

FISCAL OPERATIONS: Budget and Financial Management

Overview: The process of budget development is critical to the successful acquisition of financial resources to support the development of the educational program. Good management of the approved budget helps assure positive systemic outcomes, and builds confidence among those who pay the bills.

	SCHOOL BOARD	SUPERINTENDENT	PRINCIPAL
GUIDING QUESTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Does the board approach the preparation of a budget as one step in the overall planning process? ◆ What should the board's role in budget preparation be? <i>See Spotlight 3.</i> ◆ How should the board interact with the community in budget preparation? ◆ How should the board interact with the staff in budget preparation? ◆ How should the final budget be presented to the community in order to show linkage between the budget and school priorities, and to get the most favorable reception? ◆ What are the long-range plans for our fiscal position? <i>See Spotlight 11.</i> ◆ What are our enrollment projections for the next five years, and how will future enrollment have an impact on our budgets? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ What fiscal and budget management procedures (long and short-term) does the district currently use? ◆ Is the plan reviewed periodically? ◆ How is the budget monitored? ◆ What role does the board have in the budget process? ◆ How can we manage the politics of passing the budgets? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ What is used in the district to guide long-term fiscal planning? ◆ Is the plan implemented at the school level? ◆ What are the current fiscal priorities? ◆ What is the budget development process at the district/SU level? Process, documents, software, timelines, etc.? ◆ What resources are available in learning the system, and in the development and management of the budget? ◆ What people are responsible for budget development? ◆ What is your role in implementing and monitoring the budget?

FISCAL OPERATIONS: Budget and Financial Management *(continued)*

	SCHOOL BOARD	SUPERINTENDENT	PRINCIPAL
TASKS TO CONSIDER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Work with senior administrators and the business manager to design a long-term budget and budget documents that meet student needs. ◆ Review budgets from other districts and learn from their experiences. ◆ Plan budget presentation to community. ◆ Ensure that staff is informed about budget before it is presented to community. ◆ Monitor financial reports to ensure that district is staying within budget. Be aware of budget shortfalls. ◆ Review policy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Review chart of accounts system. ◆ Review current budget reports. ◆ Review comparative statements. ◆ Review cash flow sheets. ◆ Review current list of staff with budget responsibility, and inquire about any problem areas. ◆ Establish and review data financial benchmarks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Review budget documents— including time lines, responsibilities, forms, reports. ◆ Review past audit reports and annual reports. ◆ Meet with the person who completes the paperwork and monitors the purchase orders and payroll in your building and at the central office. ◆ Determine the strengths of and concerns with the budget management and development system. ◆ Clarify your role and the role of others in the budget process, with the central office and within the school. ◆ Develop a system to provide feedback on the process for managing and developing the budget, within the building and within the district and SU.