Community Scan Toolkit

Participating Organizations

In partnership with the Florida College Access Network (FCAN) and the Michigan College Access Network (MCAN), Helios Education Foundation is pleased to offer this community scan toolkit to assist local college access networks (LCANs) and other community groups devoted to working collectively to drive positive change for the benefit of the communities they serve.

To develop this toolkit, the three organizations shared experiences from their own work and "lessons learned;" reviewed examples of other toolkits, completed scans, and other resources; participated in workgroup sessions; and provided feedback throughout the process. Shelley Robertson, an independent consultant, expertly facilitated the process. Where documents were adapted for this toolkit from others' work, those works are cited, and a full reference is provided.

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Introduction

A community scan generates the information community groups need to identify and implement strategies that will drive positive changes in their community, such as improvements related to education (from pre-K to college), health and well-being, and economic self-sufficiency. Often, however, a group may not have experience in completing scans and needs guidance about how to conduct one. To help fill this need, we are pleased to offer this Community Scan Toolkit. Although this toolkit was developed specifically with local college access networks (LCANs) in mind and directly addresses itself to LCANs from this point forward, the tools and guidelines are nevertheless adaptable for any community group.

For LCANs engaging in this work, the toolkit is intended as a companion piece to *Charting the Course: A community's guide to increasing educational attainment through the lens of collective impact*, a publication of the Michigan College Access Network (see endnotes for the complete reference and a link to the guide).

This introduction answers some of the key questions:

- What is a community scan?
- Why conduct a community scan?
- When should we conduct a community scan?
- Who conducts the community scan?
- What are the steps and how do we do them?

What is a community scan?

Through a community scan, an LCAN collects information on the current strengths, concerns, and conditions relating to college access and success[1] in the community. The information can come from many sources including interviews, surveys, focus groups and data from local agencies, such as schools. The information may be used in a number of ways: to provide an assessment of the issue and raise awareness, to identify potential partners, to determine gaps, and to develop strategies.

The tasks of a community scan include answering the following questions:

- How do we define our community?
- How do we collect useful quantitative data?
- How do we map local assets?
- How do we put it all together?

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[1] College access is defined as preparing for, earning admission to, and enrolling in postsecondary education. College success is defined as persisting and earning a certificate or degree from a postsecondary education institution.

You may not need to conduct all parts of the scan. For example, quantitative data may be available through the other organizations, requiring you to only include that data in your analysis.

These tasks are similar to the steps in the Michigan College Access Network's guidebook, *Charting the Course*.[i] The resources in this toolkit are a subset of the larger process of building a collective impact framework described in the guidebook. Specifically, the resources in this toolkit relate to step two – conduct a landscape scan and asset mapping; step three – gather baseline data; and step eight – analyze data to select priority areas.

Why conduct a community scan[ii]?

Creating an LCAN does not mean starting from scratch: LCANs start from a foundation of organizations, programs, and people that are already working to increase college access and attainment so that you can build upon existing efforts, fill gaps, and remove barriers[iii]. A community scan is a valuable tool to help you identify stakeholders already in the community and take stock of the work currently underway.

Understanding this community landscape is a critical first step before your LCAN develops its entire coalition and its strategies and action. The information you gather for the community scan will be instrumental in helping your LCAN select those priority areas where the LCAN can have the greatest impact.

Therefore, community scans have two overarching purposes: to build relationships among the stakeholders and to collect information about college access and success in your community. Information about college access and success will include available programs, but might also include policies that influence access and success, available funding, and coordination among programs and services. More specific reasons to conduct a community scan are as follows:

- Understand the community's current success in getting your students into higher education and in supporting students to complete certificate and degrees.
- Gather information about the barriers to college access and attainment in your community.
- Identify underlying factors that contribute to those barriers.
- Identify and analyze environmental, social, and individual factors that contribute to the barriers.
- Identify current resources, programs, services that help lower the barriers to college for students.
- Identify areas of duplication and gaps in programs aiming to improve college access and success.
- Identify and engage new partners.
- Ensure you will select and implement strategies that will improve college access and attainment in your community.

When should we conduct a community scan?

A community scan should occur soon after you have initiated your LCAN but before you select your goals and implementation strategies. In other words, consider it an integral part of your strategic planning process. It is not uncommon for LCAN leaders to form their coalitions with ideas about goals and strategies but ultimately decide on different ones based on the information that the community scan reveals. Additionally, you may find that you will add members to your coalition based on the results of the community scan. Keep in mind, as well, that your community scan is a "living" document that your LCAN will add to and edit on an ongoing basis to ensure that the information is up to date.

Who conducts the community scan?

Ultimately, the LCAN is responsible for conducting the community scan. In order to do the work of the scan – identifying, collecting, and analyzing relevant data – a LCAN has three options. Each option is described in Figure 1, along with its pros and cons. Regardless of the option chosen, however, the leadership team[2] needs to be engaged and involved in data collection and analysis to ensure commitment for the final strategies and a thorough understanding of the community landscape.

Figure 1: Options for work assignments[iv]

Option	Pros & Cons
1. Leadership team or LCAN volunteers only	This option allows the LCAN to create relationships with community stakeholders and develop a strong understanding of the data. Unless LCAN members or volunteers have experience in data collection or analysis, however, data quality can suffer. Members will likely have a good understanding of the community and the importance of the issue, but may also have preconceived ideas. Using volunteers is less costly but they also have competing priorities.
2. Consultant only	While consultants with experience in community scans can bring valuable data collection and analysis expertise, the LCAN will lose the opportunity to build relationships for future collaborations.
3. Coalition plus consultant	**This option is the best of both worlds**. The LCAN members can build relationships, and the consultant can ensure high quality data collection and provide analytical expertise. Another version of this option is to ask leadership team members if there are people in their organization who can fill the data consultant role.

[2] See *Charting the Course* for a description of the leadership team.

What are the steps and how do we do them?

This toolkit is divided into four sections that align with the four major activities of a community scan:

- Part One: How do we define our community?
- Part Two: How do we collect useful quantitative data?
- Part Three: How do we map local assets?
- Part Four: How do we put it all together?

It is essential to define your community before proceeding to collecting quantitative data or mapping your local assets. Once the community is defined, the tasks in Part Two and Part Three can be done simultaneously or in sequence.

Within each section, you'll find guidelines, tools, and resources to help you in this important work.

Part One: How do we define our community?

As you develop your LCAN and start on a community scan, you will first need to define the geographic boundaries of your community. How you define the boundaries of your community is up to you, but we have listed guidance below and provided a worksheet on the next page to help you in your decision-making.

- Geographical boundaries may be informed by such factors as school district, county, region (such as metro areas that include more than one county), or the service area of the anchor[3] organization.

- Key institutions, such as high schools and colleges, exist within a broader system, defined as the collection of people, organizations, and policies that influence college access and success, and how each interacts with the others. In crafting your geography, it may be helpful to encompass the local system in which key institutions operate (e.g., both the high schools and the local community college to which they send their students).

- Restricting your LCAN to a small geographic area (e.g., neighborhoods) runs the risk of missing the full spectrum of local resources and isolating your efforts. Your action plans, however, may focus on specific neighborhoods, schools, and populations based on the needs your community scan helps you identify.

- Your geographical boundaries should not overlap with another LCAN's boundaries. For example, it would result in unnecessary duplication if City X were a part of the geographical area of both LCAN A and LCAN B.

- Geographical boundaries will impact what data you can collect for your scan and what metrics you can track to determine your progress. Most data are available at the county level; some data are available at the zip code, school, or census tract level.

- Geographical definitions will also impact how you utilize data visualization software (e.g., Tableau). Most graphical mapping programs will allow a user to include counties, zip codes, or census tracts.

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[3] See *Charting the Course* for a description of anchor organizations in the context of a collective impact framework.

WORKSHEET: DETERMINING COMMUNITY BOUNDARIES

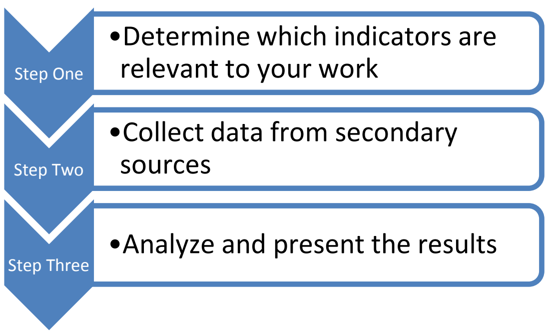
If your group has more than one option for geographic boundaries, you can use the worksheet below to help you assess each option. Just put the actual options in place of Geography 1, 2, or 3. Then you can put Yes or No for each question or assign points to help you decide.

	Geography 1	Geography 2	Geography 3
Are the boundaries of this geography logical (i.e. county, district, services area, metro area, region)?			
Do the boundaries of this geography match the systems (e.g., the local high schools and higher education providers)?			
Does this geography overlap with another similar coalition or network (such as another LCAN)?			
Are the boundaries of this geography consistent with the data we want to collect (for example, at the school district level)? Is that important to us?			
Are the boundaries of this geography consistent with data visualization options? Is that important to us?			
Are there other considerations?			

