accessible and powerful form of student learning within reach of high school teachers and students everywhere.

CF+XQ Learning Experiences, or LXs, are project-based, high interest, authentic, and rigorous—long enough for sustained learning inside and outside the classroom. They are multi-dimensional, designed to build academic content knowledge and academic, cognitive, and social-emotional capacities at the same time—a goal made possible by using the XQ Competencies alongside existing academic standards.

With the goal of seeing an ecosystem of LXs in widespread use in the next few years, we are rapidly co-creating an initial collection of LXs with a small number of innovative curriculum

developers, including teachers, while also intentionally building what we hope will become a burgeoning network of makers.

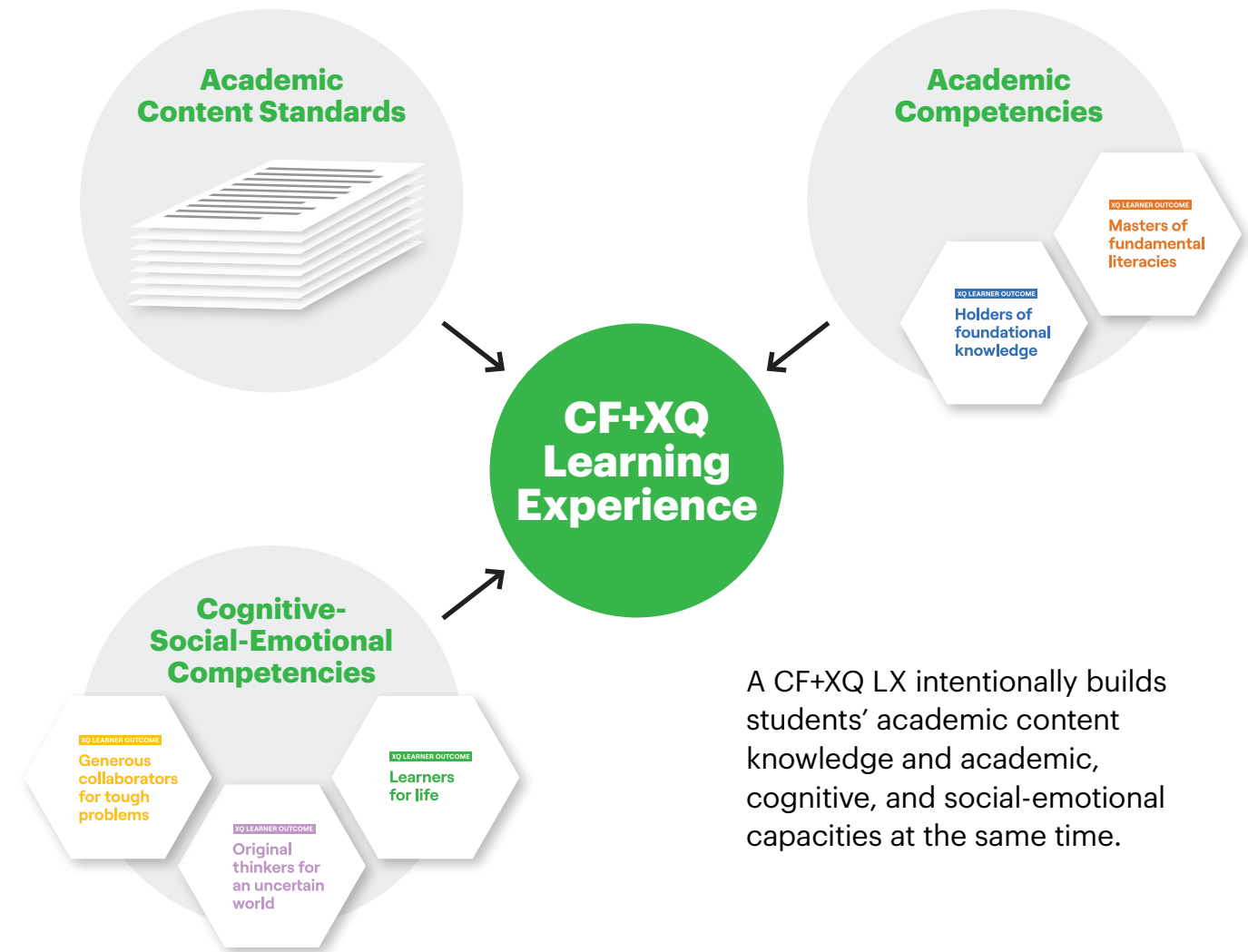
New tools and technology will make LXs accessible, intuitive, and rewarding for educators and students. Those include competency-based assessments that can be incorporated into LXs to enable meaningful measurement of student learning, growth, and development.

