

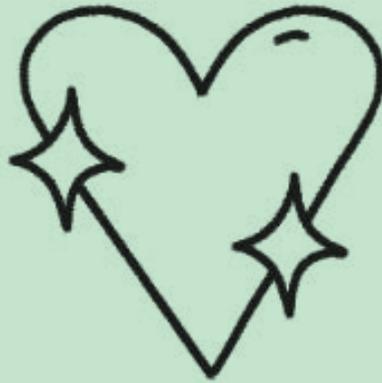


Class of 2022

Purdue Polytechnic High School

High School Transformation in Action:
Celebrating Success with XQ's Class of 2022





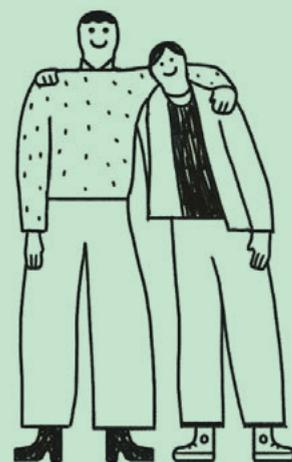
In 2016, we embarked on a journey to rethink high school with the XQ Super Schools Challenge. Our goal was to make high school more meaningful and engaging so more students would graduate ready to succeed in college, careers, and whatever the future holds.

We selected exciting proposals from around the country: district schools and programs, new schools, alternative schools, and charter schools. In 2022, for the first time, all 16 original XQ Super Schools had graduating classes, amounting to a total of 1,721 students.

These XQ students were among some three million other U.S. graduates who came of age during a time of unprecedented change. By studying their progress, we learned how their journeys, their experiences, their achievements, and struggles shaped and validated what we believe is a transformative framework to make high school more engaging and relevant for students and teachers, alike.

Surprisingly, we learned that in many ways, most XQ grads succeeded in navigating the last four years—which included tectonic educational and social shifts during a pandemic in which more than a million U.S. residents died and tens of millions more were sickened. On the whole these students didn't just advance, they thrived. So did their schools.

This overview of our XQ Class of 2022 includes detailed profiles of graduates from 14 of the original 16 XQ Schools and key data points on graduates of the other two schools. It includes several impressive takeaways based on graduation rates, test scores, and college-going rates higher than the national average, along with qualitative data showing how prepared these young people felt about their future. You'll read about these findings in this introduction and in the individual school sections that follow.



A MILESTONE METHODOLOGY

In the spring of 2022, XQ launched a project to better understand the XQ Class of 2022: their experiences, challenges, growth and learning, accomplishments, and plans for the future.

This project itself is a milestone for XQ. It represents our first effort to use expertise from multiple disciplines and analyze a wide range of evidence to learn about a cadre of students who journeyed through XQ schools. We looked at these students' experiences, challenges, growth and learning, accomplishments, and plans for the future. Celebrating and learning from the XQ Class of 2022, in turn, generated essential insights about how the schools continue to evolve and refine their models.

We analyzed results from our first-ever XQ Senior Survey conducted in the spring of 2022, which had an unusually high response rate of nearly 90 percent, including five schools that surveyed 100 percent of their 12th graders, giving us confidence in the findings. We also collected and examined school-level, local-level, and state-level data published by state education departments. Those data included results from various standardized subject tests the students took during high school.

In the fall of 2022, we held hour-long "data conversations" with leaders from 14 schools. These conversations enabled us to confirm the accuracy of the data while digging into the human context and student stories behind the statistics. Talking with the leaders also allowed us to build our "data relationship" with XQ schools—a relationship grounded in regular, reciprocal sharing of information.

These conversations proved critical for developing full profiles of the graduating class of each school. We could not hold full conversations with the leaders who guided Brooklyn LAB and Vista High School during the four years when the students in the Class of 2022 were enrolled, so we include shorter bulleted data summaries for those schools.

Following these conversations, some school leaders shared additional data on their Class of 2022 graduates, such as participation rates and scores on national exams such as the ACT, SAT, and Advanced Placement (AP). That gave us an even richer picture of how XQ graduates compared with their peers locally and nationally.

We also examined qualitative sources of information on the students, including interviews XQ conducted with 12th graders in a number of the schools, social media and traditional news stories featuring XQ students, and student publications such as school newspapers. Finally, we dug into extensive documentation from visits to eight schools in 2021–22 by teams of expert observers from XQ's partner, Springpoint.

In the appendix, we provide a more detailed technical description of every source of evidence we examined for this project, as well as limitations to data collection due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The appendix includes a school-by-school table showing which kinds of evidence were available to us when we went to publication.

Reflecting on the data
and our learnings, this
is our look back on our
first graduating class:

The Class of 2022

A snapshot of successes

On many measures we analyzed, **XQ students—and their schools—outperformed their local, state, or national peers.** And in many cases, by a wide margin.





CROSTOWN HIGH

Crosstown’s Class of 2022 met **college-ready benchmarks** on all four sections of the ACT exam at **higher rates than their peers both statewide and nationally** (e.g., in English, 68 versus 47 and 52 percent) and planned to enroll in **four-year colleges at a much higher rate** than graduates nationally (75 versus 47 percent).



LATITUDE

Latitude’s Class of 2022 had a **nearly perfect rate of completing all “A-G” courses** necessary to be eligible for admission to California’s four-year public universities, far exceeding 2021 rates in the Oakland Unified School District and statewide (97 versus 58 and 52 percent), as well as a **much higher rate of 12th graders planning to attend college** than 12th graders nationally (86 versus 66 percent).



GRAND RAPIDS PUBLIC MUSEUM SCHOOL

Grand Rapids Public Museum School’s Class of 2022 had **double the combined proficiency rate across all state assessments** compared with students in 23 “similar high schools” identified by the Michigan Department of Education (42 versus 21 percent).



SUMMIT SHASTA

Summit Shasta’s Class of 2022 had nearly **triple the rate of participation in AP** compared with 2021 graduates nationally (100 versus 35 percent taking at least one AP exam) and double the rate of passing one or more AP exams (47 versus 23 percent).



CÍRCULOS, ELIZABETHTON HIGH SCHOOL, GRPMS

Nine in ten Círculos Class of 2022 **graduates earned college credits during high school**, as did over half the graduates at Elizabethton High School (54 percent) and Grand Rapids Public Museum School (56 percent).



PURDUE POLYTECHNIC HIGH SCHOOL

Purdue Polytechnic High School’s Class of 2022 members were **four times as likely to pass both the math and English** sections of the state’s 11th grade test as those in Indianapolis Public Schools (34 versus 8 percent). Black students, Latino students, and students from low-income families at PPHS all had passing rates about four times as large as the rates for those groups across the district. In fact, **PPHS students from low-income families were twice as likely to pass both sections of the test** as Indianapolis students who were not from low-income families.



NEW HARMONY HIGH AND TIGER VENTURES

At both New Harmony High and Tiger Ventures, seven in ten members of the Class of 2022 **completed internships** during high school.



**XQ's Class
of 2022
illuminates
the uniqueness
of each school
and community**

While the data insights are nuanced, there is a powerful overarching theme:

The Class of 2022 helps us imagine a future in which XQ Learning can engage students in all types of schools and communities.

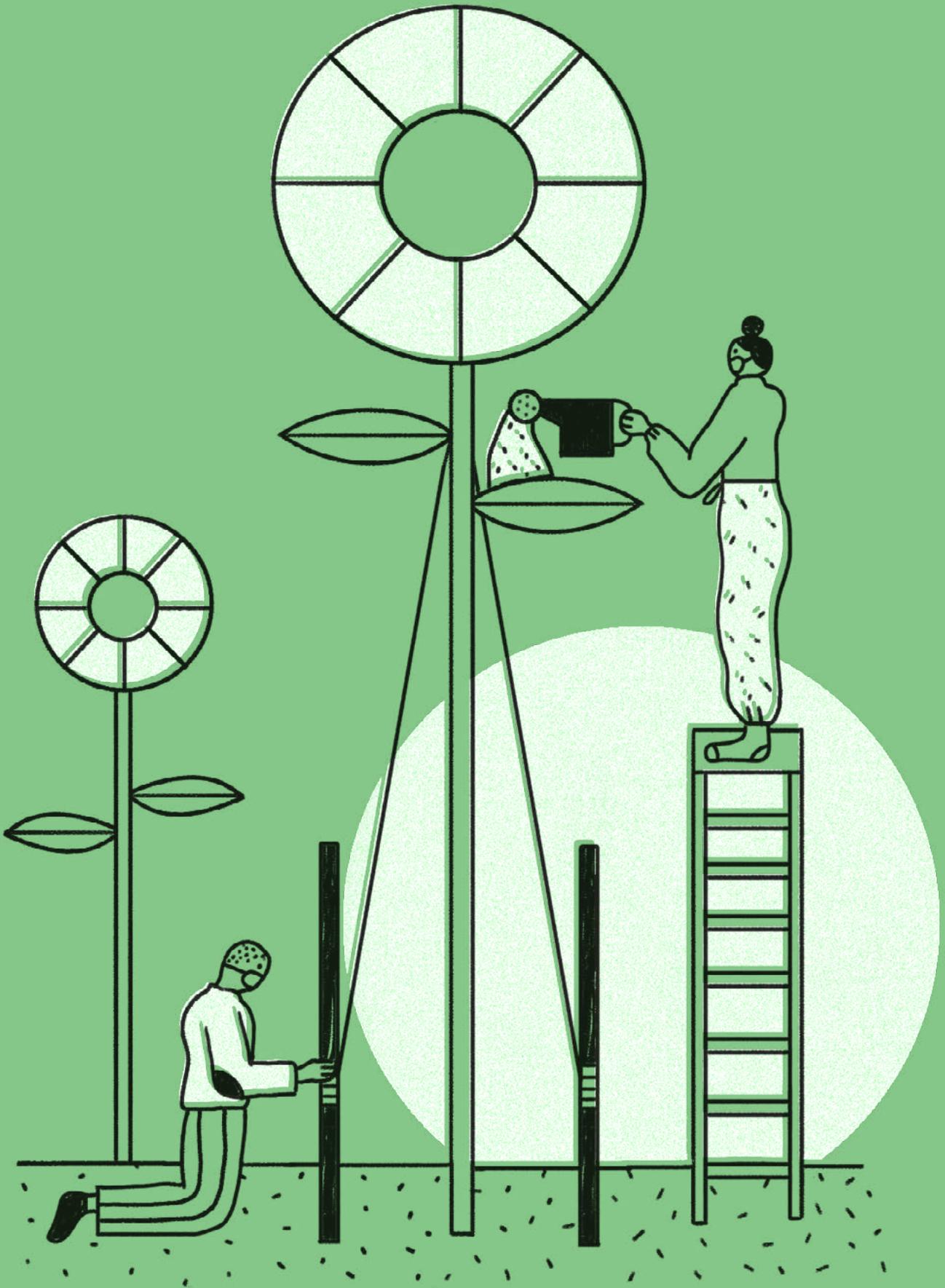
The Class of 2022's story has many characters and scenes. XQ shaped the experience of students in big schools and small schools, cities and suburbs, district high schools and charters. Some students pioneered XQ Learning in new schools and others experienced XQ through the transformation of longstanding institutions.

