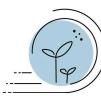# Identifying a Focus Area

**Purpose:** This tool supports decision-making when determining a focus area. Focus area questions are designed to encourage alignment between the tutoring program and district strategy. Discuss the guiding questions and use the district reflection column to contextualize the data points.

### Step 1: Choosing a Focus Area

*Which students would benefit most from individualized instruction via high-impact tutoring?*

| Data Point | Guiding Questions | District Reflection |
|---|---|---|
| **Student Achievement** | ● What groups typically lack access to individualized instruction tailored to their needs?<br>● What groups consistently underperform compared to others?<br>● In what areas have your district's students had the most significant gaps in learning, both historically and since the COVID-19 pandemic? | |
| **Content Area** | ● Which content area should the program prioritize, such as early literacy or upper grades math?<br>● Are there content areas tied to critical milestones, such as reading by third grade or mastering algebra in middle school?<br>● What data do we want to see changed? Why? What data is there to support this decision?<br>● Is there a district-priority connection?<br>● How does tutoring align with the curriculum for the content area being considered?<br>● Are High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) in place to support tutoring efforts?<br>● Are there content areas where historically underserved groups experience the greatest disparities? | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Grade Level** | <ul><li>Which grades are critical for future academic success (e.g., third-grade reading or algebra readiness in middle school)?</li><li>Are there transition years, such as entering elementary, middle, or high school, where tutoring could provide significant support?</li><li>Are there grade levels where historically disenfranchised groups experience lower achievement or engagement?</li><li>Are there any grades with a decrease in enrollment? Why?</li><li>Are there any grades with a decrease in attendance? Why?</li><li>Are there practical considerations, such as scheduling, that impact implementation?</li><li>Are teachers and school leaders ready to integrate tutoring at this grade level?</li></ul> | |
| **Vulnerable Populations** | <ul><li>What groups have been disenfranchised by the education system in your district (e.g., disproportionate discipline or SPED identification)?</li><li>Are there any groups experiencing chronic absenteeism?</li><li>Are there areas where historically underserved groups experience the greatest disparities?</li></ul> | |

### Step 2: Examining Existing District Initiatives

*How does a high-impact tutoring program interact with other initiatives already being implemented in your district?*

| Guiding Questions | District Reflection |
|---|---|
| **Does your district currently have other initiatives directed at addressing the priorities identified above?** | |
| **Are the selected student populations already receiving small group instruction, mentoring, or push-in services? Could tutoring replace some of those supports?** | |
| **What are the opportunities to complement existing effective initiatives with tutoring?** | |
| **Do state or local laws require your district to prioritize specific groups when allocating support?** | |