We will soon be broadening the call for exemplary LXs through challenges, commissioned work, a makers' network, a youth lab, and other activities, so please stay tuned!



Scan this code to explore the CF+XQ LX Design Brief and get updates on piloting LXs in your school.

Coming soon—
LXs to try in your
school and community



A CF+XQ LX intentionally builds students' academic content knowledge and academic, cognitive, and social-emotional capacities at the same time.

XQ Math

A project-based algebra curriculum that activates and upgrades students' math knowledge—and their enthusiasm for learning.

XQ Math rethinks Algebra 1—one of the hardest gateway courses, which pervasively has the highest failure rate. The XQ Math curriculum redesigns Algebra 1 around project-based learning and modeling to emphasize more complex cognitive skills, and organizes learning around student interests to help drive genuine engagement and to build students' identity as “math people.”

Each XQ Math learning experience engages students in rigorous, creative, and meaningful work—work that prepares them for advanced mathematics and defies the idea that math is boring. XQ Math uses youth-tested projects to draw students into math, particularly for those unengaged by traditional mathematics instruction.

It motivates students to “activate” and “upgrade” their math knowledge to solve problems they care about through mathematical modeling. This builds

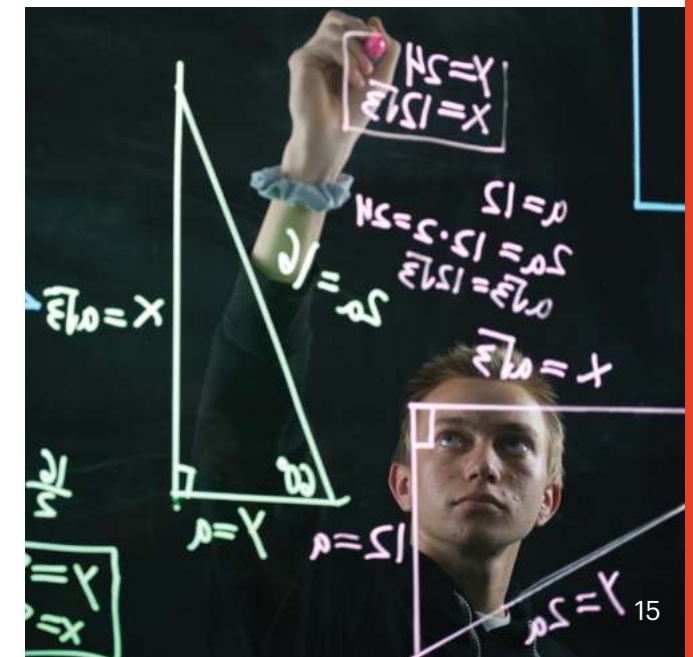
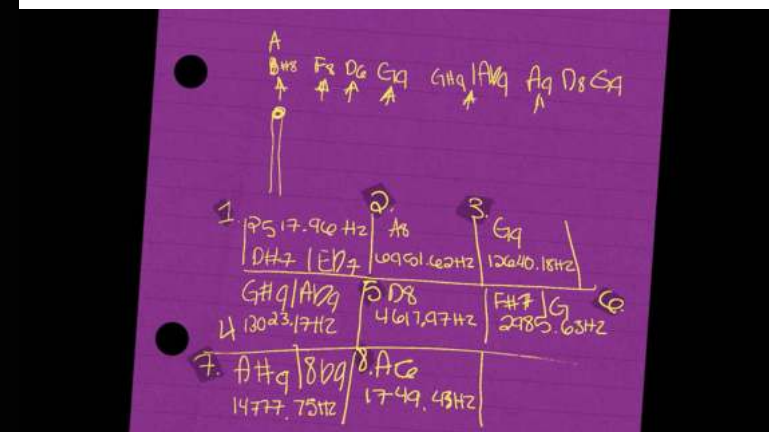
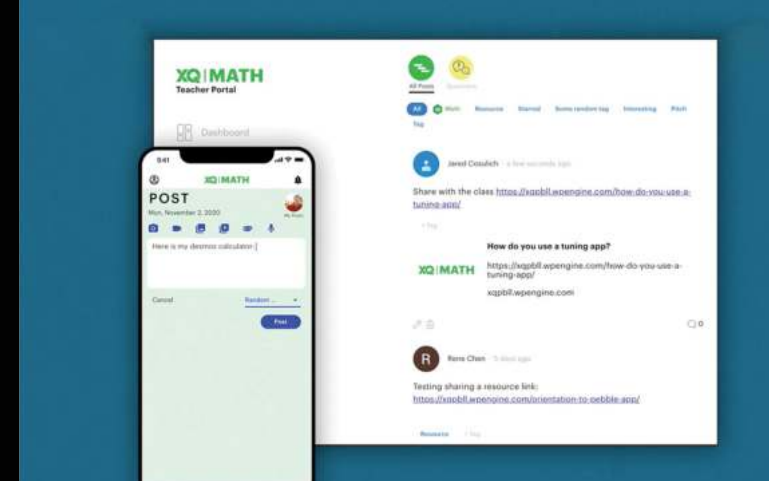
students' confidence and mathematical agency so they begin to see themselves as mathematically powerful. In so doing, it provides students with a stronger foundation for higher-level math.