As XQ looks to expand our impact, the Class of 2022 shows many different ways for our schools to succeed with students and deliver a reimagined, modern model for high school education nationwide.

“Being a founding class I felt was an important role because we set the bar for the kids behind us, and it really showed me how to be a leader and step up and be a part of things.”

Courtney,
Latitude





**Our class
is resilient, and
XQ has been
tested in tough
times**

The last four years tell a story of resilience, adaptation, and ingenuity.

We're all aware of the myriad disruptions of these last two years—academically, emotionally, and beyond.¹ Those disruptions changed not only the daily experience of students, but also the way XQ thinks about what it means to be a partner and a leader in the field. Despite the painful challenges, we believe XQ and its students not only held up, but also came away with learnings we never could have expected.

like that's very important, especially because of XQ's objectives in creating students who are capable of interfacing with a constantly changing world."

Thomas
Crosstown

"As the first inaugural class of the school, it's been rocky; there's been a lot of changes we went through. I feel like that quality is actually like a bonus because it's helped me deal a lot with sudden change. I feel

Continuity of Learning

XQ schools made tremendous efforts to maintain continuity of learning and educational opportunities, and they doubled down on the kinds of social and emotional support they provided to students.

Nevertheless, the XQ Class of 2022 faced a challenging journey through high school.

"By my 12th-grade year I was on the verge of dropping out, not because of grades but because of the pandemic," said De'von, a WLA student.

“It was two years at home,” De’von added. “Before the pandemic, we were just little boys and girls, and after two years at home, you’re a full-grown man or woman”

De’von enrolled at Morehouse College in the fall of 2022, and he credits WLA with helping him get there: “WLA was one of the best things to help prepare me for life.”

But it took unusual persistence and resilience to graduate with solid preparation, plans, and prospects for the future during such an emotional and physical upheaval wrought by a deadly pandemic. Nonetheless, like De’von, the vast majority of XQ’s Class of 2022 graduated from high school telling our survey they feel ready to face their future.

Along with COVID-19, students and educators also faced challenges from local politics, staffing changes, and other hurdles that come with working to transform a tried and true education system. Some schools had changes in leadership or had to move to other locations. Change is never easy. XQ schools had to adapt to unanticipated challenges while remaining true to their core mission, using XQ’s Design Principles and Learner Outcomes—and that hard work paid off, judging by what we learned from their graduates.

Creating Moments of Beauty

Beyond enduring a chaotic few years, our students turned challenges into opportunities and found ways to give back to their communities.

- Iowa BIG students turned a natural disaster into an opportunity to raise money for an environmental cause by transforming fallen trees into wood sculptures, then auctioning off artist-commissioned creations to the tune of \$25K.
- Latitude students learned about the beauty that comes from helping others better face adversity.

“Our first physics project was building a house... and I was like, dang, like, I’m building a house right now,” said Andrew, a Latitude Class of 2022 graduate. “I’m in service. I’m doing something not for myself, but for someone else. And I’m actively being a part of my community.”

Each school’s circumstances were different over these past four years, requiring specific reflections for how they adapted and managed. In turn, we broadened our understanding of success in school and what it means for students.

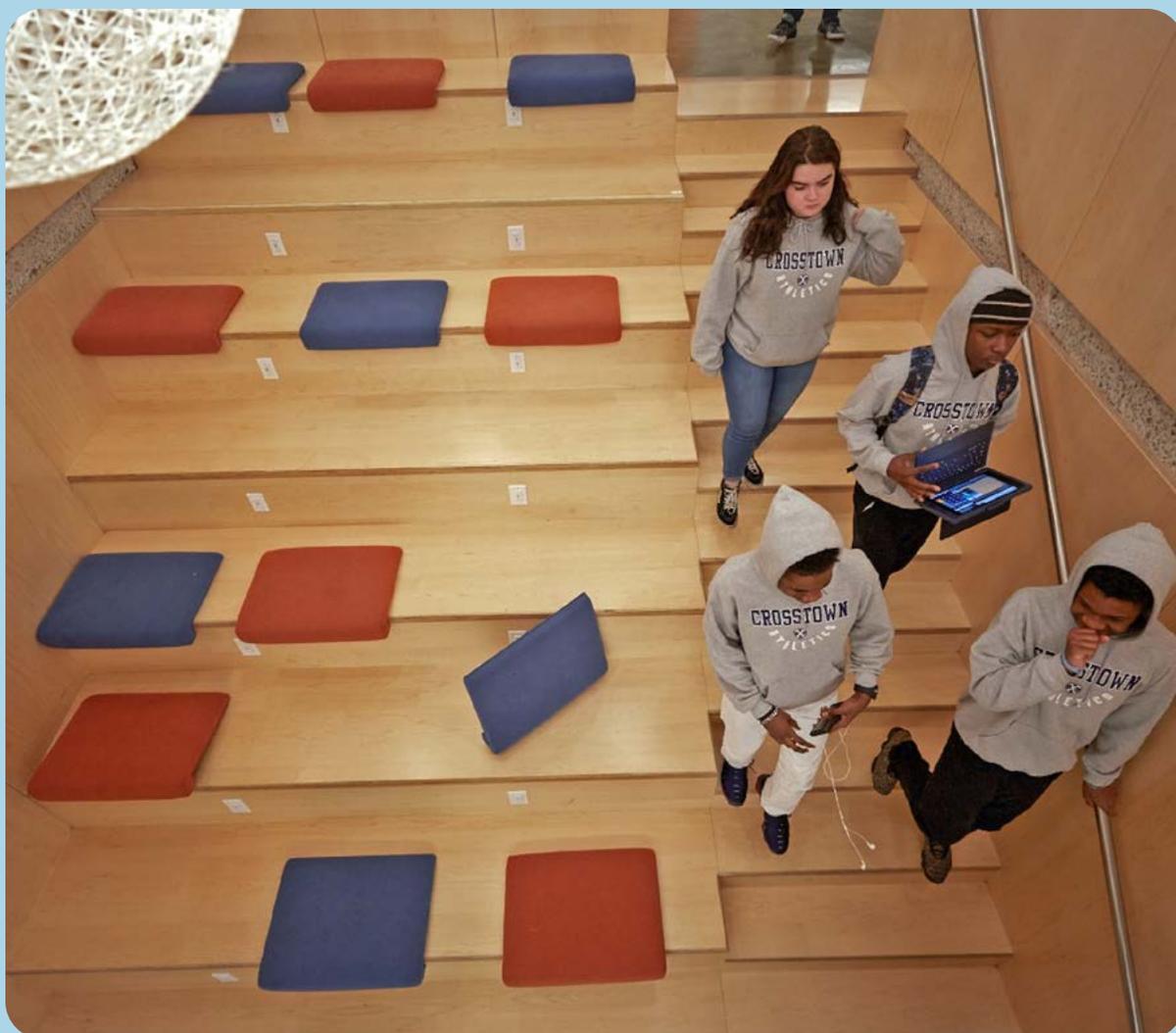
**XQ and
its students
imagine
success
in new ways**

Our students and educators discovered that success is not just something that can be measured by test scores alone.

Even more noteworthy were those moments when students proactively and confidently used their time in and out of school to change the world, give back to their community, and turn academic theory into action.

Beyond traditional indicators of academic achievement, students gained the confidence, skills, and knowledge to better prepare them for life beyond high school. Students gained leadership, problem-solving, time management, creative thinking, and other critically important life skills that are not fully measured by our educational system today.





Students at Crosstown High

“What I’ve realized in my past four years here is that learning isn’t just English, math, science, and history. It really is learning about yourself, learning about how you interact with everybody else in the environment around you. I just want to continue to learn about myself and others and about how I can get closer to my most authentic person.”

Ava,
Crosstown High

Timeless Lessons

“It will definitely help you develop more in your time management skills as well as develop more in your cognitive thinking... From my understanding of more traditional schools, that isn't something that is usually emphasized a lot because there's a specific structure you have to follow.”

