QUEST Logic Model

Study Type: ESSA Evidence Level IV

Prepared for:
ProSolve

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ProSolve engaged LearnPlatform by Instructure, a third-party edtech research company, to develop a logic model for QUEST. LearnPlatform designed the logic model to satisfy Level IV requirements (*Demonstrates a Rationale*) according to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).[1]

Logic Model

A logic model provides a program roadmap detailing program inputs, participants reached, program activities, outputs, and outcomes. LearnPlatform collaborated with ProSolve to develop and revise the logic model.

Study Design for QUEST Evaluation

Informed by the logic model, LearnPlatform by Instructure developed a research plan for a study to meet ESSA Level II requirements. The proposed research questions are as follows:

Implementation:
1. To what extent did teachers participate in QUEST training and implementation support?
2. To what extent did students use QUEST during the school year?

Outcomes:
3. Did students' perceptions of their SEL and 4Cs competencies vary before and after their participation in QUEST?
4. Did students' perceptions of their career essential skills vary before and after their participation in QUEST?
5. How did students' perceptions of their SEL, 4Cs competencies, and career-building skills vary between those who used QUEST compared to those who did not?

Conclusions

This study satisfies ESSA evidence requirements for Level IV (*Demonstrates a Rationale*). Specifically, this study met the following criteria for Level IV:
✅ Detailed logic model informed by previous, high-quality research
✅ Study planning and design is currently underway for an ESSA Level II study

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[1] Level IV indicates that an intervention should include a "well-specified logic model that is informed by research or an evaluation that suggests how the intervention is likely to improve relevant outcomes; and an effort to study the effects of the intervention, that will happen as part of the intervention or is underway elsewhere…" (p. 9, U.S. Department of Education, 2016).

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Introduction

ProSolve engaged LearnPlatform by Instructure, a third-party edtech research company, to develop a logic model for QUEST. LearnPlatform designed the logic model to satisfy Level IV requirements (*Demonstrates a Rationale*) according to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

The study had the following objectives:
1. Define the QUEST logic model and foundational research base.
2. Draft an ESSA Level II study design.

Previous Research. Social-emotional learning (SEL) competencies like emotional intelligence, empathy, and effective communication are increasingly recognized as indispensable for successful integration into the modern workforce (Atwell, 2023). However, traditional instruction frequently falls short in providing relevant, active learning experiences that promote the development of such competencies. Educators also need support to appropriately facilitate students' collaborative problem-solving, reflection, and relationship skills (Durlak et al., 2011). QUEST, a student-centered SEL curriculum, addresses these gaps in a nurturing, low-pressure environment. The training and curriculum materials empower educators to facilitate immersive problem-solving experiences, actively cultivating essential student skills for lifelong learning and career readiness.

Education systems that prioritize authentic, meaningful, and hands-on learning approaches not only show increased levels of student engagement but also improved academic outcomes (Lombardi & Oblinge, 2007). At the heart of the QUEST program is the integration of SEL skills as defined by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). SEL skills include the ability to manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions (CASEL, 2020). Studies have shown that students who engage in social and emotional learning programs outperform their peers in terms of academic results, social interactions, and overall well-being (Taylor et al., 2017). These skills are not merely supplementary competencies but are at the heart of personal and professional success in the 21st century.

Nevertheless, programs that comprehensively address the development of SEL skills are markedly scarce in the current educational landscape (National Commission on Social, Emotional, and Academic Development, 2019). The QUEST curriculum integrates real-world applications, hands-on interactions, and reflective practices into the curriculum. Students develop critical SEL competencies, promoting a sense of community and belonging and, in turn, improved academic achievement (Lombardi & Oblige, 2007). Furthermore, QUEST's alignment with the 4Cs—Creativity, Communication, Critical Thinking, and Collaboration—ensures that students are equipped with the competencies vital for the modern workforce.

Modern workforce leaders consistently report a gap between the skills they desire and the skills recent graduates possess upon entering the professional realm (Zahidi, 2020). According to a report by the National Commission on Social, Emotional, and Academic Development (2019), a significant portion of recent graduates lack essential competencies such as critical thinking, adaptability, and social-emotional intelligence, which are crucial for navigating the complexities of today's rapidly evolving job market. The QUEST curriculum further incorporates workforce readiness skills, often represented by the 4Cs. These skills are not only complementary to the SEL framework but are also essential for the modern work environment (Trilling & Fadel, 2009). The ways in which QUEST leverages these existing frameworks to promote student outcomes are outlined in Table 1 below.