“By upending the traditional model of mathematics instruction, XQ Math students can explore complex algebraic concepts from a position of strength, bringing their interests and skills in all domains—not just math—to bear on rigorous mathematical content.”

-Ben Garlets, Math Teacher,
Grand Rapids Public Museum School



Scan this code to sign up for updates or to learn more about piloting XQ Math in your school.



XQ Math Badging Initiative

A pilot program with three states to advance a more rigorous and student-centered approach to math—and ultimately all learning.

The Carnegie Foundation established the Carnegie Unit (or credit hour) in 1906. For more than a century, the Carnegie Unit has been the bedrock currency of the educational economy, undergirding almost every aspect of secondary and tertiary education.

It's time to initiate a significant shift—away from time-bound conceptions of what knowledge is and how it is acquired—to a new “educational architecture,” where engaging and effective learning can happen anywhere, and where that learning is well-validated, outcomes-based, and better-matched to the full range of knowledge, skills, and capacities students need to thrive in the 21st century. Together with the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, we are working to reinvent the world's system for recognizing and valuing student achievement, knowledge, and growth.

And we are starting with math. For too long, high school math pathways and course-taking options have served as a barrier to student success. That's why XQ has convened a network of experts in math instruction, assessment, pedagogy, and policy to build a new approach aimed at meeting the needs of individual students: the XQ Math Badging System.