Part Two: How do we collect useful quantitative data?

"Quantitative data" is data that can be measured numerically. For LCANs working with the Florida College Access Network or the Michigan College Access Network, there's good news: They will assist you with gathering some of the quantitative data that will help to inform your strategies. Even so, LCAN will still need to complete many of the basic steps in this section to determine which data are relevant and to collect data not available from the state-level organization.

Here are the steps to collect useful data:



In order to collect quantitative data, you will need to complete the three steps noted in the graphic. This section will walk you through those steps.

Step one: Determine which indicators are relevant to your work

Indicators are specific pieces of data, such as the percentage of high school graduates who enroll in college the fall after graduation. Indicators may include demographic data, school-level data (e.g., number of students by grade of the high school), and core metrics, such as those of the Florida College Access Network (see Figure 2). To determine what indicators to collect, look to research in the field and subject matter experts, both local and national. In addition to basic demographic data, you'll want to collect local data that mirrors the relevant research, whether that relates to common barriers, services and supports, or success. You can find appropriate research in peer-reviewed journals, national organizations working on the issue, and government publications.

Before you begin collecting data, however, it's important to step back and think strategically about what you will collect: It's very easy to get bogged down in a lot of data. Once the LCAN has reviewed potential indicators, you will want to screen and rank them. Some screening criteria include[v]:

- ✓ What will this indicator tell you about the issue and where it occurs?
- ✓ Will this indicator accurately represent a unique aspect of the issue?
- ✓ Does this indicator communicate well – will people understand its meaning?

- ✓ Is this indicator collected in a valid and reliable way (see below)?
- ✓ What types of breakdowns are available (e.g., by county, zip code, high school, higher education institution, gender, race/ethnicity, age group, socioeconomic status)?
- ✓ Is this indicator collected consistently at regular time periods? This is important to understand trends.
- ✓ What and who are included in this indicator? What and who are not included in this indicator? What are the data limitations of this indicator?

The last item deserves a bit more explanation. It is important that the leadership team understands how data are collected, what is included in each indicator, and who is included. They need to discuss the pros and cons at this stage. If not, then the quantitative data may be perceived as inaccurate. Consider, for example, assessing a college attainment indicator, *the percentage of adults 25-64 with a 2-year degree or higher*. These data are collected by the U.S. Census through a rolling survey and are available for each county. Data can be compared to other counties and to a state average. The data will not, however, be available at all geographies or for discrete years (i.e., 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013). Although the indicator provides consistent and comparable data at the county level, it may not for particular zip codes. It is also more difficult to compare to other indicators that are not calculated each year, but perhaps collected on a rolling three-year average. There is no right answer – **there are no perfect data** – and the leadership team will need to understand the limitations (a good adage to live by here is, "Don't let perfection be the enemy of the good"). There is a worksheet on page 13 of this guide that can assist you in ranking potential indicators.

What does it mean for an indicator to be valid and reliable?[vi]

- Reliability refers to the consistency and stability of measurement by a test.
- Validity indicates the degree to which the test is capable of measuring what it purports to measure.

Figure 2: Florida College Access Network Core Metrics

Dimension/Core Metrics	Indicator	How Measured?	Source
College & Career Readiness *(Are they ready?)*	*Students aspiration for college*	Postsecondary plans of high school completers	Florida Department of Education
	Complete standard high school diploma	Federal high school graduation rate	Florida Department of Education
	Performance in Accelerated Curricula	Percentage of graduates who completed at least one AP, IB, AICE, Dual Enrollment course or *industry certification*	Florida Department of Education
Access & Affordability *(Can they pay for it?)*	*Eligibility for state scholarships*	Percentage of high school graduates eligible for Bright Futures	Florida Department of Education
	College-going rates of high school graduates	Percentage of graduates enrolled in a Florida public postsecondary institution in following fall	Florida Department of Education
	Financial preparedness for postsecondary opportunities	Percentage of 12th graders with completed FAFSA from January 1 to June 30	Florida College Access Network
College Performance *(How are they doing?)*	*Early credit accumulation*	Percentage of high school graduates attending college completing at least 30 credits in first two years	Florida Department of Education
	College graduation rates	Students graduating within 150% time to degree (FTIC, AA Trans, Other Trans)	Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS)
	Number of degrees awarded	Number of and degrees and postsecondary credentials awarded annually year by type and population group	Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS)
Adult Access & Completion *(What about working adults?)*	*Adults with some credit but no degree*	Percentage of adults 25-64 with some college credit but no degree	U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey
	Adult college graduation rate	Six-year graduation rate for students 25 years of age and older	National Student Clearinghouse
Workforce & Economic Outcomes *(Does it pay off?)*	*Median first-year earnings*	Median first-year earnings	Economic Security Report
	Graduate placement	Percentage of graduates employed and/or continuing their education	Economic Security Report
College Attainment ***(Are we making progress toward Goal 2025?)***	***Young adults with a postsecondary credential***	**Percentage of young adults 25-34 with a 2-year degree or higher**	**U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey**
	Adults with a postsecondary credential	**Percentage of adults 25-64 with a 2-year degree or higher**	**U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey**

WORKSHEET: INDICATOR SCREENING

Once the coalition has reviewed potential indicators, you will want to screen and assess them. List one potential indicator per sheet and put the indicator description and the core metric area below. You can then assign points from 1 to 5 as to how well the indicator meets the criteria.

Potential Indicator: ____

Core metric area: ____

Screening criteria	Example: Percentage of adults 25-64 with a 2-year degree or higher from census data	Points 1 (low) to 5 (high)
What will this indicator tell you about the issue and where it occurs?	It allows for comparisons across geographies but it does not capture students who complete credentials.	4
Will this indicator accurately represent a unique aspect of the issue?	It clearly documents college attainment of an associate, bachelor's, or graduate degree.	4
Does this indicator communicate well – will people understand its meaning?	It clearly communicates the degree but people may not be aware it excludes credentials.	4
Is this indicator collected in a valid and reliable way?	Yes	5
Is this indicator available at the geographic level that you want?	Yes, it can be reported at the county level.	5
Is this indicator available for different types of people (race/ethnicity, socioeconomic class, etc.)?	Yes, it can be reported for a number of different subgroups.	5
Is this indicator collected consistently at regular time periods?	Yes	5
Is there a cost associated with obtaining this indicator?	No	5
What and who are included in this indicator? What are the data limitations of this indicator?	It includes all residents of the county, both residents who went through our education system and those who moved into our community. It does not reflect exclusively the success of our education system.	n/a

Step two: Collect the data from secondary sources

Once you have narrowed your list, it's time to collect data. For LCANs in Florida or Michigan, the state organization will assist you in collecting some quantitative data, but there may be additional data your leadership team decides it needs. If you are an LCAN in another state – or another type of coalition – you'll have to access data online or through the agency that collects it, such as the appropriate local, state, or federal government offices.

The following are questions to ask when collecting data from a secondary source[vii]:

- What is the most current year for which data are available?
- For how many years in the past are the data available?
- How often are the data updated?
- When are the data released?
- Are the data available online? Or by request?
- Is there a cost?
- How long will it take to get these data?

What's the difference between a primary and secondary source?

- A primary source just means that the coalition collected the raw data as you will when you interview key stakeholders or conduct focus groups. Primary data isn't just qualitative; the coalition may also collect quantitative primary data.
- A secondary source means that another entity has collected the raw data and provides it to you. Examples are demographics from the census and school or district-level data from your local school district. Again, secondary data can also be qualitative (e.g., a program conducts focus groups with students and shares the report with you).

Step three: Analyze and present the results

Indicators don't have to be analyzed in the traditional sense – the data have already been summarized (e.g., averages and percentages). However, LCANs will still need to analyze them in terms of what the data mean to your community. In many cases, you will want to disaggregate data to understand the issue. Think about what divisions would be helpful, such as age/grade range, gender, geography, race, primary language, and income.

The data should be reviewed and discussed by the entire leadership team. While it may be tempting to have a subcommittee act as a data team, it is very important that the entire leadership team participate in a discussion and dissection of the data[viii].

Preparing your data

Analyzing and presenting the data[ix] are related tasks. The best presentations allow the reader to easily and visually reach their own conclusions. Consider carefully how you will present the data. If the data are confusing or appear incomplete, then the leadership team may not trust or use it. Here are some tips to present the data:

- ✓ Create data tables and graphical representations at this stage. The next page has examples and guidelines for presenting data in this manner.
- ✓ Provide the data so that it is clear, easy to understand, and in "bite size," comprehensible amounts. Provide examples and background information. For example, be able to explain how the federal graduation rate is calculated differently from the state's previous method.
- ✓ A simple technique is to compare the data. You can assess the amount of improvement or decline over time by looking at trend data (i.e. comparing the data to itself). You can also compare data to state rankings, other communities, or to standards or targets.
- ✓ Review your data ahead of time and anticipate questions. If one indicator is moving significantly up (or down), try to determine any evidence as to why so that you will have an answer prior to the presentation.
- ✓ Include method notes in an Appendix: who is in the sample, what is and is not included in the indicator definition, how it is collected, and any limitations.
- ✓ Do not be surprised if participants question the data. If the data does not match their perceptions, then they may dismiss the data. Be prepared to facilitate the discussion instead of presenting data for passive consumption.