Table 1. QUEST curriculum alignment with existing frameworks

Concept & Definition	Evidence	QUEST curriculum alignment
CASEL framework: *Includes five core competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making (CASEL, 2020).*	Research has shown that SEL programming significantly contributes to positive educational and developmental student outcomes, improving academic performance, reducing behavioral issues, and enhancing interpersonal skills (Donegan et al., 2022).	The SEL activities embedded in gameplay offer CASEL-aligned instruction that provides students with opportunities to identify, build, and apply their SEL skills. These activities are strategically aligned with the gameplay, allowing students to apply what they learn in real-time directly.
4Cs: *A set of workforce readiness skills that include: Creativity, Communication, Critical Thinking, and Collaboration.*	Development of the 4Cs is proposed as a solution to global challenges facing the workforce that aims to stimulate critical thinking, creativity, innovation, and the ability to solve problems while working together as teams, (L.W., 2007). These skills are considered crucial for the success of students in the 21st-century labor market, (OECD, 2018)	Students define and monitor group norms, roles, and responsibilities as a critical first step in working with their team.
Experiential learning: *Instructional theory driven by student experiences, reflection, thinking, and acting (Kolb & Kolb, 2011).*	Learning begins with using the senses to engage in what is happening in the classroom. The learner then reflects on what happened and connects feelings with ideas about the experience. The learner next engages in thinking to reach testable conclusions. Testing theories and solutions serves as an application of skills while also generating feedback for next steps (Kolb & Kolb, 2011).	QUEST uses a game-based approach that integrates the components of experiential learning in an environment that demands effective communication, teamwork, and problem-solving. The curriculum also includes extensive training materials and implementation support for facilitators, who might otherwise struggle to adapt existing curricula to the experiential learning framework.

Concept & Definition	Evidence	QUEST curriculum alignment
Whole child approach: *An approach to education that acknowledges the full scope of a child's developmental needs to help them reach their fullest potential.*	Students' education and life outcomes are dependent upon their access to safe and welcoming learning environments and rich learning experiences in and out of school. (Learning Policy Institute, 2021).	QUEST establishes a learning environment that supports positive relationships, student feelings of safety and belonging, and provides rich, authentic learning experiences. Implementation is guided by integrated support systems to ensure that implementation acknowledges the entirety of student experiences.

Education models that prioritize the development of skills such as SEL, collaborative problem-solving, and reflective practices demonstrate promising outcomes. For instance, the Education Endowment Foundation (2021) reported that students engaged in active learning and SEL curricula not only performed better academically but also exhibited improved teamwork, communication, and problem-solving abilities. The evidence overwhelmingly underscores the urgent need to transition from conventional pedagogical methods to more progressive, holistic approaches that prioritize active learning and comprehensive skill development.

Logic Model

A logic model is a program or product roadmap. It identifies how a program aims to impact learners, translating inputs into measurable activities that lead to expected results. A logic model has five core components: inputs, participants, activities, outputs, and outcomes (see Table 2).

