



New York State
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Technical Assistance Centers
Eastern Region, Rockland 21C



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Using Data to Assess Needs and Assets in Community Schools (Part 1): The Why and How

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The New York State ETAC provides **FREE** high quality technical assistance, professional development and information dissemination tools designed to help establish and operate Community Schools that will positively impact the outcomes of children, youth, and families.

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Intended Outcomes



- Review the types of data that illuminate needs and assets
- Identify data collection methods and practices
- Learn best practices from peer community schools



Agenda

- Why conduct a needs and assets assessment?
- Data sources and collection
 - Quantitative data
 - Qualitative data
- Case studies
- Resources





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Why conduct a needs and assets assessment?

"The core advantage of data is that it tells you something about the world that you didn't know before."

Hilary Mason, data scientist and founder of Fast Forward Labs





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What is a needs and assets assessment?

A **careful and comprehensive** review of student, school, and community strengths and areas in need of investment and support



#1 Exploring data with a diverse group of stakeholders is likely to surface new ideas, and an intentional focus on strengths provides an opportunity for asset-based dialogue.



#2 Reviewing data with community members is likely to surface new solutions and ideas for community partnerships.



#3 The process is designed to drive action, using data as part of a continuous improvement cycle.



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What does it look like in practice?



**HOW DO COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
IDENTIFY THEIR PRIORITIES?**





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Data Sources and Collection



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Data Sources

Question: What counts as data?



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Data Sources

Answer: Everything!



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Data Sources

Data categories include:

- Prenatal health
- Early childhood education
- Health and mental health
- Community services
- Food access
- Housing
- Family economic stability and mobility
- Higher education attainment
- Workforce development trends





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Data Sources

Data can be collected through:

- Surveys
- Focus groups
- Polls
- Written assessments
- Documented observations
- Informal communication
- Complaints/suggestions
- Work portfolios
- Report cards
- Tests



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Data Sources

5 Data Collection Pro Tips!



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Data Sources

Tip #1: Know your goal.

You can use data to:

- **Describe** current status
- **Measure** against a benchmark or measure progress
- **Assess** impact
- **Determine** causal relationships

Know what you're asking before you start your assessment!





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Tip #2: Use mixed methods.

Focus groups and interviews are an important way to triangulate quantitative data and to tell us things numbers can't.

Be sure to have the right facilitator and setting to ensure your participants feel comfortable.





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Data Sources

Tip #3: Discuss root causes.

Upstream thinking helps us move from treating symptoms to diagnosing and addressing bigger problems.

Strong assessments ask “why?” and track challenges to their root causes.





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Data Sources

Tip #4: Use technology to make it easier.

- When collecting data, try a free Transcription app or Voice Typing in Google docs.
- Use pivot tables in Excel to crunch the numbers for you.
- Try a poll! Polls are an easy way to instantly engage stakeholders and equitably engage all voices in a room.





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Tip #5: Disaggregate where possible.

While large data sets are more likely to be statistically significant, they can hide the real story.





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Case Studies



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Data in Action



Community School Spotlight



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Data in Action





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Reflection



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Reflection

What is one new data collection tool you might use integrate into your work?

How will you engage your colleagues in shifting your data collection practices?





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Resources



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Resources

- [Sample Assets and Needs Assessment](#) (NYC DOE sample)
- [Approaches to Root Cause Analysis](#) (USDOE resource)
- [Sample Student Needs Survey](#) (USDOE template)
- [How to Use Google Voice for Transcriptions](#) (article)
- [Excel Pivot Tables Explained](#) (video)
- [Pollev.com](#) (free polling tool)





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THANK YOU!

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