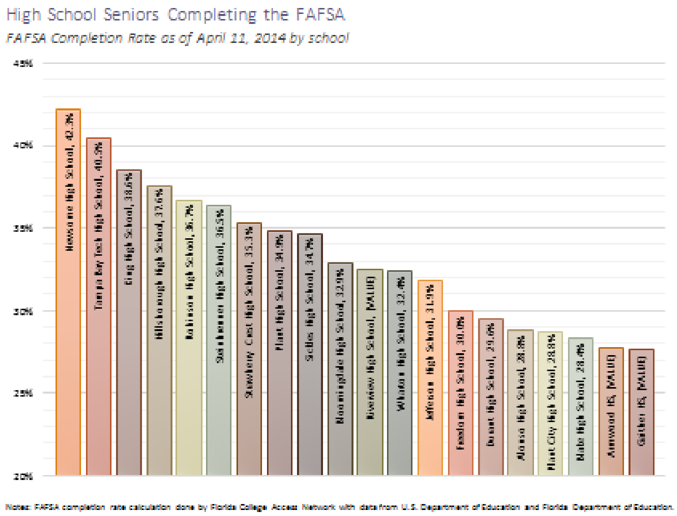
Remember – there are no perfect data! If necessary, look for indicators that document another aspect of the issue.

Preparing your presentation

A few design principles to keep in mind[x]:

- ✓ Keep it simple: Don't use three-dimensional displays, remove extraneous gridlines and decimals, and avoid color gradation.
- ✓ Place the graphic near the associated text and use labeling vs. legends, but don't overload the data with too much text.

Data presentation example



✓ Secondary information or data points should be simplified to a shade of grey to provide emphasis for the main data points.

✓ Be strategic in color schemes and color assignments to place emphasis on the important data. Use a white background with bold colored bars for high contrast.

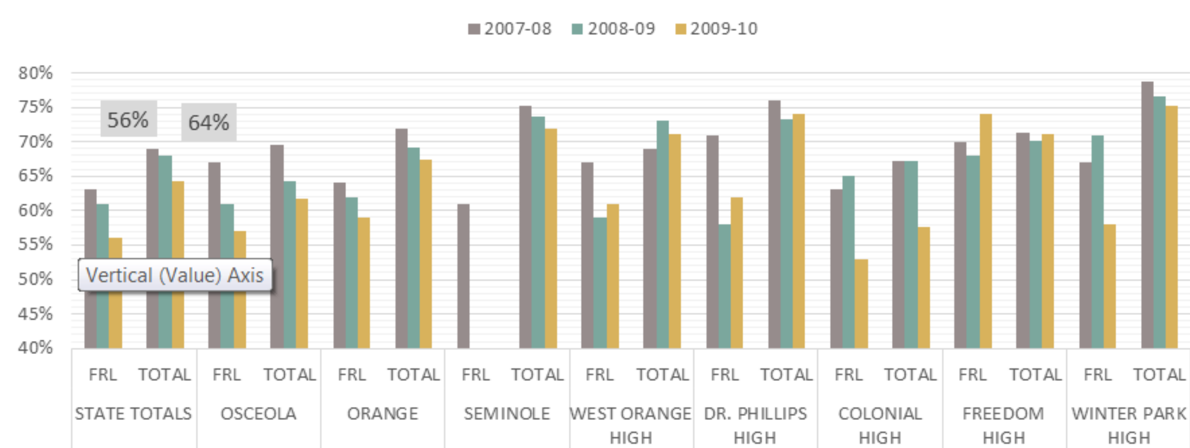
✓ Heavier weights will be interpreted as more important; motion (hovering or dynamic plots) can also provide emphasis.

✓ Arrows can literally point out what it's important.

✓ Graph titles should summarize what the graph communicates. Use additional text to add important details.

Data presentation example

Percentage of high school graduates enrolled in college completing 30 credits in first two years of enrollment by Central Florida counties/districts and local schools with high enrollment



Notes: FRL represents students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. Year reflects year of high school graduation. Students shown are high school students enrolled in a public postsecondary institution within 16 months of graduating. Axis range adjusted. Source: Dept. of Education K-20 Education Data Warehouse.

Facilitating the discussion

Once you have your data in a presentation format that is easily understandable, it is time to work to understand what the data are telling you. A sample agenda is provided on the following page so that it can be copied easily. The agendas cover all necessary agenda items; you will likely need at least three meetings to complete the entire discussion. You may need more if your group has many questions or comments on the data.

<u>WORKSHEET: SAMPLE AGENDAS FOR DATA DISCUSSION</u>

See next page.

Meeting One

I. Welcome and introductions

II. Overview on indicators to be explored at each meeting

III. Data presentation

Your data presentation may include data tables and graphs as well as the items listed on page 15 (e.g., anticipated questions, pros and cons of indicators).

- Demographics and community metrics
- College and career readiness
- Access and affordability

IV. Data discussion: What data were consistent with your perceptions? What data were better than you hoped? What surprised you? Why did it surprise you?

V. Opportunity to request any need-to-have (rather than like-to-know) data

Adjourn

Meeting Two

I. Welcome and introductions

II. Data presentation

Your data presentation may include data tables and graphs as well as the items listed on page 15 (e.g., anticipated questions, pros and cons of indicators).

- College performance
- Adult access and completion
- Workforce and economic outcomes
- College graduation and attainment

III. Data discussion: What data were consistent with your perceptions? What data were better than you hoped? What surprised you? Why did it surprise you?

IV. Opportunity to request any need-to-have (rather than like-to-know) data

Adjourn

Meeting Three

I. Welcome and introductions

II. Data presentation

- Need-to-know data requested in prior meetings

III. Summary of meetings' data discussion

IV. What are our 3-5 conclusions about the quantitative data?

Adjourn

Retaining Data For Future Use

Now that you have discussed and interpreted the data, it is often helpful to document any summaries, reflections, or understandings of the data and retain these and the data for future processes. Data collected here are broad and help the LCAN understand the context of their community. You will later use a subset of these data to help you plan your strategies and include on your data dashboard[4]. This limited number of indicators will help your LCAN track the common goals and progress, holding yourselves accountable for the change you want in your community.

[4] See *Charting the Course* for a description of the data dashboard.

Part Three: How do we map our local assets?

An asset map is an integral part of a community scan, and an important piece of the collective impact framework described in *Charting the Course*. For the purposes of this toolkit, we have narrowed the focus of this section to identifying and mapping services to better align with step 2 of the Michigan College Access Network's guide. Many community scans, however, take a broader approach and gather data beyond programs and services, such as collecting the perspectives of multiple stakeholders (e.g., students, parents, policymakers, intermediaries, technical assistance providers, grantmakers) and on other aspects of the system (e.g., context, policies, connections between stakeholders). If you are not an LCAN working with the Florida College Access Network or the Michigan College Access Network, see Appendices A – C for information on how to advance a broader approach into your work. The goal of this section, however, is to help you learn about, inventory, and take stock of the relevant programs, services, and resources in your community.

Step One
- Document existing stakeholders and supports

Step Two
- Conduct interviews to gather information

Step Three
- Analyze your data to create your asset map

In order to create your asset map you will need to complete the three steps noted in the graphic. This section will walk you through those steps.

As you begin your asset map, it is helpful to consider what and who should be included. You'll want to include at least the following sectors:

- Higher education
- Community or school-based organizations
- K-12 education
- Funders that provide relevant programs or services (such as scholarship programs)

You also need to consider what – and who – **shouldn't** be included in these sectors. Although it is tempting to include all organizations with programs that can benefit students and families, only include those that directly provide programs and supports within your LCAN's scope. For example, food banks are an important resource for low-income families, but they do not directly support college access and success. Similarly, early childhood interventions provided by a local school may have an impact on college access and success; however, the connection is too far from the end goal of college degree attainment. Limiting the information you collect to direct supports will help you stay focused on college access and success and also expedite analysis.

For these programs and services, you'll want to learn as much as possible about all the different types of relevant programs and support services directly to students or their families. For example, what organizations provide academic support, such as tutoring? Which organizations help students with college applications and financial assistance? Do these organizations provide support to a specific subgroup or cohort of students? Figure 3 provides a listing and examples.

