

Training & Support

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Implementation Checklist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delineate training content based on Model Dimensions and selection criteria for tutors • Establish a clear structure for pre-service and in-service training, including frequency, format, facilitator, etc. • Ensure inservice training is responsive to performance evaluations, stakeholder feedback, and student performance data • Collect feedback from tutors on trainings and incorporate insights and lessons from feedback to improve training effectiveness
Implementation Tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-Service Training Guidance • In-Service Training & Support Guidance
Key Insights	<p>Training should fill any gaps between your selection criteria and your ideal tutor’s qualities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training decisions and selection decisions are related. Training should help tutors acquire whatever important qualities a program did not actively select for during recruitment. • Model design decisions also influence training content. Programs with online delivery models will need to train tutors to use all features of the platform; programs with multiple students per tutor will need to train tutors to manage student behavior, programs with consistent tutors will need to emphasize relationship-building, etc. <p>The frequency of training depends on the tutor type and complexity of the program model.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tutors (especially volunteers or college students) who receive more training will be significantly more effective than those who receive less, but program capacity and return on investment is also important to consider. Year-round in-school paraprofessionals should receive more thorough training than part-timers at an 8-week summer program, for example, as the benefits of training will compound over time. <p>Regardless of tutor type or program model, pre-service training alone will not be sufficient.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Even with the highest-quality tutors, unanticipated friction and human conflict can emerge in implementing any program model.

Programs need to keep an eye out for opportunities to help tutors improve and resolve problems as they emerge in practice.

- Pre-service training should focus on building *knowledge*, while inservice training should hone *skills*. An inservice support model might involve individual observation and coaching, differentiated group coaching on specific skills, and peer support via sharing best practices.

Tutor support matters regardless of model design.

- While the specific support structures may vary from program to program, the need for support is universal. Rigorous recruitment does not mean you can overlook oversight and support: even competent and capable individuals perform better with supervision and support.
- However, there are many ways to provide support depending on a program's design. Support could mean a formal manager on the program's staff (sometimes referred to as a "site director"), a "lead tutor" who has been deemed effective in the role and capable of training others, a teacher at a specific school site, or something entirely different, like using a technology platform that tracks whether or not tutors are meeting expectations. It could also involve a combination of these methods: for example, several lead tutors supervised by a formal manager could effectively oversee many more tutors than that single manager could alone.

Trace student outcomes to root causes in tutor practices to identify training needs.

- Student academic data should inform tutor training. If students are struggling with vernacular misconceptions, for example, targeted training on anticipating and preventing these misconceptions by clarifying terminology could help tutors serve students better. Additionally, If the data indicates that lack of mastery on a prerequisite skill is the barrier for mastering the current standard, training tutors to identify missing prerequisite skills and build a remediation lesson should be considered.

Seek feedback from tutors about their needs to customize training content.

- Students feel empowered and excited when they have agency in their own learning, and the same is true of tutors. Soliciting feedback from tutors and providing training geared towards their self-identified needs not only helps them become better tutors, but also helps them feel supported and valued by the program.

Pre-Service Training Guidance

Why is tutor training important?

Training your tutors is the most effective way to ensure they are building and maintaining the skills and mindsets required to successfully tutor in your program. There are two main methods of training: **Pre-Service Training**, which takes place before tutoring sessions begin, and **In-Service Training**, which is an integral part of a tutor's ongoing support.

Why does Pre-Service Training matter?

Pre-Service training is the best way to set tutors up for success before their very first tutoring session. While the specific content and length of Pre-Service Training will vary based on the [Model Dimensions](#) of your program, there are three fundamental design principles to consider when designing Pre-Service Training and a series of topics that should be incorporated into sessions regardless of Model Dimensions. (This tool also includes additional model-specific training topics at the end.)

Design Principles

These principles set the foundation for Pre-Service Training and should be considered at every step of the design process regardless of specific content.

Principle 1: Map out Knowledge, Skills, and Mindsets.

All Pre-Service Training sessions should have an achievable objective that maps directly to a skill, mindset, or value that is required for your unique program. The need for this specificity may seem obvious, but if objectives aren't explicitly considered, programs may not end up training tutors on the highest-leverage content until problems emerge in implementation.

