



NATIONAL STUDENT SUPPORT ACCELERATOR

equalizing access to quality tutoring

Conducting a District Landscape Analysis

What is a District Landscape Analysis?

A Landscape Analysis outlines the strengths, resources, and needs of a particular school district. It provides a framework for designing a service and ensuring that it is embedded directly in the needs of the district.

Why should you conduct a District Landscape Analysis?

Prior to starting any type of program — whether a tutoring program or any other service — you should confirm that there is a need and a desire for the proposed program. The information you gather through a Landscape Analysis will allow you to thoroughly map these needs and desires, ensuring that they remain paramount when you design your program, set priorities, and make strategic decisions. A Landscape Analysis will enable your program to keep the actual needs of the district in mind at all times, rather than your own hypotheses about its needs. Doing this essential groundwork will aid in designing an effective tutoring program that the whole community values.

Who should be considered in a District Landscape Analysis?

While there are no strict limits regarding who *can* be involved, here is some basic guidance about whose needs should be prioritized:

- **Students and families** who will likely benefit from the tutoring program. Ensure that you hear from a wide range of voices so that you can holistically understand the needs of the community of potential beneficiaries.
- **Other stakeholders** beyond students and families, such as teachers and school administrators, who will have a solid expert understanding of students' needs for additional tutoring services.
- **Other district staff members in other departments**, and/or like-minded organizations that have a history operating in partnership with the district and can help you to carry out the assessment itself or assist with program design planning.

How do you conduct a Landscape Analysis?

The qualitative and quantitative data you collect will help you define your tutoring program's necessary inputs, benchmark outputs, and desired impact. Here are some of the sources from which you may want to collect information:

- **Interviews & Focus Groups:** Solicit direct input from both the beneficiaries of tutoring (families and students) as well as other stakeholders (such as school administrators and teachers) to understand what needs they observe and experience. For example, an [Empathy Interview Toolkit from CityTutor DC](#) includes a question bank to facilitate interviewing students and educators, as well as a list of common pitfalls to avoid and possible internal biases for which to correct. This will help you understand students' academic context and where a tutoring program might fit in.
- **Public Forums:** Seek out forums already happening that relate to the needs you have identified. Attend local school board meetings and other community gatherings to better learn the local political landscape.
- **Observations:** Directly observe and speak with those on the front line. Visit tutoring programs or similar services that already exist in your district and see what they look like in action.
- **Needs Surveys:** Collect an easily-parsed set of data points by having students, families, teachers, administrators and district staff rate proposed services and answer a few open-ended questions to help you understand the aggregate needs of the district community.

Existing Quantitative Data: Review and synthesize available data from sources such as research studies that have already been conducted (e.g., recent research related to learning loss); publicly available resources such as US Census; and local school district records on student achievement and graduation rates.