Figure 3: Support services to include

Support service category	***Potential Examples***
College/career aspirations	*-Career pathways exploration and exposure* *-Adult mentoring* *-Campus visits* *-Field trips to local employers* *-STEM camps*
College/career academic readiness	*-Tutoring* *-AP/IB/dual enrollment programs* *-ACT/SAT prep courses*
College application/enrollment	*-College Application Week* *-College Signing Day* *-Texting project (reminding students of deadlines)* *-Mentoring* *-Summer Melt program*
College affordability	*-College Goal Sunday/FAFSA completion initiatives* *-Scholarship programs for students in geography* *-Scholarship databases/clearinghouses* *-Need-based aid programs* *-Financial literacy programs with student aid and college budgeting component*
College persistence	*-Freshmen "near peer" mentors* *-Tutoring* *-Student counseling services* *-Campus coach*
Working-age adults	*-Competency-based credits* *-Employer-based credentialing programs* *-ID of adults with some college but no degree, to reengage them in degree completion*
Attainment	*-Reverse transfer programs* *-High school-based industry certifications* *-"Take 15, graduate in 4" initiatives on college campuses*

Step one: Generate a list of existing stakeholders and supports

Where can you find information about organizations, programs, and resources? There are three complementary methods. The first is to brainstorm among the members of your LCAN. The second is to consult reference guides. The third is what's known as a "snowball technique."

1. **Conduct a brainstorming session.**

The first method is to **conduct a brainstorming session** at one of your LCAN meetings or convene a meeting with known stakeholders to pick everyone's collective brains about the organizations, programs and services of which they are aware. Put each sector type and each support service type on a separate flip chart page and tape them up around the room. Then, provide each attendee with a pack of sticky notes. Ask them to put <u>one</u> organization/program on each sticky note and then place it on the appropriate flip chart. Note that some organizations may offer several programs and thus be listed in multiple categories, and that's okay. For example, a local university might offer campus visits and summer programs to high school youth (aspiration), financial aid workshops (affordability), a variety of supports for current college students (persistence), collaboratives with local industry to provide focused workforce credentialing (working-age adults), and reverse transfer programs (attainment). Attendees may want to do some "homework" before the meeting by consulting their contact lists or calendars to help prompt their memories and come prepared with lists of programs and services. At the end of the session, you should have the start of your asset map!

2. **Conduct additional research.**

The next step is to double check and flesh out your list by consulting **published lists and groups** such as:

- Conferences of educational – or educational support – organizations.
- Groups of organizations that serve middle and high school students. Each group will use different names (e.g., Human Services Network, Providers of Out of School Time, Agency Council), but you are looking for groups whose members share a common interest in education or youth.
- MoveEd.org
- NCAN College Access Directory
- Physical or virtual bulletin boards and community calendar-type listings.
- The school district may have lists of programs offered to students by outside organizations, a college access department, or college/career high school counselors.
- Local higher education institutions may list "student success" programs and services, including those offered in collaboration with other institutions.
- Town directories and community websites.
- United Way's 211 Information and Referral System, which contains information on non-profit organizations in many communities.

- Your statewide college access network

3. **Ask identified organizations about additional programs and resources.**

The third way is to **ask those organizations** you talk to about other programs and resources you might not have yet identified. For example, you can ask, "Who else should we talk to? What other organizations should we include?" These questions are included in the interview guide on page 26.

Step two: Conduct interviews to collect data

Once you have your initial asset list, it is time to conduct interviews with the organizations on the list to more fully understand the supports for college access and success in your community. Interviews should serve the dual purpose of building relationships and collecting data. A few tips to keep in mind:

- Don't draw conclusions until all data are in: What may seem to be a trend after three interviews may not be after 13 interviews.

- Be flexible and inclusive: Have a plan, but revise it if necessary.

- Only include those organizations that directly provide one of the support services on page 22 (and reproduced in Appendix D for easy reference). Otherwise, you will end up with too large a list of only tangentially-related programs and thus find it difficult to identify gaps.

- Expect and plan for this stage to take time.

HOW DO WE CONDUCT AN INTERVIEW?

The steps to preparing for a good interview are as follows[xi]:

- Decide in advance on the questions you want to ask and create a "question guide"—a list of questions that you want answered fully by each interviewee. Sample questions for LCANs are located below. If your group is not an LCAN, look to published research in your subject area to find sample questions.

- Obtain entry. In most cases, it is beneficial if a member of the leadership team or another supporter of LCAN can make the introduction to the potential interviewee.

- Create a standard “script” for setting up interviews. When you contact someone to schedule an interview, make sure you

    - briefly summarize the coalition and community scan project,
    - state what you hope to learn from them and how you’ll use the information,
    - explain why they were chosen to participate, and
    - note how long the interview will take, scheduling considerations, and logistics.

- Consider whether you will take notes or use a tape recorder. A tape recorder is more accurate and generates better quality data, but can take additional time to transcribe.

And finally, a few thoughts on conducting the interview:

- Provide a quick recap of the highlights from your standard script regarding the purpose for the conversation, your rationale for speaking with her, the length of the interview, and if you use one, ask her permission to use a tape recorder.

- Build trust by telling the interviewee whether their comments will be attributed to them. Because this work has the dual purpose of building relationships and because leadership team will be analyzing the data, you cannot promise anonymity; however, you can (and should) promise confidentiality.

- Make sure to get answers to all the questions listed in the question guide. If you don’t, you won’t have all the data you need to complete your asset map, which could negatively impact your ability to understand the community and set collective goals and strategies.

What’s the difference between confidential and anonymous?

- When the term “anonymous” is used, a person gives no personal information about herself and should not be asked for specific personal information that would give her identify away.

- When the term “confidential” is used, the person gives some personal information about himself to whoever is conducting the interview; however, the information is NOT given to anyone outside of those directly involved in the community scan.

WORKSHEET: SAMPLE QUESTIONS

This section provides sample questions for the interviews; depending on your community, you may need to adapt the questions or add others.

Introduction/relationship building: Briefly summarize your LCAN, state what you hope to learn from the interviewee and how you'll use the information, and explain why the interviewee was chosen to participate. A sample script is below, although you will need to modify it for various interviewees.

As you know, I am participating in Duval County's Local College Access Network. Our goal is to increase college access and success in Duval County. We are interested in learning about all of the college access and success programs available in our community and where we might partner to increase college access and success. Our leadership team will use the information from these interviews in our planning process. I know your organization offers programs to increase access, and I'm hoping you can tell me more about them.

Sample Questions:

1. What is your organization's mission and vision?
2. What are your organization's strategic goals pertaining to college and career readiness, access, and attainment for the next five years?
3. What services or programs do you provide (reference the list in Appendix D if needed)? Only include those that are a core function or directly address the support service area.

For each service or program listed:
-Who do you serve in this program or service?
-What are the eligibility criteria, if any?
-How many are served in this program/by this service?
-Where is the program/service provided?
-What geographies do you serve?
-Are you able to meet the demand for your services? Why or why not?

4. How do your clients hear about and enroll in your services or programs?

5. Where and how do you promote your programs and services?

6. Who else or what other organizations do you partner with to provide this service or program? Network with? What groups do you participate in?

What other organizations, programs and services should we include in our asset map?

Organizing the information

As you talk to interviewees, you'll want to complete an information sheet that collects the same type of information on each of your community's assets. The worksheet below provides an example. You should revise this worksheet to meet your specific needs and preferred recoding method (e.g., directly into an Excel worksheet, hand-written notes, online database, check boxes).

<u>WORKSHEET: INFORMATION TO COLLECT</u>

Date of Interview:_______________________________

Organization: ___________________________________

Sector represented: ____

Interviewee name and title:____

Mission and vision:

Strategic goals for the next five years:

Services:

What support services do they offer (check all categories that apply)?

- ❑ College and career aspirations
- ❑ College and career academic readiness
- ❑ College application and enrollment
- ❑ College affordability
- ❑ College persistence/completion
- ❑ Working-age adults
- ❑ Attainment

For each support service, document the following. Repeat the table as necessary to address all services or programs offered.

First support service (name of program): ____

Category(ies) of services provided (from list above)

Who is served	
Eligibility criteria	
How many are served	
Where programs/services are provided	
Geographies served	
Ability to meet demand	

Second support service (if applicable): ____

Who is served	
Eligibility criteria	
How many are served	
Where programs/services are provided	
Geographies served	
Ability to meet demand	

Third support service (if applicable): ____

Who is served	
Eligibility criteria	
How many are served	
Where programs/services are provided	
Geographies served	
Ability to meet demand	

Fourth support service (if applicable): ____

Who is served	
Eligibility criteria	
How many are served	
Where programs/services are provided	
Geographies served	
Ability to meet demand	

How do clients hear about and enroll in services? Where and how is the program/service promoted?

Who else or what other organizations does this organization partner with to provide this service or program? Network with?

What other organizations and programs does the interviewee recommend to be included in the asset map?

Step three: Analyze your findings to create your asset map

PREPARING YOUR DATA FOR ANALYSIS

Once you have identified your assets and completed your information sheets, it is time to prepare the data for analysis by the leadership team. The easiest way is to create an Excel spreadsheet where each program or service has its own a row and each piece of information from the information sheet is in a separate column. This allows you to easily sort by, for example, stakeholder type, core support service, or geography. An example is shown below. For the more narrative questions – mission and vision, strategic goals, and partners – you can add columns to your spreadsheet or use a Word document for easier reading. You may want to add a column to include zip codes or census tracts of service coverage if you plan to geographically map your data at a later time. Remember that where the organization is located may not always be where services are provided or represent their catchment area (for example, the neighborhoods or zip codes from which a particular school's students are drawn).

