
Landscape™ Consistent High School and Neighborhood Information for Colleges

What You Need to Know

Landscape™ provides consistent high school and neighborhood information for all applicants to help admissions officers fully consider every student, no matter where they live.

Why Landscape?

Colleges consider many things when reviewing an applicant, including their GPA, personal essay, letters of recommendation, test scores, and more. They also consider what students achieved in the context of where they've learned and lived—their high school and neighborhood.

This year, colleges will receive more than 10 million applications from students attending nearly 30,000 high schools. With more applications coming from more places, getting consistent, quality high school and neighborhood information for every applicant is getting harder. The result of inconsistent information is that colleges can't give everyone a fair look.

Colleges asked us to help them find a better way to consistently evaluate an applicant's high school and neighborhood. Working for three years with admissions officers all over the country, we developed Landscape—a resource that provides the information colleges told us they need.

What Role Does Landscape Play in the Admissions Process?

- ◆ **Only one part of admissions** | The high school and neighborhood information provided by Landscape is just one of the many things that colleges look at when considering an applicant.
- ◆ **Doesn't replace, only adds** | Landscape does not replace the individual information included in an application, such as an applicant's GPA, personal essay, or high school transcript. Landscape is only used in conjunction with an application to provide additional context about an applicant's high school and neighborhood.
- ◆ **Never alters a test score** | Landscape only shows how an applicant's SAT® or ACT® score compares to those of others at the same high school. It does not change an applicant's test score in any way.
- ◆ **No applicant gets offered or denied admission because of Landscape, only considered** | Colleges do not use Landscape to decide who gets in and who doesn't. It simply helps admissions officers give more students from more places a fair look. All colleges that use Landscape agree they will adhere to the [Landscape Appropriate Usage Guidelines](#). You can learn more at professionals.collegeboard.org/landscape.

What's Included in Landscape?

Landscape includes three categories of information:

- ◆ **Basic high school statistics** | Five basic characteristics of an applicant's high school:
 - Locale (e.g., Rural)
 - Senior class size
 - Percent of students eligible for free and reduced-price lunch
 - Average SAT scores at colleges attended

- AP® participation and performance
- ◆ **Test score comparison** | Landscape shows the range of test scores at a given high school to give admissions officers an idea of how an applicant's score compares to those of others at their high school.
- ◆ **High school and neighborhood information, relative to national or state averages** | Landscape captures 6 key indicators for applicants' communities and high schools that research has shown are related to students' education outcomes. The 6 indicators are also averaged into a Neighborhood and a High School Average. The 6 indicators are:
 - College attendance
 - Household structure
 - Median family income
 - Housing stability
 - Education levels
 - Crime

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Can students or counselors see data on their high school or neighborhood?

This year we'll work with our district and high school members on an approach to share Landscape information with them and with families. Starting next year, counselors, and students and parents with a College Board account, will be able to access the same information about their high school and neighborhood that colleges will see in Landscape.

Listening to our thoughtful critics and remaining close to our principles and mission define the College Board—Landscape is a product of these principles. We heard the feedback from counselors, K–12, higher ed, and students and parents, and we're making it simpler, more transparent, and easier to understand.

NOTE: There will be rare instances when there isn't enough data about a high school or neighborhood to populate the information. Those neighborhoods and high schools won't be included in Landscape.

Q: Why will it take a year to show students, families, and counselors the information?

This resource was originally designed by admissions officers for use in the admissions process. We're committed to responding to the feedback from educators and families—they also want a way to access high school and neighborhood information. This process will take time, and we will work closely with educators over the coming months to ensure we develop a thoughtful, user-friendly way to provide this information to educators and families.

Q: Can students, or their parents on their behalf, opt out of sharing information for use in Landscape?

Landscape does not contain student-level data and therefore doesn't require students to opt in. The only exception is the student-specific test scores. The test score in Landscape is based on the scores that students choose to send to colleges.

Colleges choose which student-submitted test score to display in Landscape. The College Board concords ACT scores to SAT scores using [published concordance tables](#).

The College Board takes students' privacy very seriously and students can [always opt out](#) of providing their individual information to colleges, whether through the Student Data Questionnaire (SDQ) they fill out when they take a College Board assessment, or when they're deciding to participate in Student Search Service®.

Q: What does this cost?

There is no cost to colleges for using Landscape.

Q: How many colleges use Landscape?

In 2018-19 we piloted the resource with more than 50 colleges and universities. This year we anticipate between 100 and 150 colleges will participate in the pilot. We plan to make it broadly available to colleges and universities for free.



Q: How do we know colleges will use Landscape to include students, not exclude them?

Colleges do not use Landscape to decide who gets in and who doesn't. It simply helps admissions officers give more students from more places a fair look.

You can read the [Landscape Appropriate Usage Guidelines](#) colleges agree to and follow when using Landscape.

Q: How is Landscape used?

Most participating colleges are using it as part of the admissions process. Some are exploring how the information might be used in student advising to support students on campus.

Q: Can all colleges use Landscape?

We're engaged in a pilot with a limited number of institutions so we can collect detailed feedback to continue to make refinements to the resource. As we move forward, we'll continue to work with institutions that are committed to using Landscape to promote access and engage with the College Board on a research partnership.

Q: Does Landscape replace the high school profile that counselors provide to colleges as part of a students' profile?

No, Landscape doesn't replace information provided on the high school profile. Pilot colleges find the information in Landscape particularly valuable when they don't have a high school profile, especially for high schools that admissions officers are less familiar with.

Visit [cb.org/landscape](https://collegeboard.org/landscape) to access an explainer video, appropriate use guidelines for colleges, details about data, and more.