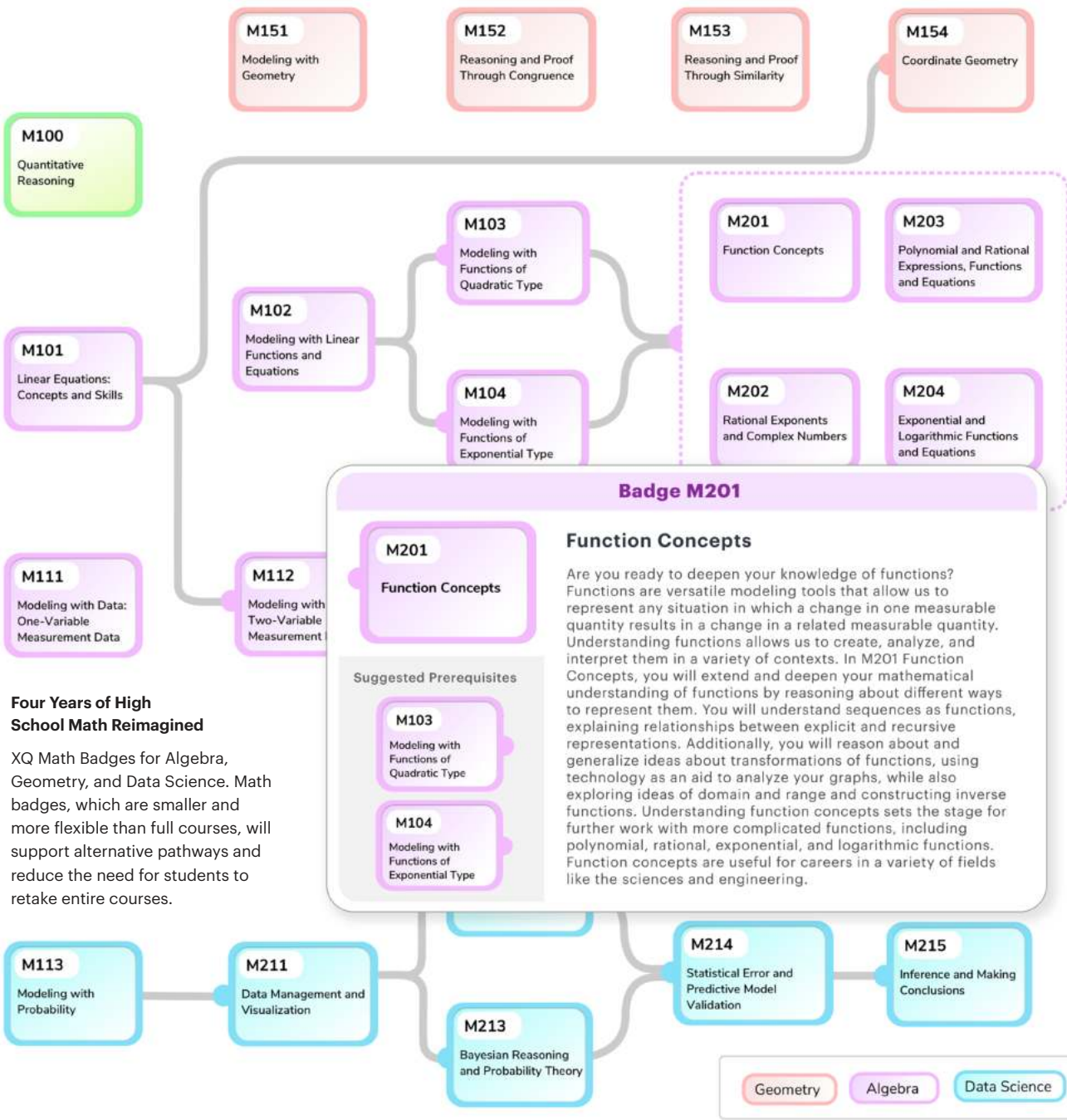
This system comprises 23 individual badges, each representing a set of core mathematical concepts and practices. Bigger than a standard but smaller than a course, math badges provide administrators, educators, and students with building blocks to create more flexible math pathways that better connect student learning to interests and career opportunities.

No longer will students be required to repeat an entire course if they need to do more work to master a single badge area, and learners will move through academic content toward mastery at their own pace. Our approach will integrate academic rigor with real-world learning and support adolescent developmental needs for motivation, engagement, and a sense of belonging in mathematics.

This work is currently underway through XQ Math's Badging Initiative in three pilot states: Idaho, Illinois, and Kentucky.



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social media: @XQAmerica





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