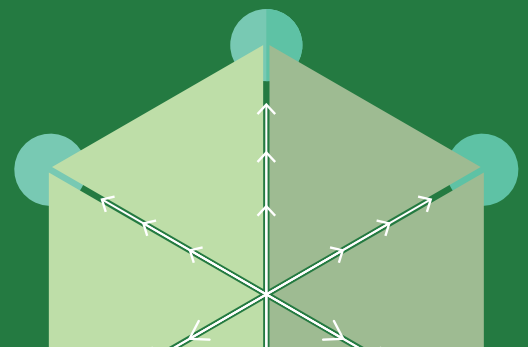


# Students in the 21st Century

What do young people need to learn  
today to succeed in the future?

**2**  
EDITION



**Today's  
global society  
demands critical  
thinking skills  
and higher levels  
of educational  
achievement.**

**By understanding  
the knowledge  
and skills young  
people need  
to succeed,  
we can start to  
design learning  
environments  
that truly prepare  
them for the  
real world.**

**How can we  
help young people  
be creative and  
self-reliant,  
discover what  
they love, master  
what they learn,  
and apply what  
they know to the  
challenges that  
matter to them?**

# THINGS TO THINK ABOUT



**01**

Examine the high schools in your community. How well are they serving people? What gaps do you see? Are there any young people being left out of high school?



**02**

How is the youth population changing in your community? How might it change in the next several years?



**03**

What demands and opportunities will today's teenagers encounter in higher education, the workforce, and civic life? Are students in your community ready?



**04**

How can schools equip young people to be practical problem solvers, ready and able to tackle challenges globally and in their communities?

**LEARNING  
FOR THE  
FUTURE  
OF WORK**

## FACT 01

**Both student demographics  
and workplace diversity  
are changing rapidly.**



# Agility, diversity, and learning to learn are more important than ever.

It used to be common for Americans to graduate high school or college, get a job that would sustain a family, and stay in one field for life. Nowadays, most people end up working multiple careers by the time they reach age 40, which often means further education and training in order to learn new skills and retrain as they change jobs.

The nature of work is very different for young people than it was for their parents and grandparents. More and more, routinized work is a thing of the past.

In today's world, young people need to develop skills such as thinking critically and solving complex problems creatively and collaboratively. Traditional subject areas like English, math, and science are still important, but the challenge now is for students to learn more deeply across these areas and develop the skills needed to apply knowledge in new and unfamiliar contexts. Schools therefore need to implement new strategies to foster a deeper, more expansive type of learning.

Public high schools in many communities are becoming more diverse, reflecting larger changes in American society. This provides high schools with new and important opportunities to prepare young people for the challenges of adulthood. Young people will know a different kind of diversity—in college, in the workforce, and in community and civic life. School cultures that intentionally embrace diversity can help young people build understanding and skills that will stand them in good stead in their adult life.

## Think About →

How do schools and classrooms need to better create learning environments that help young people develop their ability to solve problems, think critically, and collaborate with others?

**Jobs that were once performed by humans are quickly being replaced by machines or sent to lower-cost markets. What does this mean for young people's future work lives and the demands they will face? Here are some examples of the shift in requirements from the old paradigm to the new knowledge economy.**

OLD PARADIGM	→	KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY
+ Follows orders		+ Co-creates plan to achieve goals
+ Product driven		+ Customer driven
+ Climbs the corporate ladder		+ Seeks leadership opportunities
+ Boss creates directives, and change takes time		+ Team responds quickly and strategically
+ Face-to-face meetings in the office		+ Office? What office?
+ 9 to 5		+ Flex time
+ Lifelong employment		+ Changes jobs often
+ Resume		+ LinkedIn profile
+ Commutes to office		+ Works remotely
+ Completes given tasks		+ Pursues goals creatively
+ Domain specialization		+ Agility across domains

## 5 Facts about American Students

What does the modern American student look like? The Pew Research Center has a report full of interesting facts and helpful infographics.



## Education for Life and Work

What knowledge and skills do young people need to thrive in their jobs, their communities, and the world? Take a deep dive into learning for the 21st century with James W. Pellegrino and Margaret L. Hilton.



## America's Divided Recovery

Since the recession, jobs have rebounded at every education level except one: those requiring only a high school diploma or below. This report by Georgetown's Anthony Carnevale explains why.