Table 2. Logic model core components

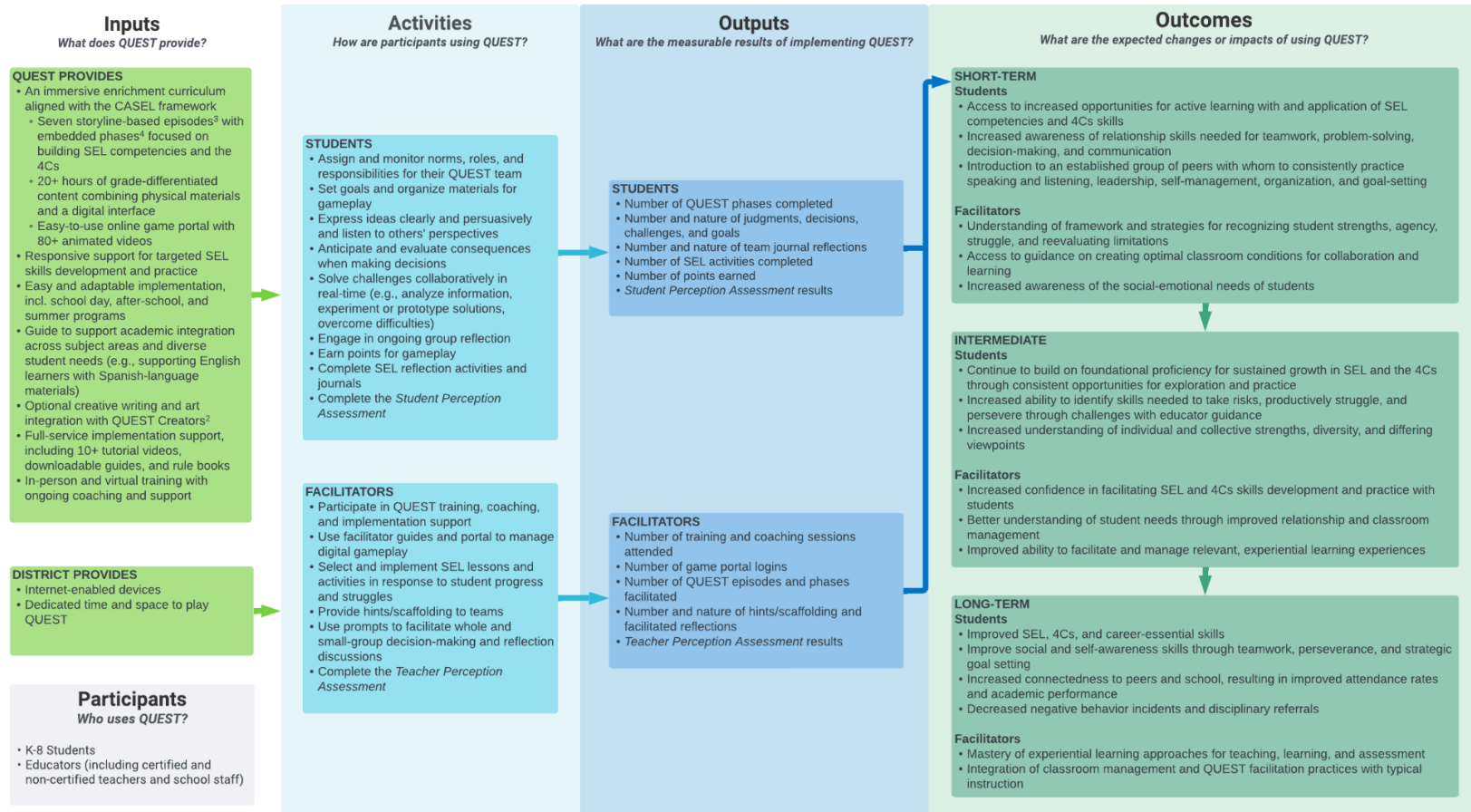| Component	Description	More information
Inputs	What the provider invests	What resources are invested and/or required for the learning solution to function effectively in real schools?
Participants	Who the provider reaches	Who receives the learning solution or intervention? Who are the key users?
Activities	What participants do	What do participants do with the resources identified in Inputs? What are the core/essential components of the learning solution? What is being delivered to help students/teachers achieve the program outcomes identified?
Outputs	Products of activities	What are numeric indicators of activities? (e.g., key performance indicators; allows for examining program implementation)
Outcomes	Short-term, intermediate, long-term	Short-term outcomes are changes in awareness, knowledge, skills, attitudes, and aspirations. Intermediate outcomes are changes in behaviors or actions. Long-term outcomes are ultimate impacts or changes in social, economic, civil, or environmental conditions.

LearnPlatform reviewed QUEST resources, artifacts, and program materials to develop a draft logic model. ProSolve reviewed the draft and provided revisions during virtual meetings. The final logic model depicted below (Figure 1) reflects these conversations and revisions.

Problem Statement: Students must develop social-emotional learning (SEL) and 4Cs[1] skills for academic and workforce success. However, traditional instruction frequently falls short in providing relevant, active learning experiences. Educators also need support to facilitate students' collaborative problem-solving, reflection, and relationship skills. QUEST, a student-centered SEL curriculum, addresses this gap within a nurturing, low-pressure environment. The training and program materials empower educators to facilitate immersive problem-solving experiences, actively cultivating essential student skills for lifelong learning and career readiness.

ProSolve QUEST
Logic Model

Inputs
What does QUEST provide?

QUEST PROVIDES
- An immersive enrichment curriculum aligned with the CASEL framework
  - Seven storyline-based episodes[3] with embedded phases[4] focused on building SEL competencies and the 4Cs
  - 20+ hours of grade-differentiated content combining physical materials and a digital interface
  - Easy-to-use online game portal with 80+ animated videos
- Responsive support for targeted SEL skills development and practice
- Easy and adaptable implementation, incl. school day, after-school, and summer programs
- Guide to support academic integration across subject areas and diverse student needs (e.g., supporting English learners with Spanish-language materials)
- Optional creative writing and art integration with QUEST Creators[2]
- Full-service implementation support, including 10+ tutorial videos, downloadable guides, and rule books
- In-person and virtual training with ongoing coaching and support

DISTRICT PROVIDES
- Internet-enabled devices
- Dedicated time and space to play QUEST

Participants
Who uses QUEST?

