



Instructions

BUDGET LAB

1. **Decide on a reporter and a time keeper.**
2. **Create a hypothetical school for the purposes of this exercise:**
 - a. First, list the 1-3 essential elements of your mission:

 - b. Then, list the things your consumers really want, the things that will really bring enrollment into your school:

 - c. Now – tying together your mission and what will really bring enrollment into your school -- list the 1-3 program elements that will define your school. These are your mission-driven, visionary strategic goals. You will want to allocate sufficient resources to these goals, which will require making priority-based decisions.

3. Every challenge has an economic context – so choose the scenario for your hypothetical school:

- **In the Black** – In this scenario, your school of 250 children is humming along nicely in the black.
- **Enrollment Decline** – The loss of 5 children in 3rd grade continues steadily, compounding the original loss.
- **Perfect Storm** – All-too-familiar, in this scenario you sustain stresses to the budget in multiple areas.
- **Royal Purple** – Your strategic goal was to increase the student body, and now, year by year, it's coming to fruition.

4. Now, go to work to make those mission-driven, visionary strategic goals possible.

Try things and see what happens.

Make sure you consider:

- In your scenario, what (if anything) will you need to do short-term?
- What will you need to act on to achieve your top long-term priorities?

Feel free to:

- Use all areas of the budget that apply to your hypothetical school.
- Make changes in parameters, income, and expenses – as long as you have planned hypothetical actions that justify those changes. (For example, you may add enrollment once you've outlined new academic programming that you predict will draw new students into the school or new admissions activities that will do the same. Etc.)

5. Return to the large group on time, prepared to share insights from your experience.

BTW, what's the name of your school?