Aeden,
Grand Rapids Public Museum School



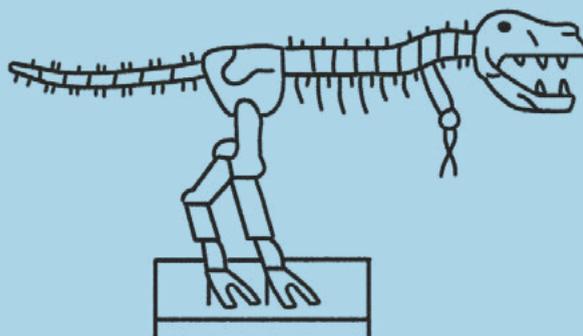
Students at Grand Rapids Public Museum School



Students at Grand Rapids Public Museum School

“I’ve learned management skills, and I’ve learned about working with people, and working in a group, as well as working with people who don’t really want to listen to what I’m saying. But I learned how to actually get them to respond, which I think is a great skill.”

Dot,
Grand Rapids Public Museum School



Notable Projects



Student at Crosstown High

“We made an art business... and we founded an artists’ collective... It taught me a lot about art and entrepreneurship, which is what I want to get into for the rest of my foreseeable life.”

Nisa,
Crosstown High

“I learned a lot of political science [through The Fast Fashion Kills zine]. The second issue of the zine focuses on social and political aspects. Also writing and revising. Whenever I would write an article, we’d have our project mentor—a teacher at BIG—look over it. Lots of edits. I learned to keep going.”

Anna,
Iowa BIG



Students at Iowa BIG



Students at Latitude

“A memorable project that we did was a credit card project in our mathematics class, where we learned how to manage debt and also how to strategize to actually reduce debt, and actually how to build credit. And I really appreciated that because it was a real-world example.”

Anthony,
Latitude

Work-Based Learning

Work-based learning experiences such as internships give students a chance to apply what they are learning in the classroom to real-world problems, gain exposure to a professional field, and build relationships with accomplished adults who can guide them toward career opportunities in the future. Well-designed internships also help students develop mastery of the full range of XQ Learner Outcomes.

About one in seven XQ graduates completed internships (14 percent) during high school, far exceeding the national rate of participation (2 percent) based on the best available data.² If that figure is accurate, XQ's Class of 2022 participated in internships at seven times the rate of high schoolers nationally.

Some XQ schools came up with inventive solutions to continue providing internship opportunities during the pandemic. Tiger Ventures in upstate New York expanded in-house opportunities, for example, by partnering with a local business so that students could launch a café and coffee shop in the basement of the school's building. That solution provided internships for five of the school's eleven 12th graders, and school leaders helped two additional 12th graders land internships outside the school building.

Latitude's model originally called for all students to complete internships in 11th grade, a plan that had to be rethought when COVID-19 hit. When the students returned for senior year, the school required a revised college and career planning course to allow any 12th grader

to complete an internship. Based on our survey, more than two in five did. Now that Latitude's model is operating as intended, the school said 100 percent of its Class of 2023 members have already completed internships.

The XQ's Senior Survey probed more deeply into the question of internships, asking how that experience supported students' plans for the future. Unsurprisingly, a significant proportion—nearly two in five—said the internship helped them gain experience in a specific field they plan to pursue in college or a career. But 75 percent said the internship “helped me build skills I can use in the future no matter what field I study or pursue as a career,” the most commonly cited benefit by a wide margin.

That response aligns well with modern ideas about work-based learning, which aims to help students develop broad-based competencies rather than narrow expertise in a job that might not exist in ten years. It also means internship opportunities provided by XQ schools help students master the kinds of skills and competencies described in the XQ Learner Outcomes.

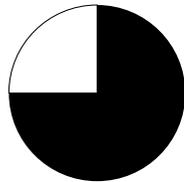
This type of meaningful, engaged learning, in and out of the classroom, helps students turn academic theory into action and the graduates into active citizens, problem-solvers, and leaders.

Our research ultimately serves as a solid jumping-off point to push against both traditional educational practices and how we measure academic success.

“How did your internship experience support your plans?”

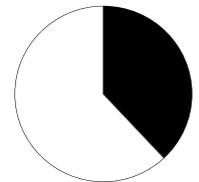
Helped me **build skills** I can use in the future no matter what field I study or pursue as a career

75%



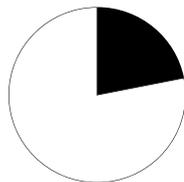
Was in a **field I plan to pursue** in college and my career

38%



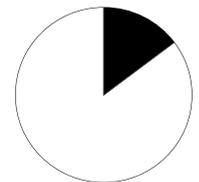
Led to me **meeting a mentor** in the field I plan to pursue in college and my career

22%



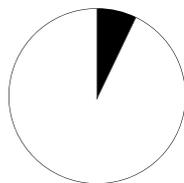
Resulted in a **professional credential**

15%



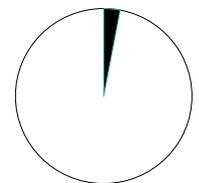
Resulted in **college credit**

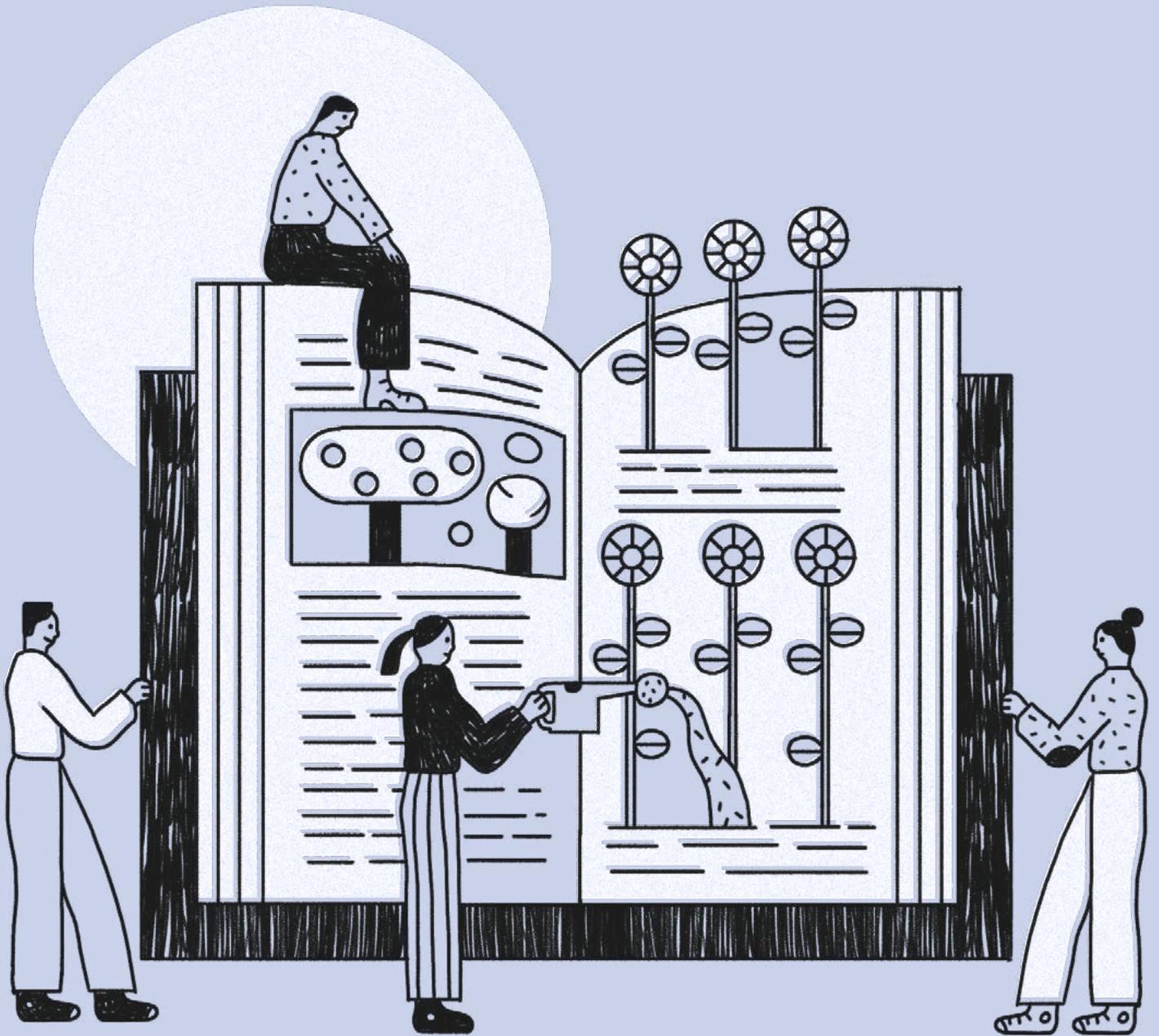
7%



Other

3%





Engaging with the education system of today

Even though standardized tests can't measure the full range of learning described in the XQ Learner Outcomes, we know these existing measures have currency for students when they pursue postsecondary opportunities. Those traditional indicators of learning open the door to more experiences, so XQ understands it's important to consider student successes and opportunities in conversation with state and national benchmarks for academic performance.

Gaps in Testing Data, with Mixed Results

In the school profiles that follow, we provide information from state and national standardized exams whenever such data shed light on the Class of 2022. However, the available data had large gaps due to several circumstances:

First, the pandemic severely disrupted testing programs.

Second, state testing programs vary considerably from state to state, with some testing all students in a particular grade level and other states only testing students at the end of a subject-area course such as U.S. history or biology. Therefore, in many cases, members of the Class of 2022 took different tests at different times.