Figure 4: Sample Excel spreadsheet

Organization	Sector	Service	Who	Eligibility	How many	Where	Geographies	Meet demand	Outreach
Organization A	Higher Ed	Aspirations – campus visit and summer programs	High school students from Title I schools	Students from families with low income	500	On campus	Three counties	No, there is a waiting list each year	School counselors
Organization A	Higher Ed	Affordability – financial aid workshops	All currently admitted and enrolled students	All students of institution	1,000	On campus	Three counties	Yes	School website, financial aid office, student housing
Organization B	Community-based organization	STEM camps	Middle school girls	Students from Title I schools	225	Five middle schools	XXX county	Yes	Teachers and administrators from the schools

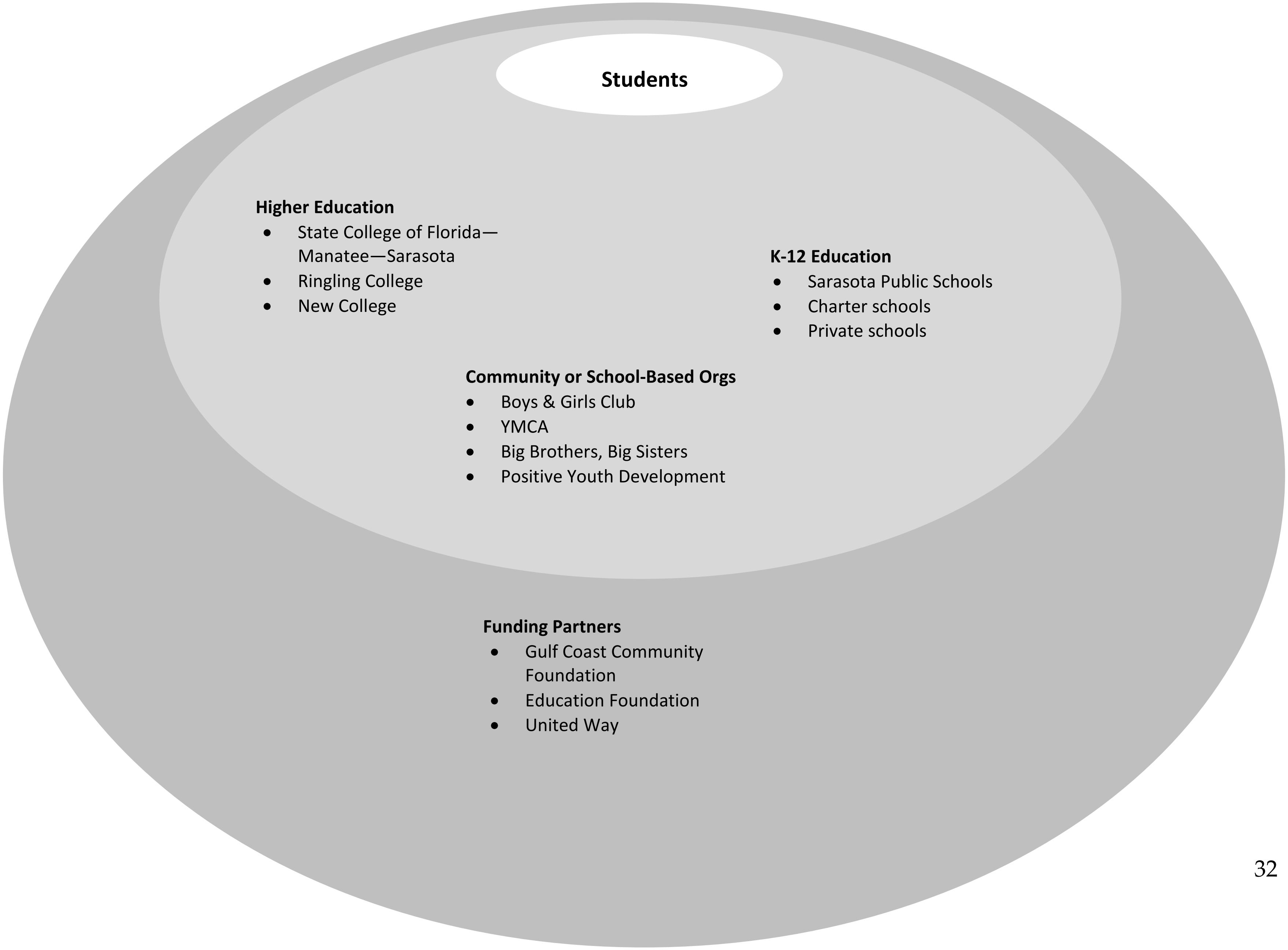
You'll then want to prepare the following data summaries to determine the extent to which each sector and each service is represented. There are three ways to do this. The first is a simple table with the sector in the first column and the organizations listed (individually or summarized, depending on the size of your community) in the next column. A third column could include support services or geography covered. An example is below.

Figure 5: Sample simple table for organizing information

Sectors	Organizations	Services	Geographies
Higher Education	Organization A Organization B	Campus visit and summer programs Financial aid workshops	Available regionally (three counties)
Community-based organization	Organization C Organization D Organization E	STEM camps Tutoring	Available mostly in one county, with limited services in the other two counties in the region.

The second way to do a data summary is to create a visual that depicts sectors graphically, such as the one on the next page (Figure 6).

Figure 6: Sample visualization of sector representation



The third way to create a summary is to create a color-coded matrix. The example below utilizes colors to show where there are high levels of those served (green) vs. low levels (red). It's easy to see the gaps at a glance, but you will need to generate the ratings first using the data that you've collected.

Figure 7: Sample visualization of sector and service coverage

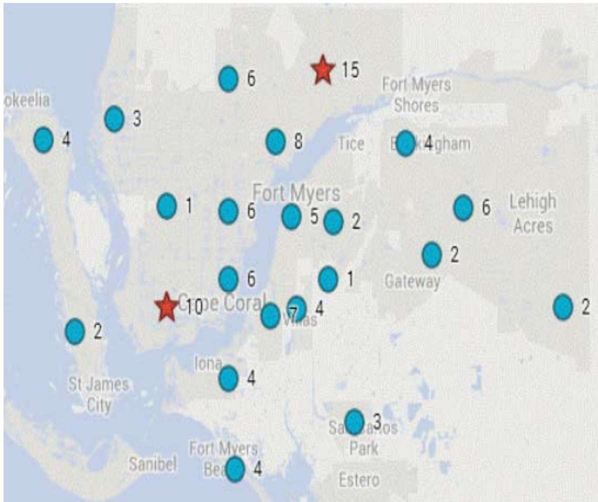
	Higher Education	Community or school-based organizations	K-12 Education	Funding partners
College/career aspirations	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**
College/career academic readiness	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**No**
College application/enrollment	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**No**
College affordability	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**
College persistence	**Yes**	**Yes**	**No**	**No**
Working-age adults	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	**No**
Attainment	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**

Another level of analysis is to construct a summary chart to show to what extent each support service is provided. This analysis needs to summarize – by support service – how many individuals are served. An example of a matrix is below. For cell entries, you will need to balance the need for detail with the ability to quickly grasp the information. The more summary your data, the easier it is to absorb and analyze, but you will lose details in the process.

Figure 8: Sample visualization of service coverage

Support service category	Overview	Who is served?	How many are served?	What geographies are covered?
College and career aspirations	Local high schools focus on career exposure but less programming exists for campus visits and field trips to local employers. Two high schools have a STEM focus. Adult mentoring occurs, but not with a specific focus on college and career aspirations.	Primarily high school students; two high schools have a whole-school STEM focus with an emphasis on college/career aspirations. Other high schools provide discrete programs to targeted students, some at-risk.	2,845 in the two STEM high schools, 475 in other high schools combined.	County-wide for high school programs, although both STEM-focused high schools are in South County.
College application and enrollment	No programs available	None	None	None