- K-8 Students
- Educators (including certified and non-certified teachers and school staff)

Activities
How are participants using QUEST?

STUDENTS
- Assign and monitor norms, roles, and responsibilities for their QUEST team
- Set goals and organize materials for gameplay
- Express ideas clearly and persuasively and listen to others' perspectives
- Anticipate and evaluate consequences when making decisions
- Solve challenges collaboratively in real-time (e.g., analyze information, experiment or prototype solutions, overcome difficulties)
- Engage in ongoing group reflection
- Earn points for gameplay
- Complete SEL reflection activities and journals
- Complete the *Student Perception Assessment*

FACILITATORS
- Participate in QUEST training, coaching, and implementation support
- Use facilitator guides and portal to manage digital gameplay
- Select and implement SEL lessons and activities in response to student progress and struggles
- Provide hints/scaffolding to teams
- Use prompts to facilitate whole and small-group decision-making and reflection discussions
- Complete the *Teacher Perception Assessment*

Outputs
What are the measurable results of implementing QUEST?

STUDENTS
- Number of QUEST phases completed
- Number and nature of judgments, decisions, challenges, and goals
- Number and nature of team journal reflections
- Number of SEL activities completed
- Number of points earned
- *Student Perception Assessment* results

FACILITATORS
- Number of training and coaching sessions attended
- Number of game portal logins
- Number of QUEST episodes and phases facilitated
- Number and nature of hints/scaffolding and facilitated reflections
- *Teacher Perception Assessment* results

Outcomes
What are the expected changes or impacts of using QUEST?

SHORT-TERM
Students
- Access to increased opportunities for active learning with and application of SEL competencies and 4Cs skills
- Increased awareness of relationship skills needed for teamwork, problem-solving, decision-making, and communication
- Introduction to an established group of peers with whom to consistently practice speaking and listening, leadership, self-management, organization, and goal-setting

Facilitators
- Understanding of framework and strategies for recognizing student strengths, agency, struggle, and reevaluating limitations
- Access to guidance on creating optimal classroom conditions for collaboration and learning
- Increased awareness of the social-emotional needs of students

INTERMEDIATE
Students
- Continue to build on foundational proficiency for sustained growth in SEL and the 4Cs through consistent opportunities for exploration and practice
- Increased ability to identify skills needed to take risks, productively struggle, and persevere through challenges with educator guidance
- Increased understanding of individual and collective strengths, diversity, and differing viewpoints

Facilitators
- Increased confidence in facilitating SEL and 4Cs skills development and practice with students
- Better understanding of student needs through improved relationship and classroom management
- Improved ability to facilitate and manage relevant, experiential learning experiences

LONG-TERM
Students
- Improved SEL, 4Cs, and career-essential skills
- Improve social and self-awareness skills through teamwork, perseverance, and strategic goal setting
- Increased connectedness to peers and school, resulting in improved attendance rates and academic performance
- Decreased negative behavior incidents and disciplinary referrals

Facilitators
- Mastery of experiential learning approaches for teaching, learning, and assessment
- Integration of classroom management and QUEST facilitation practices with typical instruction

[1] **The 4C's include**: Creativity, Communication, Critical Thinking, and Collaboration.
[2] **QUEST Creators** is a Creative Writing & Art program that focuses on building written and oral language skills that is available as an add-on purchase.
[3] Each season of QUEST immerses players in a new storyline and includes seven **episodes** to be played over the course of a semester.
[4] Five game **phases** are embedded into each season, designed around the 4C's: 1) Map Exploration/Creativity; 2) Encounter Decisions/Communication; 3) Puzzles (challenges)/Critical Thinking; 4) Bartering/Collaboration; and 5) Debrief/Reflection.

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LEARN PLATFORM
BY INSTRUCTURE

Figure 1. QUEST logic model

QUEST Logic Model Components. ProSolve invests several resources into their program, including:
- An immersive enrichment curriculum aligned with the CASEL framework
  - Seven storyline-based episodes with embedded phases focused on building SEL competencies and the 4Cs
  - 20+ hours of grade-differentiated content combining physical materials and a digital interface
  - Easy-to-use online game portal with 80+ animated videos
- Responsive support for targeted SEL skills development and practice
- Easy and adaptable implementation, including school day, after-school, and summer programs
- Guide to support academic integration across subject areas and diverse student needs (e.g., supporting English learners with Spanish-language materials)
- Optional creative writing and art integration with QUEST Creators
- Full-service implementation support, including 10+ tutorial videos, downloadable guides, and rule books
- In-person and virtual training with ongoing coaching and support

District provides:
- Internet-enabled devices
- Dedicated time and space to play QUEST