Principle 2: Combine Asynchronous and Synchronous Components.

Whether in-person or online, Pre-Service Training is most successful when it combines asynchronous and synchronous components. Consider including information-heavy content as pre-work or online coursework that can be completed at the tutor's own pace and dedicate synchronous sessions to interactive discussions, skill-building workshops, and practice sessions. Whenever possible, tutors should have opportunities to discuss with, learn from, and teach their peers.

Principle 3: Ground Training in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

Training should promote diversity, equity, and inclusion by both creating a culture that allows tutors to elevate these topics when they come up and providing time and space to question systems of oppression and entrenched power structures that may threaten the advancement of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Incorporate specific sessions dedicated to:

- Setting a foundation for exploring identity
- Building self-awareness through uncovering implicit bias

- Exploring different forms of privilege
- Generating awareness around the history of systemic racism, paying special attention to local context
- Building understanding of the local context

All of these sessions should incorporate opportunities for tutors to build awareness related to their attitudes towards education and the experiences they've had that inform their vision of the type of instructor they want to be. Engaging in this kind of exploration and discussion will help tutors uncover the biases they potentially hold about education. For example, do they value silence over discussion? Lectures over group work? Note-taking over project-based work? If tutors don't get the opportunity to unpack why they favor certain behaviors or approaches over others, their actions while working with students may unintentionally work against student learning and uphold a culture of white supremacy.

Universal Training Topics

All programs should incorporate these topics into training sessions. The time you should spend on each, however, will depend on your Model Dimensions.

Tutor Expectations

- Training should open with an explicit definition of what it means to be a successful tutor in your program.
- Carving out time at the outset to discuss what constitutes success makes giving feedback when expectations aren't met much easier.
- Formally communicate expectations verbally and give tutors the opportunity to ask questions and get clarification. The training session during which you have this discussion is an ideal time to give tutors the expectations in writing and have tutors sign off on them.
- To learn more about setting expectations, see the [Setting Expectations with Tutors](#) tool and model your training sessions using it as a lens.

Content Proficiency

- If content proficiency is not prioritized as a [selection criterion](#), Pre-Service Training should incorporate strategies tutors can use to effectively prepare to deliver content fluently and facilitate student learning.
- When working with students, tutors should be able to explain concepts in multiple ways, identify students' misconceptions, and proactively plan to address those misconceptions.
- Pre-Service Training should give tutors the chance to grapple with these strategies and consider how they will structure their own pre-session prep time. Pre-Service training should introduce any specialized content knowledge or skills unique to your program (e.g. some literacy programs need to teach tutors the science around how young children learn to read).

Program-Specific Pedagogy

- Regardless of tutors' content proficiency, you must train them on your program's particular pedagogical practices.

Effective Facilitation

- Pre-Service training should include skill building for effective session facilitation. Tutors should not only see examples of strong facilitation, but also have the opportunity to practice through role play and giving/receiving feedback.
- Examples of effective facilitation include implementing an appropriate warm-up, giving clear directions, asking appropriately rigorous and scaffolded questions, and finding opportunities to build the student-tutor relationship.
- To learn more about facilitation, see the [Effective Facilitation Checklist](#) and model your training using it as a lens.

Data Practices

- Pre-Service Training should be used to familiarize tutors with the data collection tools they will use throughout their time as a tutor with your program, along with expectations related to student data use and privacy.
- To learn more about data use and best practices, see the [Example Data Collection Tools](#) and [Student Data Privacy Guidance](#) tools and model your training sessions using these tools as a lens.

Supporting Students with Learning and Thinking Differences

- Training sessions should include opportunities for tutors to practice facilitating sessions that incorporate strategies for working with students who have learning and thinking differences, which are variations in how the brain processes information that can affect how people learn, work, and interact.
- After practicing, tutors should debrief and receive feedback, then try again (incorporating the feedback).
- To learn more about supporting all learners, see the [Example Tutoring Session Structure](#), [Accessibility Checklist](#), and [Personalizing a Tutoring Session](#) tools and model your training sessions using these tools as a lens.