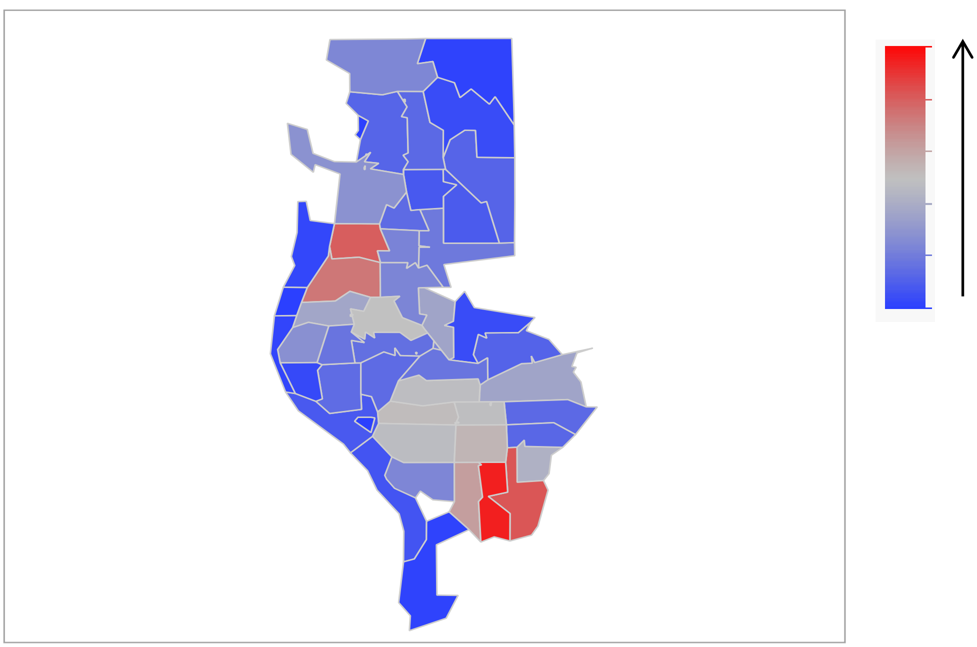
Figure 9: Sample visualization of geographic coverage



Finally, you'll want one or more maps to demonstrate to what extent each geography is served. This analysis summarizes – by geography such as zip code or neighborhood – what services are provided. It is a different way to sort the information in the second data summary. You can use a matrix like the one above or present the information in a map format. For example, the graphic to the left has educational programs and supports noted with a circle or star, while educational attainment is coded in grey at the zip code level. This was created using Google maps.

The map below is an example of the number of people served by programs, by geography, where red would represent more services and blue would represent fewer services.

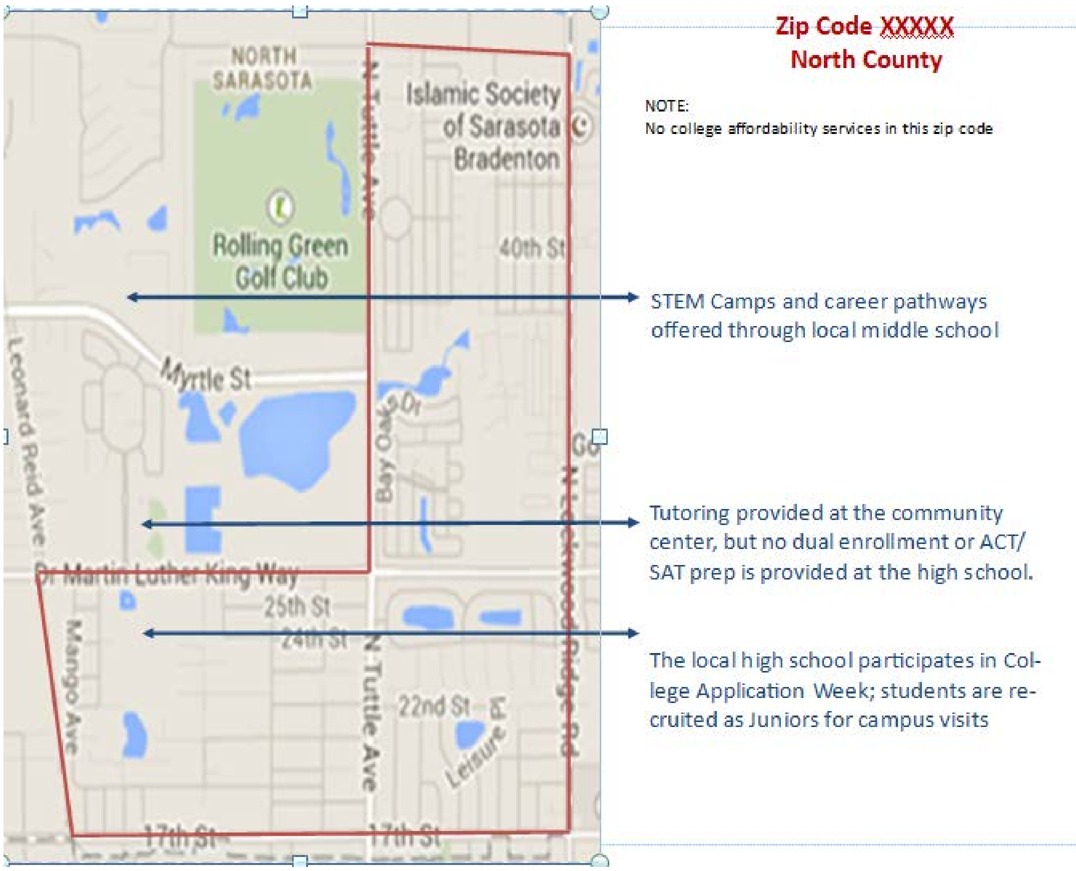
Figure 10: Sample visualization of service coverage



*Not actual data – for descriptive purposes only

Another option might be to create maps for each zip code. You can show what services are provided, and where. This example was created using Microsoft Publisher. This map is for descriptive purposes only and does not represent actual services.

Figure 11: Sample visualization of geographic coverage



*Not actual data – for descriptive purposes only

Tableau, Google products, Many Eyes, and Bing all have free options for creating maps. For an excellent resource on data visualization as well as a listing of data visualization software – along with the cost – see the reference to *New Directions* in Appendix C. To see examples, go to www.NDEdataviz.com and choose Chapter 8.

Data discussion

Now that you've completed your data summaries, it is time to draw conclusions! This step will take some time, as your leadership team will need to have a series of discussions to finalize their thoughts. Prior to the meeting, provide the leadership team with an agenda and the three data summaries. Be prepared to provide or reference your detailed data from your Excel file.

Potential questions for your analysis discussion:

1. What gaps in services exist? Where is there duplication? How much overlap exists between programs and services? What would need to change to fill gaps or reduce duplication?

2. Which sectors are engaged? Which sectors are not? How many different stakeholders are working with students and families? What would need to change to engage other sectors?

3. Even if you have stakeholders in a category and/or a type of support service being provided, does your quantitative data suggest there are still gaps? Do services need to be provided differently to meet needs?

4. Where is there alignment between the stakeholders, the programs, and needed services like tutoring, mentoring, financial support, etc.? Are there examples of alliances or partnerships or do most organizations operate their programs in isolation?

5. What are our 3- 5 conclusions?

As discussed earlier, learning about the support services in your community, inventorying those services, and taking stock of what your community has is an important step. An expanded asset map, however, involves taking a critical look at the landscape of stakeholders in the college access community and assessing their individual and collective reach, scope, relationships, and abilities. This exercise is much more than compiling the inventory list. It is about really understanding what is happening in the community from a policy, service, operational, and stakeholder point of view. If your organization is ready to take that step, see Appendices A - C. Otherwise, you might consider incorporating the steps discussed in the appendices at a later date, as your LCAN continues to refine its work. If you take this approach, then you would add the following question to your analysis discussion:

What policy issues, if any, are growing evident? This could be at the institutional level (e.g., school district, state college) or state or federal level (e.g., inadequate need-based student aid)

Part Four: How do we pull it all together?

At this stage, you will want to synthesize the quantitative and qualitative data and document your conclusions to lay the groundwork for choosing strategies. (This corresponds to Step 8 in the MCAN guidebook). Analyzing data precedes action because it allows you to:

- Develop a clear picture of to what extent the community supports its residents in accessing and succeeding in postsecondary education.

- Identify strengths and untapped assets of a community and ways to mobilize them.

- Ensure that your strategies will build on existing assets and address gaps rather than be duplicative.

This step will take some time, as your leadership team will need to have a series of discussions to finalize their thoughts. You'll need to send meeting materials and your agenda in advance so that representatives are prepared for an in-depth conversation. Listed below are the materials to send and possible questions. Again, this discussion may take multiple meetings.

Prior to the meeting, provide the leadership team

- An agenda for the meeting
- Conclusions from Part Two, the quantitative data analysis step
- Conclusions from Part Three, the asset map step

Potential questions for your analysis agenda are as follows:

1. What were the issues that consistently surfaced as important?

2. What are the themes across sectors and services?

3. Across all sectors and services, where are the greatest needs identified?

4. Are there policy and environmental factors to consider in addition to gaps?

5. What do the data mean? To answer question 5, you'll need to consider the following:

- What is causing this to happen? What are the contributing factors?
- Why does the data look the way it does?
- But why? And why here?

6. What are our conclusions?

Appendix

Appendix A: Asset mapping as part of a broader community scan

Stakeholders identified during your asset mapping process can include individuals; organizations; non-profits; local, state and national governmental agencies; for-profits; and elected and appointed office holders. The inventory and mapping exercise is greatly enhanced when approached from a broad perspective: Just because a stakeholder isn't physically located in your community doesn't necessarily mean they don't – or won't – have an impact on your goals and strategies. Start compiling your stakeholder list with a wider geographic outlook and then narrow as you learn more about each stakeholder.