## IT and the U.S. Workforce

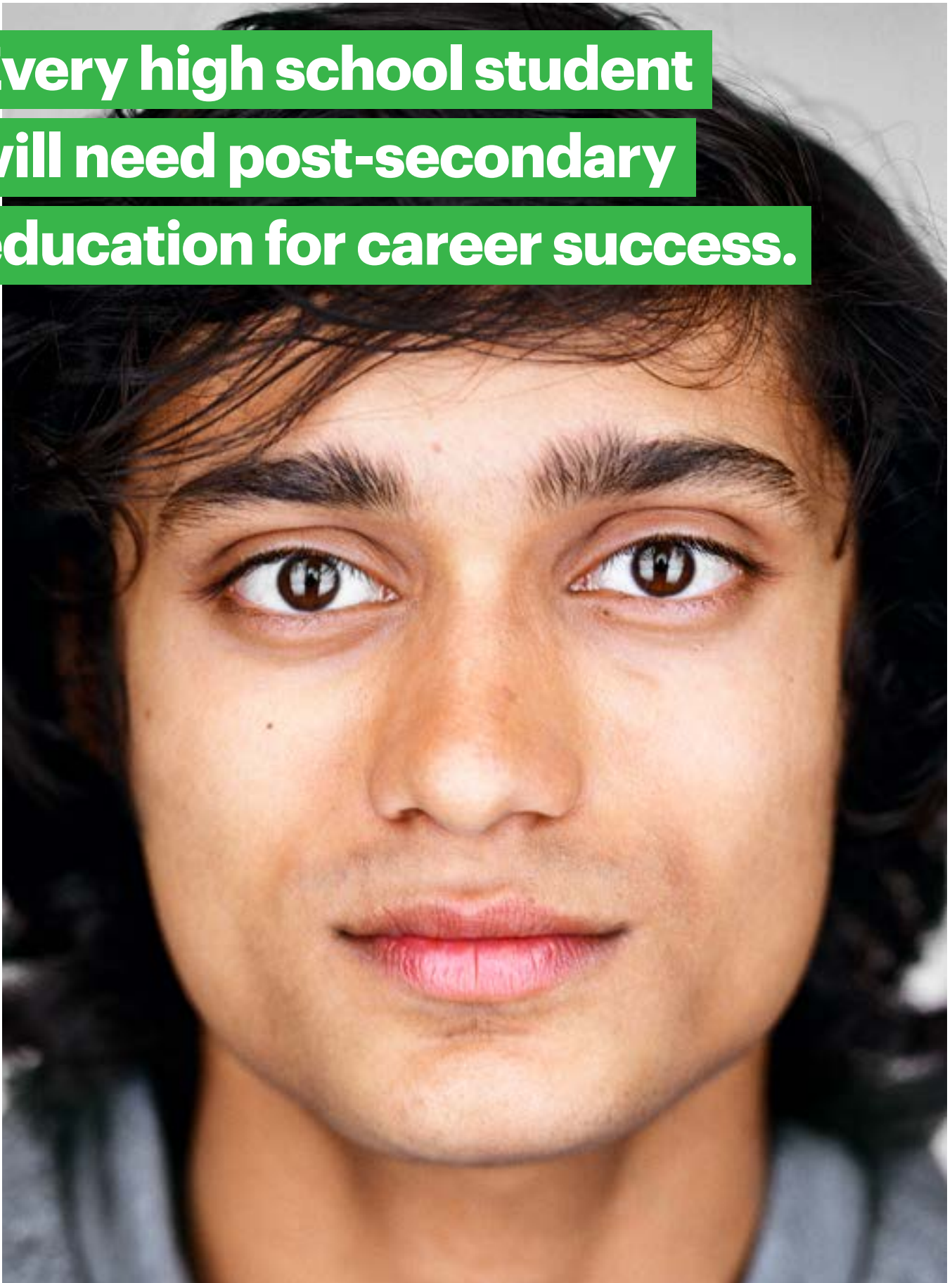
Information technology is driving change, and the education system must adapt. This National Academy of Sciences report concludes that IT can also help meet the challenge.





## FACT 02

**Every high school student  
will need post-secondary  
education for career success.**



# Every student needs to be ready for college—and not just on paper.

According to the U.S. Department of Education, approximately one half of students entering two-year colleges are not ready for postsecondary education, even though their high school diplomas say they are. This points to a discrepancy between what students are doing in school and what educators consider college readiness.