Ultimately, the QUEST program aims to reach K-8 students and facilitators including certified and non-certified teachers and school staff. Using these program resources, the participants can engage with the QUEST platform in the following activities:

Students
- Assign and monitor norms, roles, and responsibilities for their QUEST team
- Set goals and organize materials for gameplay
- Express ideas clearly and persuasively and listen to others' perspectives
- Anticipate and evaluate consequences when making decisions
- Solve challenges collaboratively in real-time (e.g., analyze information, experiment or prototype solutions, overcome difficulties)
- Engage in ongoing group reflection
- Earn points for gameplay
- Complete SEL reflection activities and journals
- Complete the *Student Perception Assessment*

Facilitators
- Participate in QUEST training, coaching, and implementation support
- Use facilitator guides and portal to manage digital game play
- Select and implement SEL lessons and activities in response to student progress and struggles

- Provide hints/scaffolding to teams
- Use prompts to facilitate whole and small-group decision-making and reflection discussions
- Complete the *Teacher Perception Assessment*

ProSolve can examine the extent to which core activities were delivered and participants were reached by examining the following quantifiable outputs:

Students
- Number of QUEST phases completed
- Number and nature of judgments, decisions, challenges, and goals
- Number and nature of team journal reflections
- Number of SEL activities completed
- Number of points earned
- *Student Perception Assessment* results

Facilitators
- Number of training and coaching sessions attended
- Number of game portal logins
- Number of QUEST episodes and phases facilitated
- Number and nature of hints/scaffolding and facilitated reflections
- *Teacher Perception Assessment* results

If implementation is successful, based on a review of program outputs, ProSolve can expect the following outcomes:

Short-Term
In the short term, students will have opportunities for active learning with direct application of SEL competencies and 4C's skills. The curriculum will build increased awareness of the complex relationship skills needed for teamwork, problem-solving, decision-making, and communication. QUEST also establishes a group of peers with whom students can consistently practice speaking and listening, leadership, self-management, organization, and goal-setting.

Early implementation also provides facilitators with a framework and strategies for recognizing student strengths, agency, and struggle, and reevaluating limitations in their instruction. Facilitators are also given access to guidance on creating optimal classroom conditions for collaboration and self-directed, authentic learning. Implementing QUEST will also increase facilitator awareness of the social-emotional needs of their students.

Intermediate-Term
As implementation progresses, students will continue to build on foundational proficiency for sustained growth in SEL and the 4Cs through consistent opportunities for exploration and

practice. Through their engagement with the QUEST activities and materials, students will increase their ability to identify skills needed to take risks, productively struggle, and persevere through challenges with educator guidance. Regular collaboration with their team will provide a greater understanding of how individual and collective strengths, diversity, and differing viewpoints are critical to success.

Ongoing implementation will help facilitators develop confidence in facilitating SEL and 4Cs skills instruction and identify opportunities for students to practice. The improved relationships and classroom management skills that underlie implementation will help facilitators to better understand their students' emotional and academic needs. Finally, facilitators will improve their ability to facilitate and manage relevant, experiential learning experiences

Long-Term

In the long term, QUEST implementation is expected to measurably improve student SEL, 4Cs, and career-essential skills. Their experiences with teamwork, perseverance, and strategic goal setting will also help them to increase their social and self-awareness. Finally, the increased connectedness to peers and the burgeoning affinity with school experienced through QUEST implementation will result in improved attendance rates and academic performance while also decreasing negative behavior incidents and disciplinary referrals.

The long-term outcomes of QUEST for facilitators include mastery of experiential learning approaches for teaching, learning, and assessment. Facilitators might also integrate classroom management and QUEST facilitation practices with their typical instruction, expanding program impact and student opportunities to learn and grow.

Study Design for QUEST Evaluation

To continue building evidence of effectiveness and to examine the proposed relationships in the logic model, ProSolve has plans to conduct an evaluation to determine the extent to which its program produces the desired outcomes. Specifically, ProSolve has plans to begin an ESSA Level II study to answer the following research questions:

Implementation:
1. To what extent did teachers participate in QUEST training and implementation support?
2. To what extent did students use QUEST during the school year?

Outcomes:
3. Did students' perceptions of their SEL and 4Cs competencies vary before and after their participation in QUEST?
4. Did students' perceptions of their career essential skills vary before and after their participation in QUEST?
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Conclusions

This study satisfies ESSA evidence requirements for Level IV (*Demonstrates a Rationale*). Specifically, this study met the following criteria for Level IV:
✅ Detailed logic model informed by previous, high-quality research
✅ Study planning and design is currently underway for an ESSA Level II study

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