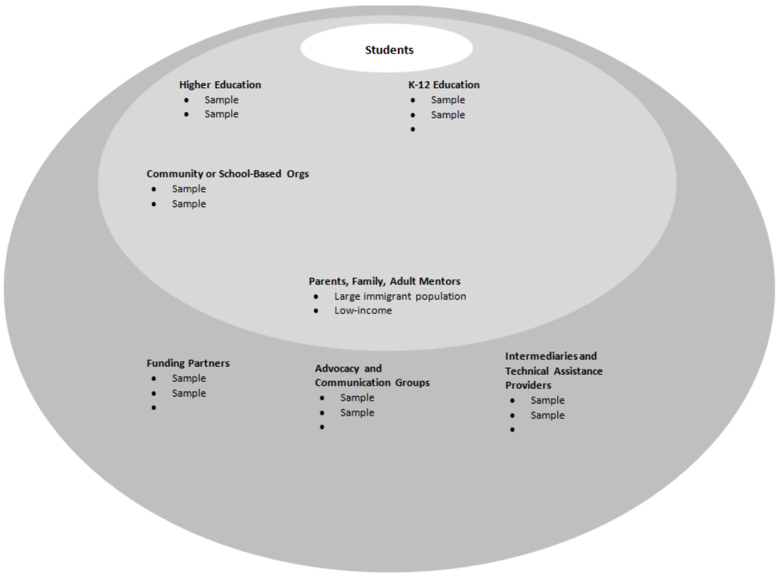
Earlier we listed the sectors and supports that are important to include. Although the support service categories remain the same, for a broader listing, you'll want to include all of the following sectors:

- Students, parents, family, adult members
- Higher education
- Community or school-based organizations
- K-12 education
- Funding partners
- Research organizations
- Advocacy and communications groups
- Intermediaries and technical assistance providers
- Business community
- Policy providers

As stated above, think broadly and creatively in identifying stakeholders. There are the more obvious individual and organizational stakeholders – students, teachers, parents, guidance and job counselors, school administrators, community colleges, tech schools, and colleges and universities. There are also nonprofit community-based organizations; local, regional and national associations; workforce development programs; libraries; city and/or regional leaders; and political bodies like city and council councils.

Creative thinking will likely identify additional alternative stakeholders. These stakeholders might include the business community, business and investment groups, technology providers, policymakers at all levels, cities, counties, and local agencies providing the services or set policies effect your core issue – transportation choices, health services, disability services, language assistance, housing, child care, local law enforcement, neighborhood groups, state and federal political and policy programs, state and federal agencies.

As with the prior configuration, it may be helpful to organize these other players in relation to the key beneficiary of the work. For LCANs, the key beneficiary is the student. Some sectors will be nearer and some sectors will be farther away in terms of their relationship to the students.



It's going to be important to think about not just what organizations are active in promoting your issue and what support services are being offered, but also how these stakeholders are working together. Consider not only service gaps, but also linkage or system gaps. System elements to include: collaborations; information sharing; linkages between services; and access to services.

Depending upon the scope of your work, there are several important questions that will drive your asset mapping process.

- Who are the stakeholders in these efforts?
- Are there other organizations working to reform the current landscape? If so, how does their work align with your community work? If not, how would that affect your community group?
- Who or what may be positively (or negatively) affected by your community group?
- What services are these stakeholders providing and what assets are they deploying or making available?
- What outside programs, supporters, or resources are operating in the community that could affect your objectives?
- What is the reach, level of funding, reputation, and values of these organizations?

In an expanded asset map, the steps are as follows:

- Step One: Conduct searches to document assets: key players, existing programs, and supporters
- Step Two: Conduct interviews with a subset of your asset list
- Step Three: Conduct focus groups with parents and students
- Step Four: Analyze the qualitative data

Earlier in this document, we provided the "how to" of conducting searches and documenting programs. Rather than interview all the program representatives, however, you may wish to use published resources and phone calls to complete your program information sheets. Spend your time on the more in-depth qualitative interviews with a subset of your asset list. This section provides guidance on interviews.

HOW MANY INTERVIEWS SHOULD WE CONDUCT?

There are no rules for determining the "right" number of interviews to collect. You'll likely use criterion sampling[xii], where the criteria are a mix of sectors, support services, and geographies. As you complete interviews, however, you'll want to revisit the criterion to see if any areas have emerged that should be explored. You'll need to conduct enough interviews to have at least one for each sector type, geography, and support service type. You'll also want to ensure a mix of perspectives: leaders, administrators, and program staff. Because you won't have interviewed program staff if you use this approach in lieu of that outlined in Part Three, you will want to include their perspective.

Using your asset listing, identify your largest stakeholders (school system, local colleges, large youth development organizations) as well as any sectors, geographies, or support services that are underserved. For example, if there is only one organization identified as providing tutoring, you will want to make sure they are included. The worksheet below can help you plan your interviews. The first few lines contain examples of what this might look like. Depending on the size of your community, you may wish to expand the worksheet columns to include individual sector types, geographies, perspectives, and support services so that you can use check-off boxes and see your coverage "at a glance."

WORKSHEET: WHO DO WE TALK TO?

Organization	Sector	Geography	Perspective	Support services
XXX Community College	Higher education	Regional	Administrator	College application and financial assistance
YMCA	Community or school-based organization	South County	Program staff	Academic support
XXX Foundation	Funding partner	Regional	Leader	College affordability
Chamber of Commerce	Business community	County-wide	Administrator	College/career aspirations

Questions asked in this phase allow you to gain information beyond that available in public or promotional documents. Let your questions be ones that allow you to get a look at that individual or organization's vision toward driving college access, the roadblocks they have identified, and perceptions of their place in the bigger college access system. These qualitative data will also allow you identify which of these stakeholders have a desire to expand their participation and/or are willing to work toward collaborative relationships that will create meaningful and lasting partnerships.

Remember, these qualitative data are always formed from opinion and personal bias, position, politics, historical legacies of operation. Sample questions are included below to help you put together a list of questions. While consistency in questioning is important to get solid data, don't let a "list" of questions get in the way of real listening to the answers given. You may need to adapt your questions after the initial few interviews to broaden or revise your inquiry. Depending on your community, you may need to adapt the questions.

WORKSHEET: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Introduction/relationship building: Briefly summarize the project; state what you hope to learn from them and how you'll use the information (i.e., "We are looking to learn about the programs and services currently in existence and develop partnerships"); and explain why they were chosen to participate.

Questions:

What is your organization's mission and vision?

What are your organization's strategic goals for the next five years?

What are the barriers or challenges keeping your organization from reaching your goals?

What resources are committed to college access and attainment (e.g., staff, funding)?

Considering the role your organization pays in college access and attainment, are you (or others) able to meet demand for college access and success?

Who else or what other organizations do you partner with? Network with? What groups do you participate in? Who do you share information with?

In your opinion, in our community, what is currently working well in increasing college access and attainment? What isn't working?

Who else should we include in our asset map? Who else should we talk to?

PREPARING THE INTERVIEW FOR ANALYSIS

After the interview, prepare a contact summary sheet[xiii]. The contact summary sheet should include the geographic location, sector, and other items related to your sampling strategy. It should also include main issues or themes, and then a summary, by question area or topic. The last section should document any thoughts on the system: how stakeholders interact with each other and with students and families, what gaps exist, and where alignment exists between stakeholders.

WORKSHEET: CONTACT SUMMARY SHEET

Sector: ______________________________________
Geography: __________________________________
Position at organization: ______________________

1. What were the main issues or themes of this interview?

2. Question summary:

Mission and strategic goals	
Barriers or challenges to achieving goals	
What assets do they deploy? What are used, underutilized, or stretched?	
Services summary: what's provided /what would they like to provide?	
Gaps: capacity or geography	
How do they increase access?	
Partners, collaborators, etc.	
What's working?	
What isn't?	

3. Analytical summary:
In this section, summarize your thoughts on the following:

a. How does this organization fit into the continuum of college access and success? What other organizations are their partners and collaborators? Where are there linkages?
b. How does this organization interact with students and parents? How do they conduct outreach, enroll clients, and provide services?
c. Where is there alignment between this organization and our LCAN?

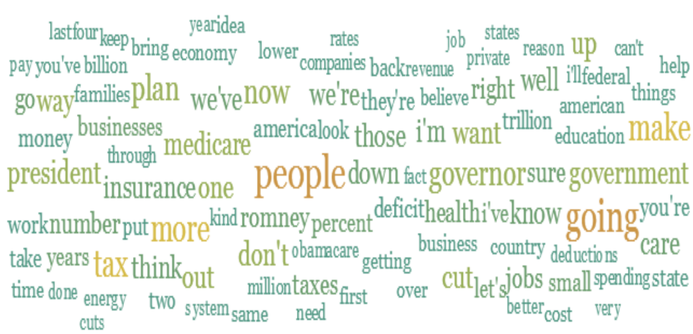
Depending on the number of interviews conducted, you may be able to use the contact summary sheets to analyze the data. For most communities, however, you will need to summarize your contact sheets. Again, starting with a simple Excel spreadsheet like the one on page 30 will allow you to sort your findings by sector and by service. Use one row for each service and one column for each item in the contact summary sheet. You will need the following data summaries:

- Sector summary. For this summary, you will want to summarize each question, by sector. For each sector, list the mission and strategic goals, barriers or challenges, service summary, demand gaps, access issues, partners and collaborators, and what's working/what isn't. Summarize based on prevalence (i.e., what barriers did you hear most often?) or identify no more than three to five themes.

