Mapping Your Service Landscape

**Purpose:** This activity is intended to help students think of as many approaches as they can to working on a given issue, as well as how these approaches connect with each other.

**Materials needed:** yarn, beach ball

**Time required:** approximately 30 minutes

**Process:**
Students stand in circle. Present issue to map (example: closing the achievement gap in education).

First student (holding ball of yarn) introduces herself and the role she plays in closing the achievement gap. She then names someone else in the circle, the role they play, and how she works with them. Holding the end of the yarn with enough slack to throw it, she throws the ball of yarn to the person she named. Example: “I’m Kristy, I run an after-school tutoring program. I work with Edgar, a researcher who studies the impact of after-school tutoring programs and gives me ideas based on his research for how to improve my program design. [Throw ball of yarn to Edgar]”

The person who catches the yarn repeats these steps, throwing the ball of yarn to a new person and coming up with a new role for them. Example: “I’m Edgar, I’m a researcher. My research conclusions help Kristen the philanthropist decide what educational programs to fund. [Throw ball of yarn to Kristen]”

Keep going until everyone in the circle has received the ball of yarn and there is a web of yarn in the middle of the circle. Everyone needs to have a different role in working on the issue.

Toss beach ball on the web and try to keep it bouncing above the web as long as possible.

Ask every other person to drop their yarn and step out of the circle. Have remaining people step back to keep the yarn taut and try to keep the beach ball bouncing.

If possible, once again ask every other person in the circle to drop their yarn and step out. Have remaining people try to keep the beach ball bouncing.

**Debrief:**
What is this activity about? >Being knowledgeable about your service landscape. If you don’t know who else is addressing your issue, you can’t access them. Your issue can “fall through the cracks”.