Third, states do not report separate assessment data for a few of the XQ schools—Iowa BIG, PSI High, and Tiger Ventures—because they are considered dependent programs attached to larger schools or districts rather than standalone schools.

For now, state assessment data are best interpreted on a school-by-school basis in combination with other information and in light of observations by school leaders. From a big picture perspective, we can say that results of state assessments for Class of 2022 members varied considerably across the XQ schools. In some schools, students were more likely to perform at a proficient level than their peers locally and statewide (or nationwide on exams such as the SAT and ACT). In other schools, that held true for all groups of students for whom the state reported data, for example, students from low-income families.

Across 24 instances where we obtained validated state test results, we saw a mix of outcomes:

- In ten instances, the school’s percentage of students meeting standards surpassed the results for both the surrounding district and the state as a whole.
- In four instances, the school’s percentage exceeded either the district’s or the state’s results.
- In ten instances, the school’s percentage trailed both the district’s and the state’s results.

“I feel like, for being a learner for life, you also have to know what it is that you might be lacking in or what you’re good at, so that you can develop those things more. So it’s not just taking things as they come, it’s also planning to know what is it that I want to experience next?”

Thomas,
Crosstown

Meeting Readiness Benchmarks on State Assessments:

XQ Schools versus Surrounding Districts and States

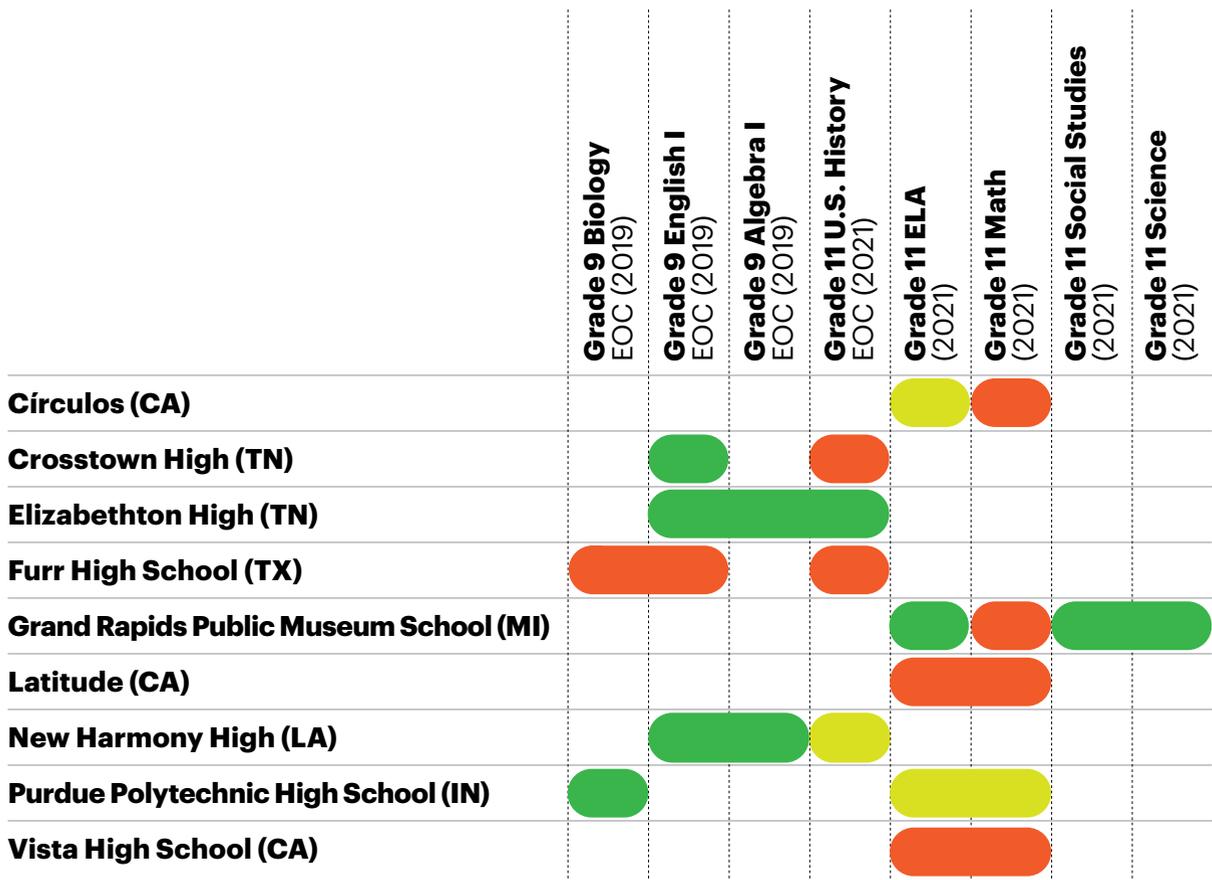
Key

XQ percentage meeting benchmark HIGHER than district AND state

XQ percentage meeting benchmark HIGHER than district OR state

XQ percentage meeting benchmark LOWER than district AND state

No state testing results available for the Class of 2022 cohort in this case



Data unavailable:

- Brooklyn Laboratory High School (NY)
- Da Vinci RISE High (CA)
- Iowa BIG (IA)
- PSI High (FL)
- Tiger Ventures (NY)
- Vista High School (CA)
- Washington Leadership Academy (DC)

Higher than average College-Going Plans

More than seven in ten 12th graders in the XQ Class of 2022 who took our survey (72 percent) planned to go directly to college by the fall, a higher rate than the 66 percent of 12th graders in a separate national survey in 2022.³ XQ students were somewhat less likely than 12th graders nationally to plan to attend a four-year college (43 versus 47 percent) and more likely to head to a two-year institution (28 versus 19 percent).⁴

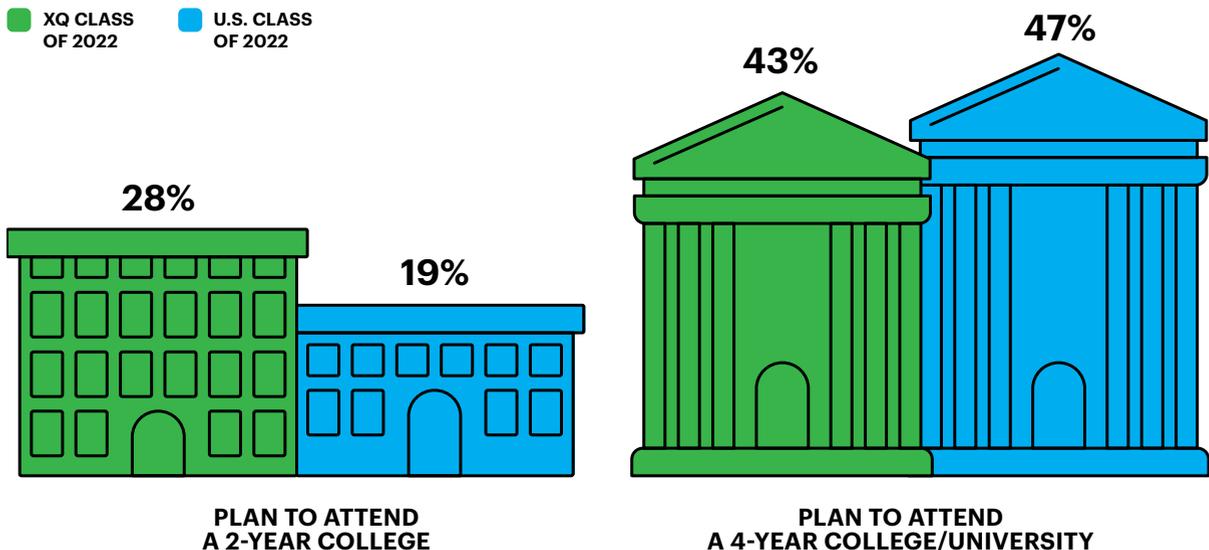
Several factors explain the higher rate of XQ 12th graders planning to attend

a two-year college, the biggest being affordability. When asked why they had chosen the school they planned to attend, “I can afford this school” outranked all other reasons by a wide margin among those planning to attend a two-year college. For those headed to a four-year institution, “this school is one of my top choices” ranked first, followed closely by “this school has strong academics.” About two in three students across the 16 XQ schools are from low-income families, compared with just over half of high school students nationwide.

CLASS OF 2022

College Plans

■ XQ CLASS OF 2022 ■ U.S. CLASS OF 2022



SOURCE: XQ School data from XQ Senior Survey for Class of 2022. U.S. data from YouthTruth survey of seniors in Class of 2022. Note: Total percentage for XQ students exceeds the sum of four- and two-year percentages due to rounding.

Second, at least half of the 16 schools are located in states or regions with especially strong connections between two-year colleges and public four-year universities. That high level of “articulation” makes it easy for students to begin at a two-year college and later transfer all their credits to a four-year institution to complete their undergraduate studies. A follow-up question on the XQ survey bears out this theory: Two out of three XQ 12th graders planning to attend a two-year college also said they intended to transfer to a four-year institution in the future.

XQ conducted additional analyses of the XQ Senior Survey data to identify factors that led to four-year college-going. Students who felt more prepared for the future were significantly more likely to plan to attend a four-year college. While XQ’s non-comprehensive and comprehensive high schools have similar college-going rates overall, XQ’s non-comprehensive high schools have a far higher four-year college-going percentage than do comprehensives (58 percent versus 28 percent). This mirrors the research literature. Finally, XQ schools that were launched as new startups have similar college-going rates overall, but new schools have a far higher four-year college-going percentage than do redesigns (53 percent versus 36 percent).