- Support services summary. For this summary, you'll complete the same type of information as above but by support service. For each support service type, list the barriers or challenges, service summary, demand gaps, access issues, partners and collaborators, and what's working/what isn't. Summarize based on prevalence (i.e., what barriers did you hear most often) or identify no more than three to five themes.

- Thematic summary. For this summary, document the analytical summary items from the contact summary sheet by organization. Summarize your findings about how stakeholders interact with each other and with students and families, what network gaps were identified, or where is there alignment. Summarize based on prevalence (i.e., what barriers did you hear most often) or identify no more than three to five themes.

For some groups and communities, tables or narratives will be appropriate presentation formats. For others, you may wish to prepare one of the following to share your data[xiv]:



- A Word cloud like the one to the left.

- A color-coded matrix similar to the one on page 33.

Appendix B: How to solicit input from parents and students

Generally, if there is a source of quantitative data on parent or student experiences or perceptions relating to college access and success, it should be included in your quantitative data. Unfortunately, such data do not exist in many communities, but if your group has the resources to do so, you can gather data on parent and student perspectives through focus groups, interviews, and/or surveys. This section provides a brief overview of focus groups; see the next page for additional resources. You could also include parents and students in your interview process. If so, consider those who represent others: President of the Parent-Teacher Association, Student Council Leaders in K-12 or post-secondary, etc.

A focus group is a small group interview. It is not a problem-solving or decision-making session.[xv] The goal of a focus group is to generate high quality interview data within a social context. Focus groups are resource- effective and when done well, enhance data quality as participants provide checks and balances on each other. Focus group considerations are listed below.

Before you begin:[xvi]

- You will need both a skilled facilitator and a person who will record participants' comments.
- Decide who should be invited or find a group that can host your focus group (i.e., a school advisory committee, neighborhood meeting, youth group).
- Decide about incentives for participation. Incentives can include a donation to a group (e.g., the PTA or nonprofit hosting the session) or payment to the individual participants.
- Decide on meeting particulars: the number of group sessions to hold, the length of the session, and the day, time, and place. Consider providing light refreshments or food.
- Prepare your question guide. See the next page for resources on how to create questions.
- Recruit your members. Invite no more than 12, as this will likely generate attendance of 8 to 10. When inviting members, tell them why they were invited, as this can increase participation.

For additional information, see Section 6 of the University of Kansas Community Toolbox[5]. The section includes information on how to run a focus group, questions to ask, etc.

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[5]http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/assessment/assessing-community-needs-and-resources/conduct-focus-groups/main

Appendix C: Resources for community scans

CADCA. (2010). *Assessment primer: Analyzing the community, identifying problems and setting goals*. Alexandria, VA: CADCA National Coalition Institute.

Michigan College Access Network. (2013). *Charting the Course: A community's guide for increasing educational attainment through the lens of collective impact*. Retrieved April 15, 2014 from http://www.micollegeaccess.org/our-network/lcan-guidebook

Kansas University Work Group for Community Health and Development (n.d.). *Community Tool Box*. Retrieved May 2, 2104 from http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/assessment/assessing-community-needs-and-resources/conduct-focus-groups/main

The American Evaluation Association published a two-part guide to data visualization in the journal *New Directions for Evaluation* (number 139 and number 140). Several chapters may be of interest:

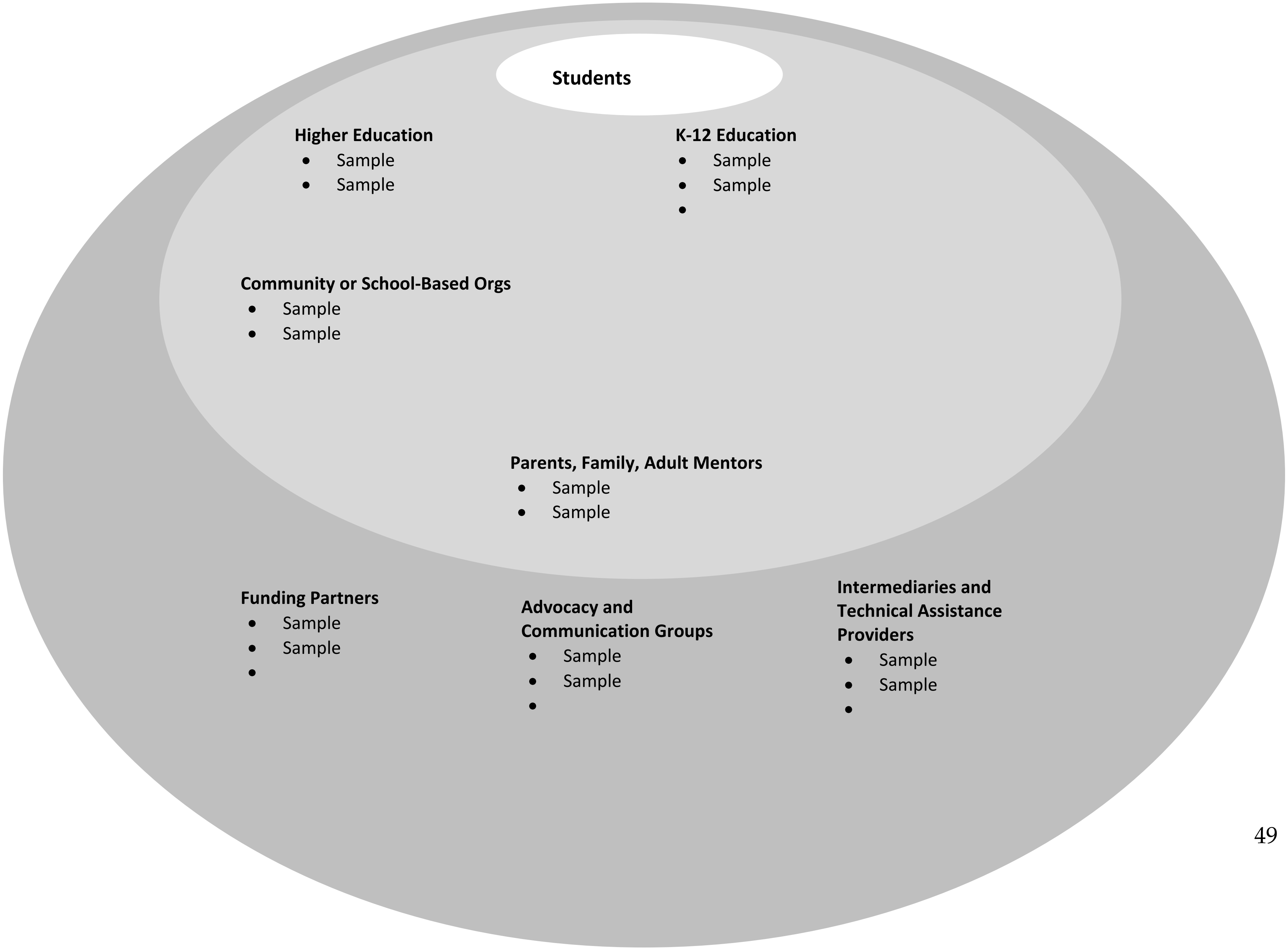
Data visualization, part 1, chapter 2, pages 43-45 for maps of educational services
Data visualization, part 1, chapter 4, all pages, for a listing of data visualization tools
Data visualization, part 2, chapter 8, all pages, for a listing of mapping tools

Examples can be seen at www.NDEdataviz.com

Appendix D: Basic list of support services (not exhaustive)

Support service category	***Potential Examples***
College/career aspirations	*-Career pathways exploration and exposure* *-Adult mentoring* *-Campus visits* *-Field trips to local employers* *-STEM camps*
College/career academic readiness	*-Tutoring* *-AP/IB/dual enrollment programs* *-ACT/SAT prep courses*
College application/enrollment	*-College Application Week* *-College Signing Day* *-Texting project (reminding students of deadlines)* *-Mentoring* *-Summer Melt program*
College affordability	*-College Goal Sunday/FAFSA completion initiatives* *-Scholarship programs for students in geography* *-Scholarship databases/clearinghouses* *-Need-based aid programs* *-Financial literacy programs with student aid and college budgeting component*
College persistence	*-Freshmen "near peer" mentors* *-Tutoring* *-Student counseling services* *-Campus coach*
Working-age adults	*-Competency-based credits* *-Employer-based credentialing programs* *-ID of adults with some college but no degree, to reengage them in degree completion*
Attainment	*-Reverse transfer programs* *-High school-based industry certifications* *-"Take 15, graduate in 4" initiatives on college campuses*

Insert Title Here



Endnotes

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