High school students need to acquire foundational knowledge and skills in order to move on to even higher levels of learning and grapple with new information and ideas. Schools need to go beyond traditional teaching strategies, courses, and curricula so students are actively engaged in learning—not just meeting requirements—and exploring areas that interest them deeply.

Every student who graduates high school should leave with a meaningful diploma and a clear path forward. Envisioning a future begins early: from the very first day of high school, if not before. Schools can help by intentionally cultivating a college-going culture, providing opportunities to explore a range of college and career pathways, and giving all students plenty of chances to contribute to the life of their school community.



**MICHELE CAHILL**  
*Distinguished Fellow in Education and Youth Development at the National Center for Civic Innovation*



## Think About →

How can high schools prepare students for the challenges they'll face in college and the 21st century workplace?



### Educational Policy Improvement Center identified seven key ingredients that drive high schools toward success.

1. A **college-going culture** with an emphasis on the value and attainability of postsecondary education.
2. A **core academic program** that yields college readiness by the end of senior year.
3. The instruction and application of **self-management skills and good academic behaviors**.
4. **Access to resources** that prepare students for the path to college and career.
5. A **progressively challenging curriculum** for each successive year of high school, including assignments and grading policies that prepare students for college expectations.
6. Efforts to make senior year **meaningful and challenging**.
7. **Connections to postsecondary programs and institutions**, like entry-level online coursework and summer college classes designed to catch students up to college levels in math and science.

## The Readiness Gap

Why do so many students enter college without the preparation they need to do college-level work? The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education shares their research in this report.



## Meandering Toward Graduation

Less than half of high school graduates have completed a full college-ready course of study, according to EdTrust.



## Do Students Feel Prepared for College?

What makes students feel prepared for post-high school life? Watch this video from Achieve to find out.



## Understanding the One in Five

How can we support the educational success of the one in five U.S. students with learning disabilities?



## FACT 03

**Race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status still influence success.**





# Opportunity is still far from equal.

Our society looks to the public education system to be the great equalizer—but is it?

Economic disparities in our country are increasing, thereby widening opportunity gaps in education—and, consequently, decreasing earnings and career advancement. While wealthier families can sign their kids up for creative after-school programs, private tutoring, and study-abroad placements, most low-income families simply don't have the time or financial resources to provide these opportunities. Despite the considerable gains our country has made in recent years, the education system is still disproportionately under-serving black and Latino students, as well as young people of all races who live in poverty. This is why we need public schools to rise to the occasion.

In addition to the disparities within schools, an estimated 13 percent of 16-24 year-old Americans are neither enrolled in school nor employed. That's over 5.5 million young people who are disconnected from opportunities that would better their own futures, and thus are twice as likely to live in poverty. To improve their chances of success, they need opportunities to envision a better future for themselves. That's where schools and other institutions come in: to help them develop the skills and perseverance they need to claim the lives they deserve. Many people in education refer to these young people as "opportunity youth" to highlight the potential they have to both contribute to their communities and the economy.

At XQ, we strongly believe that intelligence itself is colorblind. It's up to each and every school to develop greater equalizing opportunities so every student has the chance to thrive.

Think About →

How do we strengthen connections among teachers, peers, and the rest of the community so that young people have the confidence and resources to push themselves to achieve academically?

**"Today, more than ever, an advanced education beyond high school is a prerequisite for success. America was once the most highly educated country in the world. A generation ago, we led all nations in college completion, but today, 10 countries have surpassed us. It's not that their students are smarter than ours. It's that these countries are being smarter about how to educate their students. And the countries that out-educate us today will out-compete us tomorrow."**

**BARACK OBAMA**

*College and Career Ready Standard and Assessments,  
U.S. Department of Education, 2011*

**What does access to education look like in your school or district? Look it up here and map it against the national average.**

## Restoring Opportunity

Greg Duncan and Richard Murnane's infographic visually explains the crisis of inequality in the American education system and highlights promising programs that are making a difference today.



## Zeroing in on Place and Race

How can we do more for young people who are neither working nor in school? Student Status Confirmation Reports provide up-to-date data on the more than 5.5 million disconnected young people living in cities across the United States.



## The State of Education: African American & Latino Students

How well are our schools serving Latino and African American students today? The Education Trust highlights the most important trends impacting these student communities.