Nine percent of XQ’s 2022 graduates said they don’t see college in their future, and another 14 percent said they were unsure of their next step. Our early information on both groups suggests that 31 percent of these students are planning professional training; 46 percent are going directly into the workforce either part-time or full-time; and about 7 percent are entering the armed forces. Another 2 percent will do service work through organizations such as the Peace Corps and Americorps.

More than one in four XQ graduates (27 percent) got a head start on college education by earning postsecondary credits during high school. That appears to be around the national average based on the best available data, but those figures are out of date and not strictly comparable to the information we have on XQ students. Among the national class of 2013 (currently the most recent data), 34 percent of graduates enrolled in one or more dual enrollment courses, and 11 percent completed such courses to earn high school credits by the time they graduated.⁵

Most XQ school leaders told us that pandemic restrictions made dual enrollment much more difficult for members of the XQ Class of 2022, particularly for students taking courses on college campuses. (Dual enrollment courses can take place on college campuses or in the high school itself depending on state policies and regional dual enrollment models). Therefore, we expect this number to increase for future cohorts.

Four-Year versus Two-Year College Decision-Making:

XQ 12th graders who reported they were heading to a two-year college were motivated by affordability, whereas those planning to go to a four-year college were more likely to report career match and strong academics as their reasoning.

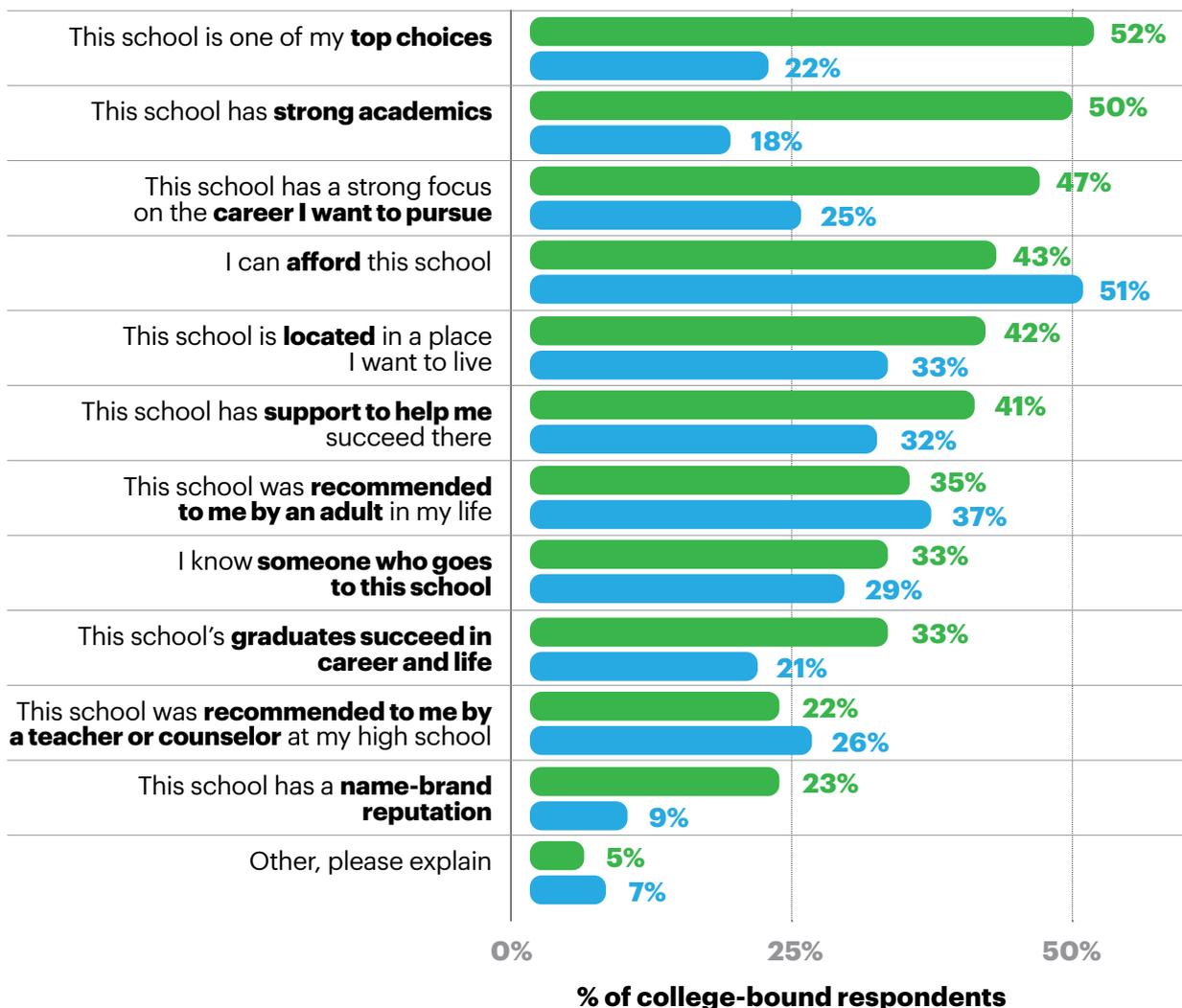
Key

Four-year college or university

Two-year college



Factors Informing Four Year versus Two Year College Choice



**And preparing
to lead
proudly into
the future**

“I’m always considering possible solutions to whatever situation may arise, whether they be societal, environmental, economical.”

Jakeb,
Elizabethton

Feeling Prepared for the Future

College entrance exams, state test scores, and even tangible accomplishments such as earning college credits can only tell part of the story. What do the XQ graduates themselves have to say about their preparation for the future?

Overwhelmingly, members of the XQ Class of 2022 said they felt prepared for the future, with a full 84 percent feeling at least somewhat prepared. Among those students, more than half said they'd developed creativity and problem-solving skills during high school that would serve them well in adulthood. Nearly half pointed to the ability to collaborate and work in groups, with the same percentage saying that the ability to demonstrate knowledge in complex ways made them feel prepared for life after high school.

That survey question did not include an answer related to leadership skills. However, another survey question—plus several other kinds of evidence—led us to believe that XQ schools offered students many opportunities to take on leadership roles. Asked what aspects of their XQ schools had been most important to help them accomplish their goals both during high school and for the future, more 12th graders pointed to “opportunities for students to play leadership roles” than to any other feature.

As we explored such findings with school leaders, we discovered that student leadership can mean a wide variety of opportunities that are all clearly important to XQ students. These range

from traditional leadership roles such as participating in student government, to informal opportunities such as interviewing applicants for teaching positions, giving tours of the school, or playing the role of “ambassadors” during recruiting visits to local middle schools. In many XQ schools, group projects offer chances to learn about leadership as students take turns leading collaborative teams. We believe these opportunities bolster their confidence in themselves and their ability to succeed in the future.

Finally, we learned about a very special kind of leadership enjoyed by nearly 200 graduates of the Class of 2022. These students were members of “founding classes” at four XQ schools that launched in the fall of 2018: New Harmony, Latitude, Crosstown, and Grand Rapids Public Museum School. School leaders and students alike told us their founding classes had played a big part in shaping the school model, culture, and enduring institutions. In effect, the schools learned from these students even as the students learned from the schools. Students said this bolstered their confidence as they headed into adulthood in an uncertain world.

“What strengths did you develop in high school that made you feel prepared?”

Creativity and problem-solving

54%



The ability to demonstrate and communicate my knowledge

(critical reading, oral and written communications, data analysis, and visualization)

48%



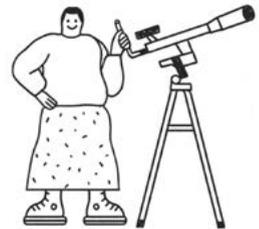
Collaboration, working in groups

48%



Curiosity, a desire to keep learning more

38%



Deep knowledge in academic areas
(math, English, science, history, civics)

35%



Other

1%



Source: XQ Senior Survey of the Class of 2022. This question was asked only of students who indicated that they were somewhat, very, or extremely prepared for their future.

Introducing the XQ Class of 2022...