Tutor-Tutor Team-Building & Networking Activities

- Tutors are people, too. While social activities aren't "topics" per se, they are universally useful to include.
 - Examples include incorporating icebreakers into sessions that promote getting to know each other, providing optional affinity spaces, and organizing events outside of training that build positive culture among tutors.
- If your Pre-Service Training includes a session on the program's mission/vision/values, consider supplementing that training with plenty of team-building activities — both to promote socializing during less-interactive sessions and to leave tutors with strong implicit associations between their positive social-emotional experiences that day and your program's identity.

Model-Specific Training Topics

These topics are only relevant for specific Model Dimensions. Not all tutoring programs will need them, but those that do will need to prioritize them highly.

Virtual or Blended Instruction

- If your Delivery Mode is Virtual or Blended, Pre-Service Training should include demonstrations of all features of the online platform and coaching of tutors on how to use it effectively.
- Tutors should be familiar with all the platform’s basic capabilities (e.g. communication abilities, screen sharing, group discussion features, etc.) and should have a general sense of how to troubleshoot if there are technology issues. They should receive guidance about whom to contact for more advanced tech support if necessary.
- Tutors may need to employ adjusted warm-ups and/or behavior management strategies in a virtual environment.
- To learn more about online learning, see the [Choosing and Using Blended Learning Software](#) and [Choosing and Using Virtual Tutoring Platforms](#) tools and model your training sessions using these tools as a lens.


Tutor-Student Relationships

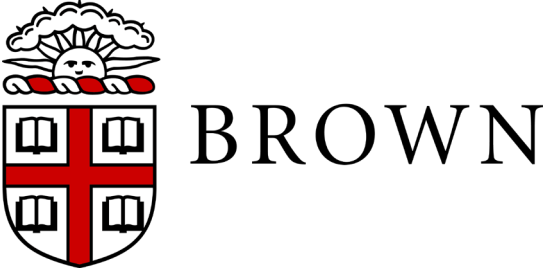
- If your Tutor Consistency is Consistent, Pre-Service Training should strongly emphasize the importance of tutor-student relationship-building, along with providing guidance to help tutors understand what effective and professional relationships look like in practice.
- The more tutors are taught to prioritize healthy relationship-building in interactions with students, the more quickly they will get to know them as people and as learners, the higher their expectations will be, and the more effective and productive their instruction will be. In other words, student-tutor relationships should not be the topic of a singular Pre-Service Training session, but rather should be embedded in all sessions.
- To learn more about relationship-building, see the [Strong, Academically Focused Tutor-Student Relationships](#) and [Relationship Building Activities](#) tools and model your training sessions using these tools as a lens.

Small-Group Facilitation

- If your Student-Tutor Ratio is Small Groups instead of one-on-one, your tutors will need detailed guidance on facilitating small-group instruction effectively while redirecting off-track student behavior and keeping student discussions productive.
- If the tutors will be responsible for creating the small groups themselves, they should receive training and tools to help them leverage student academic data for this purpose to ensure that groups are both purposeful and flexible.
- To learn more about facilitating small groups, see the [Tips for Creating Data-Informed Student Groups](#) and [Effective Facilitation: Small Group Tutoring](#) tools and model your training sessions using these tools as a lens.

Pre-Service Training Examples

	<p>Link to Pre-Service Training Overview</p>
<p>Model Dimensions</p>	<p>Design of Pre-Service Training</p>
<p>Content Area & Grade Level: 9th Grade Math (Algebra 1) Target: Universal or Problem-Driven Setting: In-School Take-Up: Required Tutor Type: Paraprofessionals (AmeriCorps) Delivery Mode: Traditionally In-Person (Implementing SAGA OffSite Virtual in 2020-2021) Dosage: 45-60-minute sessions 5x per week for 1 school year Student-Tutor Ratio: 2:1 or 3:1 Tutor Consistency: Consistent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3-week training • 5 days a week from 8:30am - 5:30pm • Multiple sessions per day • For the first two weeks, each day follows a specific theme • The last week is dedicated to site-specific time