## Equity and 21st Century Learning

Arva Rice, Sonja Santelises, and Uri Treisman join Michele Cahill for a discussion of what equitable high schools would look like, and how to get there.



IT'S TIME  
TO **RETHINK**  
HIGH  
SCHOOL.

# We need to go beyond traditional high schools to foster deeper learning

**The principles behind deeper learning are deceptively simple and obvious: spend time with students, treat them as individuals, invest in their success, and help them mature into responsible and concerned adults armed with knowledge.**

Here are some ways, according to Monica Martinez and Dennis McGrath, schools can encourage deeper learning:

- + Connect as a community of learners
- + Empower students to lead their own learning
- + Contextualize learning and relate it to young people's lives
- + Reach beyond school walls with partnerships and real-world experiences
- + Inspire and motivate students to customize their learning
- + Make good use of technology as a means, not an end
- + Invest in and commit to deeper learning as an integral part of a school and its curriculum

# GET INSPIRED



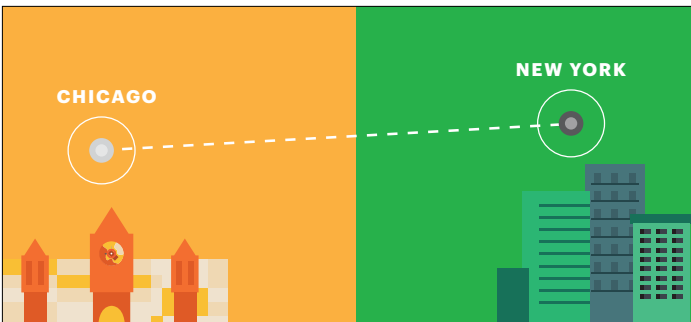
## Eight Schools on Deeper Learning

This review of a book by Monica Martinez and Dennis McGrath summarizes the themes that led to innovation for deep learning in eight public schools.



## Mapping Mobility

Raj Chetty and the Equality of Opportunity Project use maps to demonstrate visually how the places where children live affect their lifetime earnings and economic mobility.



## Opportunity in New York and Chicago

See how two approaches—at a high school in NYC and an elementary school in Chicago—create stronger opportunities for students in these short videos from Restoring Opportunity.



# TEDx Talk

DAN CARDINALI

## Communities in Schools

In this compelling TEDx Talk, Dan Cardinali, president of Communities in Schools, makes a passionate case for doing more to help negate poverty's effect on educational performance.



## School Funding

Do poor kids get their fair share of school funding? Urban Institute researchers take a close look, state by state, in this data feature.



## EdNavigator

EdNavigator connects families and students with trained “navigators,” who can help chart an educational path to the future.



# GET INSPIRED



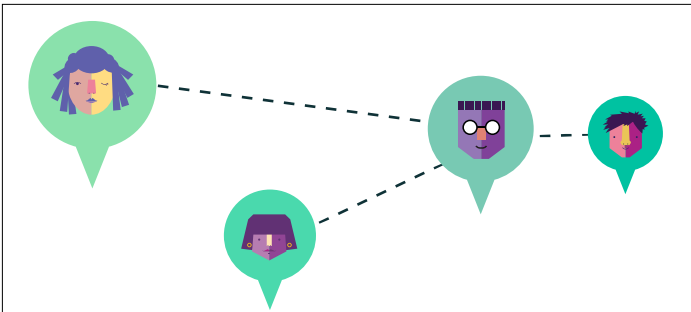
## Segregation, or “The Problem We All Live With”

In this two-part podcast by This American Life, reporter Nikole Hannah-Jones examines the problem of school segregation, its causes, and its pernicious effects.



## The Posse Foundation

Deborah Bial, a MacArthur Genius grantee, runs this organization designed to close the opportunity gap and help kids thrive after high school.



## ZeeMee

Sometimes called “LinkedIn for students,” ZeeMee is a technology platform that helps college applicants share their stories with admission reps.



## The World of Data Visualization

How do you learn about the community you will serve and then share that knowledge in a persuasive, compelling way? One way is through data visualizations, such as the collection here from the Urban Institute.



## Opportunities for Disabled Youth

Brooke Haycock wrote this Education Trust blog post about how we can make sure students with disabilities are not left behind.



## Inequity and Inquiry

Teaching inquiry is the best way to disrupt poverty, says Google education evangelist Jaime Casap in this podcast.