WAS LEADERS ACADEMY

VALEDICTOR

WE ARE 2022
Washington Leadership Academy

Makita

40

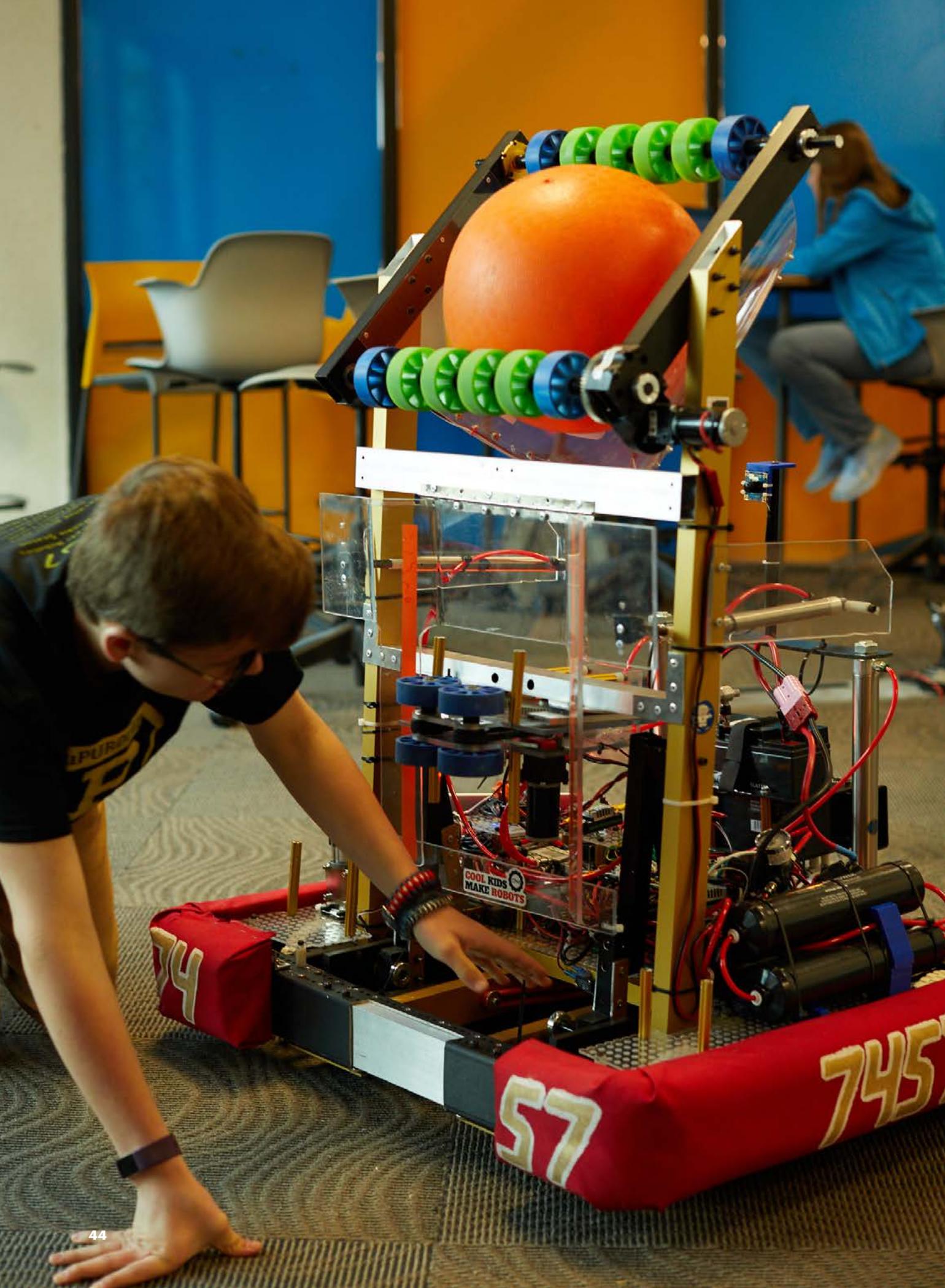






ELECTRICAL
ENGINEER

37.80



Purdue Polytechnic High School

INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

Preparing students, especially students of color from across Indiana, for future careers in STEM through partnerships with Purdue University and Indiana industry partners.

This is a school **developed in partnership with Purdue University**, business leaders, the city of Indianapolis, and the state of Indiana to raise the number of students from underrepresented backgrounds attending Purdue University and going into STEM careers.

This is where all students can leave **high school with college credit, in-demand industry credentials, and preferred admission** to nine out of the ten colleges at Purdue University.

This is a **project-based approach to all courses**, from physical education to mathematics, where students research problems and design solutions.

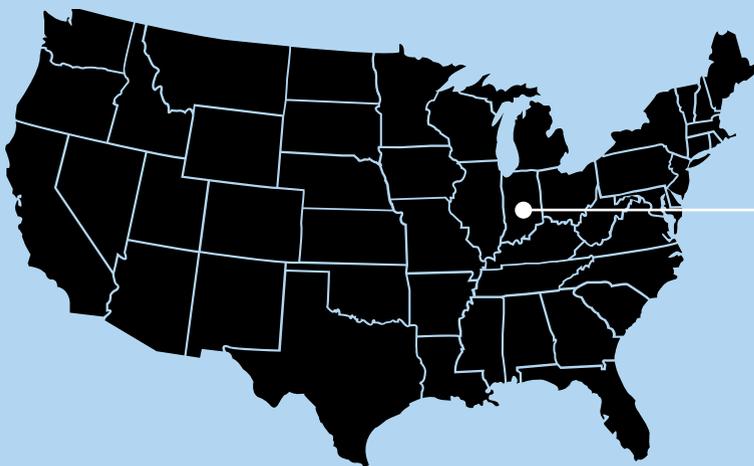
This is **real-world, future-ready work**. Students pitch ideas to community and industry partners, such as Eli Lilly and Company and Citizens Energy Group, giving them the exposure, preparation, and pathways needed to succeed.

This is **personalized learning**. Students choose their schedules, which change every eight weeks. Teachers are called “coaches” and act as guides rather than instructors, increasing student agency and building a culture of support.

This is a successful model that’s grown to three charter school locations, with **plans to establish eight to ten** serving 5,000–6,000 students across Indiana.

PURDUE POLYTECHNIC HIGH SCHOOL

In the spring of 2022, 110 students graduated from the flagship campus of Purdue Polytechnic High School (PPHS), the school's second graduating class since it launched in 2017-18.



**Indianapolis,
Indiana**

Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, the Class of 2022 achieved some remarkable successes, including:



Sending 34 graduates to Purdue University, **more than tripling the average total number of public school graduates** from Indianapolis who enroll in the university each fall.⁶



Proficiency rates on state assessments that are **four to six times higher than citywide rates for Indianapolis Public Schools** (e.g., 34 versus 8 percent scoring at the passing level on a statewide test when they were 11th graders).⁸



Nine in ten graduates feeling at least somewhat prepared for the future, with three in five of those students saying PPHS helped them develop strengths in creativity and problem-solving that will serve them well as adults.



Higher proficiency rates on state assessments for Black students, Latino students, students from low-income families, and students who qualify for special education services compared with similar groups districtwide and statewide (e.g., among students who qualify for special education services, 30 percent at PPHS scoring at the passing level on a statewide test when they were 11th graders, versus 1 percent districtwide and 8 percent statewide).⁹



An overall college-going rate that significantly exceeds the most recent statewide figure (65 versus 53 percent).⁷

Expanding the Pipeline to Higher Education and STEM Careers



When former governor Mitch Daniels became president of Purdue University in 2013, he dug into the numbers on how Indiana’s public universities could help meet statewide goals for workforce development. Daniels noticed a disturbing trend: Only a handful of Indianapolis Public Schools graduates were qualifying for admission to Purdue University each year, and even fewer were applying and enrolling.

Together with leaders in K-12 education and the business community, the university

helped launch PPHS as an innovative charter high school specifically designed to propel more Indianapolis students—especially students of color—into higher education and STEM careers.

That would, in turn, help meet the state’s goal of increasing the number of qualified employees for high-tech, high-paying

jobs important for Indiana's future, such as wind and solar energy.

PPHS has succeeded in its founding mission. Among the PPHS Class of 2022, 39 students gained admission to Purdue University and 34 enrolled, most of whom were students of color.¹⁰ That's more than twice the average number of Indianapolis high school graduates who enrolled at the university between 2016 to 2020 (15 a year), before PPHS graduated its first group of students.¹¹

Overall, 63 percent of PPHS 12th graders said they were college-bound, a figure that edged up to 65 percent by the time the class graduated in June.¹² More than half of PPHS graduates planned to attend a four-year institution (51 percent) with 12 percent saying they were headed to a two-year college.

Those figures are just about even with the national average of 66 percent planning to attend college in 2022, 47 percent at a four-year and 19 percent at a two-year college.¹³ More to the point, PPHS's rate significantly surpasses Indiana's statewide college-going average, which fell from a high of 63 percent in 2015 to just 53 percent for 2020 graduates, the latest year available.

“We serve a population that has historically not been as represented in higher education and a lot of students who would be the first in their families to go to college,”

said Keeanna Warren, the founding principal of the PPHS North campus who now serves as associate director of the Purdue Polytechnic High School Network. “So we know that it's really important to get them engaged with the college-going process right away.

“From the first day that they enter their 9th-grade year, they're getting constant exposure to Purdue University.”

Teachers, called coaches, provide college information and guidance during advisory time, and the school's full-time college counselor offers information and assistance at other hours. In addition, all students have the opportunity to spend a week to a month on the Purdue University campus every summer, taking classes and living in the dorms, at no cost to their families. “We have so many students come back from that visit and say, ‘I didn't think college was for someone who looked like me, but I now know I can do it,’” said Warren.