	<p>Brown University Online Tutoring</p>
<p>Model Dimensions</p>	<p>Design of Pre-Service Training</p>
<p>Content Area & Grade Level: Elementary School All Subjects Target: Universal Setting: Outside of School Take-Up: Voluntary Tutor Type: University Students Delivery Mode: Online or In-Person Dosage: Dependent on student preference Student-Tutor Ratio: 1:1 Tutor Consistency: Consistent</p>	<p>Tutors must earn the following three badges by completing the three Community Engagement Orientation Workshops below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providence: Many Stories (<i>understanding local community context</i>) • Providence is not our Playground (<i>privilege awareness & culturally-responsive approaches to the tutor role</i>)

- Healthy Boundaries and Professionalism

Once completed, tutors undergo a series of trainings pertaining to:

- Online etiquette and communications skills in an online setting
- Similarities and differences between online and face-to-face tutoring
- Problem-solving or growth mindset: applicable to both in-person and online tutoring
- Empathy and relationship building between tutor and student learner

In-Service Training & Support Guidance

Why does In-Service Training, Oversight and Support Matter?

Training, providing oversight and supporting your tutors are the most effective ways to ensure they are building and maintaining the skills and mindsets required to tutor successfully in your program. There are two main methods of training: **Pre-Service Training**, which takes place before tutoring sessions begin; and **In-Service Training**, which is an integral part of a tutor's ongoing support and typically includes some form of coaching, oversight and professional development to help tutors consistently meet your expectations, support their students, and continue growing as professionals within your community.

In-Service Training

Generally, all programs have some form of in-service training that takes place on an ongoing basis at regularly scheduled times. Although the frequency and content of training will vary depending on a program's **Model Dimensions**, the following best practices should guide all In-Service Training design:

- **Refresh and build on what was covered during Pre-Service Training.** Keep that knowledge alive for tutors!
- **Establish a cadence for your in-service training.** Whether you offer training once a month or once a quarter, determine these dates ahead of time and share them with your tutors as soon as possible. (Send reminders, too.)
- **Develop a scope and sequence for your training.** Consider gradual skill building, introducing more advanced content or facilitation strategies as tutors progress throughout the year and master skills from Pre-Service Training.
- **Be flexible based on what your tutors need.** Just like your tutors, you should use your observations to identify and meet individual learning needs. If you notice common struggles across tutors, consider addressing these via training.
- **Incorporate sessions where tutors learn from one another.** Giving tutors an opportunity to learn from one another and problem-solve together is a powerful training approach.
- **Gather feedback from all stakeholders.** Ask tutors what they want from training, of course, but also reach out to school administrators, teachers, students, and families, and use their insights to adjust the design of your training.
- **Think outside the box.** In-Service Training does not need to take place in a traditional classroom in order for it to be successful. Online modules, workshops, professional learning communities, and meetings with consultants are all additional options, some of which current tutors could take the lead in organizing with program staff support.

Tutor Oversight Approaches and and Support Structures

Just as ongoing training is essential, tutor oversight and support is fundamental to tutor success. While providing tutors with direct coaching is ideal as it allows for the most comprehensive and prompt feedback, it is not always possible. Like many components of your program, oversight approaches and support structures will vary depending on your program's **Model Dimensions**.

Regardless of Model Dimensions, however, most programs designate a person or group of people responsible for tutor oversight; the approaches they take to this role determine the type of support provided. The table below outlines some different options for oversight approaches and support structures.