Class of 2022 graduate Alan agreed that such visits can be life changing. “During the junior year of high school, I lived at Purdue for a whole month in the summer and experienced campus to the fullest,” he recalled. “That's when I knew Purdue was for me.” Alan is majoring in mechanical engineering technology at the Purdue Polytechnic Institute, one of ten academic colleges at the university. He is the first in his family to attend college.¹⁴



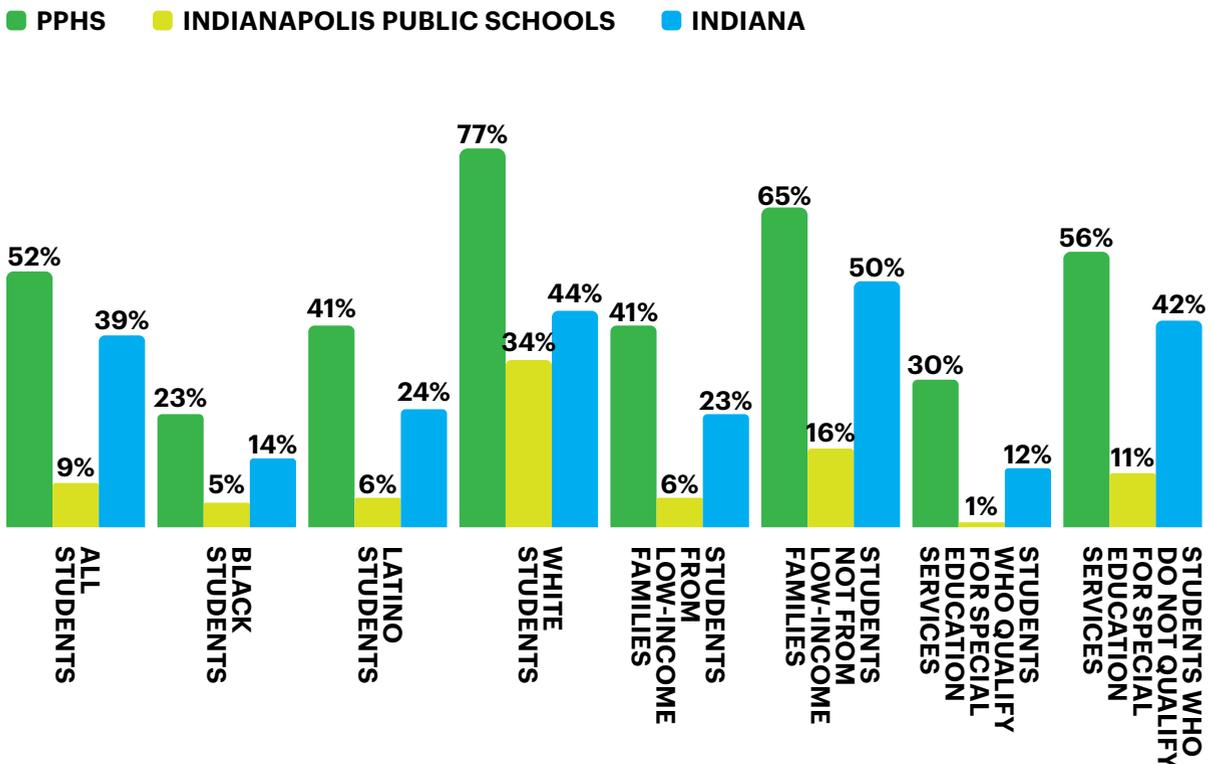
Ahead on State Assessments

PPHS’s success in expanding the pipeline to higher education also shows up in results on state assessments. Indiana students typically take a biology course in 9th grade, followed by a state exam in that subject. About two thirds of PPHS Class of 2022 members took the state biology exam in 2019, and they were nearly six times as likely to perform at the proficient level as students in the surrounding Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS) district (52 versus 9

percent).¹⁵ Black students, Latino students, and students from low-income families all had higher proficiency rates than those same groups citywide.

PPHS Class of 2022 students again overwhelmingly outperformed students across Indianapolis high schools on the state tests given to 11th graders in 2021. PPHS students were four times as likely to pass both the math and English sections

Biology End-of-Course Assessment, 2019

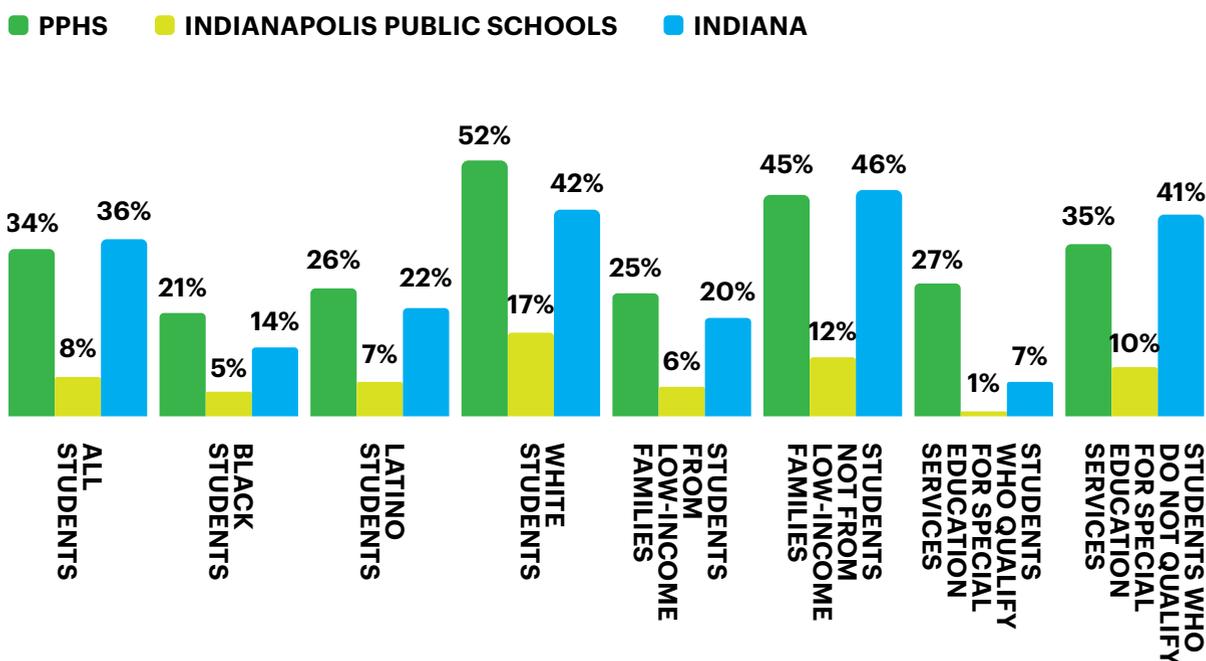


SOURCE: Indiana Department of Education, Assessment Results web page, <https://www.in.gov/doi/data-center-and-reports/>

NOTES: Eighty-two PPHS students took the ILEARN Biology assessment in 2018-19.

GRADE 11 STATE ASSESSMENT, 2021

Passing Both English Language Arts and Math



SOURCE: Indiana Department of Education, Assessment Results web page, <https://www.in.gov/doi/it/data-center-and-reports/>

NOTES: Ninety-seven PPHS 11th graders took the ISTEP+ 10 in 2021, for a 77% participation rate.

of the test as students in IPS (34 versus 8 percent).¹⁶ Black students, Latino students, and students from low-income families at PPHS all had passing rates about four times as large as the rates for those groups across IPS.

The school did such a good job at raising achievement rates among different subgroups that PPHS 11th graders from low-income families were twice as likely to pass both sections of the test as IPS students who were not from low-income families.

This pattern didn't hold when comparing the overall performance of PPHS students with those in the rest of the state. PPHS students were just slightly less likely to pass both sections of the 11th grade test than were their counterparts statewide (34 versus 36 percent).

Again, however, Black students, Latino students, and students from low-income families all were more likely to pass both sections of the test than the same groups across Indiana. For example, 21 percent of Black PPHS 11th graders passed, compared with 14 percent of Black 11th graders statewide.

We saw another noteworthy trend in the assessment results. PPHS students who qualified for special education services performed exceptionally well relative to their counterparts in the surrounding district and state.

At PPHS, roughly three in ten students who qualified for special education services met the standard on both tests, compared with only one out of 100 such students districtwide. In fact, PPHS students who

qualified for special education services were three to four times as likely to meet standards on both assessments as IPS students who did not qualify for such services. Notably, these students with special needs at PPHS also significantly outperformed their counterparts across the state as a whole on both assessments.

Warren believes this success comes down to several factors at PPHS, where about one in five students overall qualify for special education services—somewhat higher than average for the Indianapolis Public Schools. First, these students are not marginalized at PPHS. Every student has a highly personalized education plan and schedule, not just students with a mandated Individualized Education Program, or IEP. Second, the school also builds-in personalized learning time for

one-on-one meetings between students and coaches. Finally, PPHS empowers students to exercise voice and choice in their educational journeys, which helps them learn how to monitor their learning and advocate when they need additional help.

“That voice and choice is often taken away from students who historically have been marginalized, and that includes the special education population,” Warren explained. “Giving them that voice back and empowering them to own their own learning has been a game changer.”



Students as Problem Solvers

Nine in ten PPHS 12th graders said they felt at least somewhat prepared for their future, including more than half (53 percent) who felt “very” or “extremely well” prepared. Of those students, about six in ten cited creativity and problem-solving, along with the ability to collaborate with others, as strengths they had developed at PPHS that would serve them well into adulthood.

PPHS teaches its students collaborative problem-solving strategies as soon as they enter 9th grade, using a process the school calls “design thinking.”

Students practice design thinking in projects called “industry challenges,” where they work with community and business leaders to solve authentic problems of interest and create prototypes they pitch to industry experts.

For Alan, these industry challenges—with partners such as Eli Lilly, Subaru, and the United Way—proved as transformative as his month on Purdue’s campus. His enthusiasm for problem-solving sparked during 9th grade when he got to work with industry professionals trying to solve a resource-management problem for Citizens Energy Group, an Indianapolis utility company.

“I used to believe that the problems that our community faced were impossible to solve,” he said. “Working with industry partners showed me that no effort is too small, and it can lead to innovative ideas. Now, when I encounter a problem, I implement the design thinking skills I’ve learned.”

Students can participate in a new industry challenge during each so-called “cycle,” one of the eight-week blocks of time the school uses to organize learning opportunities. During each cycle, they also can opt into two other kinds of project-based experiences: immersions and passion projects. In immersions, PPHS coaches guide students in exploring topics within an academic area such as math or English language arts. Passion projects give coaches and students an opportunity to dive deeply into shared interests, from robotics to graphic design to guerilla street art.



During immersions, coaches grade students on their ability to demonstrate and apply subject-area content and skills through real-world challenges. In industry challenges and passion projects, students earn grades by demonstrating mastery of PPHS competencies such as “understand diverse perspectives” or “make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.” Students can track their progress in mastering all 20 of the school’s competencies in the Alma learning management system.

Passion projects get their name not just because they appeal to students’ current interests, but also because they can help students discover lifelong passions and make plans for the future.

Class of 2022 graduate Victor said he was always intrigued by aviation but discovered a new interest in finance through passion projects. “I always wanted to be an aviation engineer because I was interested in how planes move,” he explained. “Through the Money Moves project, I found I liked working with finance. And through modern segregation, I learned how school finance works, how tax dollars flow through schools to help us succeed and learn.”

Another project called “What Is Your Passion?” led Victor to think about how to combine his evolving interests. And a presentation by a visiting representative of Purdue University sealed the deal. Today, Victor is pursuing a degree in integrated business and engineering, a unique major

SPRING 2022 EXIT SURVEY



“What aspects of your XQ high school program were most important in helping you reach your goals while in high school and for college/career?”

Class of 2022’s top four choices for “aspects”

60%

lets me **work at my own pace** until I truly master the things I need to learn

54%

has **maker spaces, labs, or other hands-on learning spaces**

43%

opportunities for students to **play leadership roles** in the operations and life of the school

43%

has a **partnership with a college/ university** that provides learning opportunities to me while I am still in high school

SOURCE: XQ Senior Survey of the Class of 2022

offered through a partnership between Purdue's Krannert School of Management and its College of Engineering.

“For me, preparing for college was in the name of the high school,” Victor said. “All of that, and the four weeks I spent on campus, fostered my relationship with Purdue and showed me what a university education could be.”

He's also minoring in political science, he said, because “PPHS has shown me I can make an impact in my community.”

Asked which aspects of PPHS were most helpful for achieving their goals, 12th graders most frequently cited the opportunity to work at their own pace to master learning (60 percent) and the school's multiple hands-on learning spaces (54 percent). Alan said his favorite passion projects “involved use of the makerspace where we have a miter saw, drill press, and other tools. For one project, I designed and built a hydroponic system. For another, my team designed a glider using CAD software and then built it in the makerspace.”

Nearly one in three PPHS graduates (31 percent) earned college credits while still in high school, either during their summer studies at Purdue University or from other institutions. However, only about one in ten completed a full internship, partly due to challenges in work-based learning during

the COVID-19 pandemic. Warren said now that restrictions are lifted, she is focused on getting more students into internships in the 2022–23 year, and expects that number to increase.

Like its students, PPHS showed remarkable resilience and adaptability during the pandemic, and its 2022 graduates are proud to have helped it become what it is today. “Through all our trials and tribulations, we have persevered,” Victor told the audience at his PPHS graduation ceremony.¹⁷ “We built a community where we have used each other's perspectives to grow in our lives. Although we are graduating today, this community will continue to help and nurture our growth for the rest of our lives.”





WOMEN'S RIGHTS
ARE HUMAN RIGHTS
BLACK LIVES MATTER
LOVE IS LOVE
IMMIGRANTS MAKE
AMERICA GREAT
CLIMATE CHANGE IS REAL

Appendix

MORE ON OUR METHODS

XQ collected evidence from multiple sources to learn about the Class of 2022 in each school.

But, as noted in the introduction, the evidence available differed from school to school. In this section, we describe the most common kinds of evidence and provide a table showing which types of evidence were available to us for each school.

XQ Senior Survey Results: We present Class of 2022 XQ Senior Survey results for all 16 schools. The survey had an overall response rate of 87 percent.

State-Published Data: Wherever possible, we provide data from *state academic assessments* for Class of 2022 members at various points in the journey through high school. We had state test results for nine of the 16 schools.

We include test results only when the following conditions are met: 1) At least two-thirds of the Class of 2022 members took a particular test, and 2) School leaders told us they believe the data are a valid reflection of their students' academic progress.

Only one state, Tennessee, had published official four-year *graduation rates* for 2022 by the time this publication went to press. A few school leaders in other states told us they could reliably estimate graduation rates for the Class of 2022, and we discuss those estimates in the profiles.

For each school, we include data for all *student groups* for which the state published any data. Those groups vary

from school to school depending on whether a school enrolled students in a particular group. In addition, states withhold data for a group whenever the number of students in that group is too small in order to protect individual students' privacy. That means for some schools we are only able to show breakouts for a few groups of students, such as "Black students" and "white students" or "students from low-income families" and "students not from low-income families."

We use standardized names for student groups in both text and charts, based on XQ's in-house style. If a state used a different term to describe a student group, we make note of that in the end notes (e.g., "disadvantaged students" instead of "students from low-income families").

Data Conversations with School

Leaders: We held conversations with leaders of 15 schools to review XQ Senior Survey results and state assessment data, both to confirm accuracy and to dig into the human context and student stories behind the data. In some cases, the conversations revealed ways that adults are continuing to evolve the school model in response to student experiences and input.

School Observation Visits: Teams of experts from XQ's partner Springpoint conducted in-depth, two-day observation visits at eight of the 16 schools during 2021–22. After each visit, Springpoint produced the following documentation:

1. An overall judgment of how far the school had progressed in implementing all six areas of the XQ Design Principles Rubric (DPR).
2. An approximately 15-page document providing in-depth judgments and evidence on the following two focus areas of the DPR: meaningful, engaged learning and caring, trusting relationships.
3. An approximately 80-page summary and analysis of all the evidence collected during the two-day visit, including two areas of strength to build on and two areas for future improvement.

We incorporate judgments and examples from the Springpoint visits as appropriate to convey a better understanding of the experiences and outcomes of the Class of 2022.

Data Shared by Schools: Some schools shared additional information about their Class of 2022 members, primarily data from national assessment programs such as SAT, ACT, and AP.

A few schools provided that information as data on individual graduates, removing personally identifiable information about the students. In those cases, XQ analyzed the student-level data to produce overall numbers and percentages. In order to protect student privacy, we only show data for student groups of 10 or more individuals.

Student Voices and Examples: Whenever possible, we include student quotes and examples to illustrate and humanize key themes that emerged from our analysis of **the evidence above**. We obtained the material from a wide range of sources, including interviews by XQ staff and contractors; social media posts and videos published by XQ schools; traditional media coverage featuring XQ Class of 2022

members; and student publications such as blog posts and school newspapers.

A Note about Comparison Data:

We provide national, state, or local data whenever recent, comparable data are available to make comparisons. In some instances, we found such data to be too out of date to provide reliable context, especially information collected prior to

the disruptions caused by the pandemic. For example, California has not published college-going rates for any cohort since the Class of 2018.

	XQ Senior Survey Result	State Assessment Results	Official Graduation Rates (Published by State Dept. of Ed.)	Data Conversation with School Leaders	Springpoint Observation Visit	Additional Data Provided by Schools (ACT, SAT, or AP)	Student Voices and Examples
Brooklyn LAB	x			*			
Círculos	x	x		x			x
Crosstown	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Da Vinci RISE	x			x	x		x
Elizabethton	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Furr	x	x		x			x
GRPMS	x	x		x	x		x
Iowa BIG	x			x	x	x	x
Latitude	x	x		x		x	x
New Harmony	x	x		x	x	x	x
PPHS	x	x		x			x
PSI High	x			x	x	x	x
Summit Shasta	x			x		x	x
Tiger Ventures	x			x	x		x
Vista High	x	x					
WLA	x			x		x	x
TOTALS	16	9	2	14	8	8	14

* We held a Data Conversation with newly appointed school leaders who were not working at the school during the time the Class of 2022 was enrolled and graduated.

Endnotes

Introduction

1. American Institutes for Research, "National Survey of Public Education's Response to COVID-19," 2021, <https://www.air.org/project/national-survey-public-educations-response-COVID-19>.
2. American Student Assistance, "Spotlight On High School Internships," 2020, <https://www.asa.org/research-study/spotlight-on-high-school-internships/>. Based on a survey of 840 high school students.
3. YouthTruth, "Class of 2022: Planning for the Future in Uncertain Times," 2022, <https://youthtruthsurvey.org/future-plans-2022/>. Based on a survey of 22,219 high school 12th graders conducted over the winter months of 2021–2022.
4. We do not have data on whether 12th graders who were planning to go to college had enrolled in college by the fall. Based on other research, we do know that confirmed college-going rates tend to be several percentage points lower than survey-based data on college plans.
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13. National percentage of 12th graders from YouthTruth, "Class of 2022: Planning for the Future in Uncertain Times," 2022, <https://youthtruthsurvey.org/future-plans-2022/>. YouthTruth figures based on a survey of 22,219 high school 12th graders conducted over the winter months of 2021–2022.

Purdue Polytechnic High School

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8. Indiana Department of Education, Data Center and Reports web page, <https://www.in.gov/doe/it/data-center-and-reports/>. The figures come from separate downloadable school-level, district-level, and state-level data files for a state assessment called the ISTEP 10+, which in the past had been administered in 10th grade but was administered in 11th grade in the spring of 2021 to make up for testing gaps caused by the pandemic the previous year.
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16. Indiana Department of Education, Data Center and Reports web page, <https://www.in.gov/doe/it/data-center-and-reports/>. The figures come from separate downloadable school-level, district-level, and state-level data files for a state assessment called the ISTEP 10+, which in the past had been administered in 10th grade but was administered in 11th grade in the spring of 2021 to make up for testing gaps caused by the pandemic the previous year.
17. Purdue University, "Purdue Polytechnic High School's Students Celebrate Graduation," June 20, 2022, <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1lwsaXij9ahU57wUuK4WnzRazrT466kHnidn8MLIKVxw/edit>.