Oversight Approaches & Support Structures	Relevant Model Dimensions
<p>Heavy oversight and individual coaching support from an onsite supervisor. An onsite supervisor is usually an employee of the tutoring program, sometimes referred to as a Site Director or Site Manager. People in this role tend to spend the majority of their work week at the same location as the tutors and liaise heavily with administration and other school personnel.</p>	<p>Often used for in-person, in-school, high-dosage tutoring. Highly effective, but also very time-intensive. Less necessary for more experienced Tutor Types (e.g. teachers).</p>
<p>Daily oversight from school faculty with routine support from program staff. Some programs rely on an existing onsite staff member, like a teacher, to support with daily aspects of the oversight role, but then have someone else from the program's staff observe and provide support once per week. The onsite staff member may take on an elevated role, and thus be compensated (or have a lighter teaching schedule) in order to provide oversight and coaching to tutors. The person in this role will often facilitate the collaboration between tutors and teachers at the school as well.</p>	<p>Appropriate for in-school programs that use a rigorous and consistent curriculum. The program staff check in regularly to ensure that a program is implemented to fidelity, while onsite school faculty or staff provide daily advice. Using this approach also provides an opportunity to develop leadership within schools.</p>
<p>Virtual oversight and support. With this approach, sessions tend to be recorded for a supervisor to watch and later provide feedback. Tutors may also be encouraged to watch their own recordings and learn to identify their strengths and struggles; this self-reflective work helps them set goals for improvement. Virtual sessions also let supervisors pop in to observe live sessions easily.</p>	<p>Most effective when it can be comprehensive (i.e. when the tutoring Delivery Mode is completely or mostly Virtual).</p>
<p>Light oversight with peer support via professional development communities. Instead of receiving direct support from someone in an onsite supervisor role, tutors attend skill development sessions and share best practices through communities of practice led by experienced tutors who have demonstrated</p>	<p>This structure is most effective when tutors are skilled and experienced instructors. But be careful relying exclusively on it with less experienced Tutor Types (e.g. volunteers/college students).</p>

<p>strong outcomes for students. Someone from the program staff may need to support coordination, but this person would be “on the ground” much less frequently.</p>	
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Effective Tutor Support: Best Practices

Regardless of how support is structured, these 4 critical actions can help tutors develop and improve in their role.

1. Create a culture of open communication and feedback.

Pre-Service Training should explicitly model healthy mindsets about feedback, but most of the work of cultivating these mindsets happens via In-Service Support. Strategies for creating a culture of open communication and feedback include:

- Ask tutors for feedback and explicitly share when their feedback has been taken into account in a decision.
- Ask tutors how they prefer to receive feedback (e.g. written first with time to process vs. immediately, etc.) and prepare accordingly. By considering this, you’re setting yourself and your tutor up for a productive conversation.
- Provide feedback right from the start of the program. Especially at first, carve out time for tutors to have a meta- conversation with you about the feedback they’re receiving. Validating their questions and asking them directly how it felt to receive the feedback will naturally open lines of communication centered around improvement.

2. Support tutors in creating their own goals.

Leverage tutor-articulated goals when providing feedback and other means of support, and help tutors reflect on their progress in reaching those goals. Use these conversations to deepen personal connections and provide social-emotional support if needed.

3. Plan for regular observation and debrief cycles.

- Observe each tutor working directly with a student (or small group).
- Provide regular feedback so that tutors get multiple opportunities to learn, reflect, and improve.
- The person conducting the observation (e.g. a Site Director, a teacher in the building, etc.), the frequency of the observations (weekly, biweekly, etc.), and the method for engaging in the debrief (in-person, over video call, over email, etc.) will vary based on your chosen support structure, but the important thing is embedding a feedback cycle into your in-service support strategy.
- In in-person, during school, high-dosage programs, tutor observations tend to be on a weekly basis.
- Programs that use more than one person to support tutors (i.e. a combination of people in different roles) may incorporate a more nuanced cadence (e.g. onsite staff member observes

twice per month, program staff observes once per month, and they observe simultaneously once per quarter).

4. Invest in developing a rubric or fidelity checklist specific to your model to support continued improvement.

Supervisors can use a rubric or fidelity checklist to provide consistent support and feedback to tutors. Providing feedback using these kinds of tools builds self-awareness in tutors. It also allows programs to set benchmarks for progress and by looking at all tutors' rubric scores or checklists collectively, programs can identify cohort-wide skill gaps or program-wide trends that need addressing. At the end of this document, you'll find an example fidelity checklist that the literacy tutoring program Reading Corps uses for one of their reading interventions. An example of a portion of a rubric can be found in our [Examples of Data Collection Tools](#).

Example Fidelity Checklist

[This document](#) shows what an exemplary fidelity checklist looks like. Note its clarity and specificity about what tutor actions to look for. This type of checklist not only helps tutors plan their session facilitation and self-evaluate as they work, but it also helps ensure that the feedback they receive from various observers uses consistent language and sets consistent expectations.