

School Budget Planning and Equity Considerations

Planning for 2018-19 School Year

SCHOOL NAME

This document is designed to walk you through some recommended steps for an equity-driven budget planning process, and also provide a place to record the ways in which the development of your school-level budget for 2018-19 has included diverse perspectives and equity considerations.

Below, you will first find a place to document the ways that you're engaging diverse stakeholders in budget planning. Then you'll find some specific steps to follow, each with guidance for how to complete related activities. For each step, there is a place to synthesize what results from engaging in those activities with your community of diverse stakeholders.

*Using the format of a Google Doc will ensure that you can update this document as a running record throughout the development of your budget. **Keep in mind that some of what is recorded in this document will eventually be made public and available for review by the Board of Education.** However, a final version will only be made public following final review and revision by the principal.*

Meaningful Inclusion of Diverse Perspectives

The best way to ensure that your budgeting process is equity-driven is by centering marginalized voices. You need to bring diverse perspectives to the table to help make tough choices about how to use your resources in ways that align your school programming with district priorities and pursue efforts that will lead to increased achievement of all students. Those diverse perspectives should be representative of the students and families who will be impacted by your decisions, and the opportunities for people to share their perspectives need to be meaningful, not tokenizing nor merely for the appearance of inclusion.

Describe the ways in which you've worked to ensure that you have meaningfully included diverse perspectives from the following stakeholder groups in your budget decision-making process:

<i>Students*</i>	<i>Staff</i>	<i>Families/Community Members</i>

** Try to include student perspectives to the extent possible, given your student population. If it doesn't make sense to include student voice in decision-making, ensure that families have an opportunity represent their students' interests.*

If you have held meetings to include diverse perspectives in your decision-making process, please note the date(s), time(s), and type(s) of participants included in those meetings below:

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Steps for an Equity-Driven Budget Planning Process

Please answer the questions below to the best of your ability. Look for the 📄 symbol to find resources, like facilitation plans and worksheets, that can help you guide stakeholders through activities to complete each step. These activities are **not** required, but can help ensure your process is equity-driven. **The only requirement is to fill in the boxes below each bolded question.**

RECOMMENDED TIMELINE:

- **Steps 1 - 3** should be completed prior to the finalization and communication of budget allocations
- **Steps 4 & 5** should then be completed prior to your Budget Tie-Out meeting

Step 1: Our Vision for Student Success and Equity

Start by engaging your school community in the development of a vision of student success and equity. Think about which stakeholders should be included in the generation of this vision and how you can include diverse perspectives. When you've completed this activity, synthesize your community's vision below.

📄 [Facilitation Guide](#)

📄 [Worksheet - Printable PDF](#) (8.5x11)

What will our school look like, feel like, and sound like, when all students are successful and we are achieving educational equity?

<i>Looks Like</i>	<i>Feels Like</i>	<i>Sounds Like</i>
●	●	●

Step 2: Our School Community Values

Next, work with your school community to identify your collective values and the ways that those values are currently reflected in your school. Think about which stakeholders should be included in the generation of your values and how you can include diverse perspectives. When you've completed this activity, synthesize your community's values and ways they are reflected below. Add additional rows to the table, as needed.

📄 [Facilitation Guide](#)

📄 [Worksheet - Printable Google Doc](#) (8.5x11)

What are our values as a school community? How do we put those values into action?

<i>We value...</i>	<i>therefore we...</i>

Step 3: Activity Inventory and Prioritization

An activity is any effort, strategy, or program that your school is using to produce changes that will result in improved outcomes for students. Think broadly: an activity would likely be something that is currently a strategy in your school improvement plan, but could also be programs or strategies that aren't currently reflected in your SIP. (Examples of things that could be considered activities: Balanced Literacy; co-teaching; International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme; Responsive Classroom; counseling; etc.)

For this step, with the help of your stakeholders, identify your current school activities and any ideas for new activities; think critically about how well each of them align with district priorities and your community's values and vision; and prioritize the activities that will have the biggest impact on increasing student success and achieving equity. When you've completed this activity, synthesize the list of your community's prioritized activities below. Add rows to the table below, as needed.

[Facilitation Guide](#)

[Worksheet - Printable PDF version \(11x17\)](#)

[Worksheet - Google Sheet/Excel version](#)

What prioritized activities does our school community believe are having or will have the biggest impact on increasing student success and achieving equity? How does each align to the MPS priorities?

<i>Priority Activity</i>	<i>Alignment to one or more MPS priorities (MTSS, SEL, Equity, or Literacy)</i>

Step 4: Budget Alignment and Trade-Offs

Once you've received your budget allocations, you will need to make difficult decisions regarding how to utilize limited resources in ways that support your prioritized activities and programs. After you engage in that decision-making process, use the spaces below to identify the trade-offs that you're making, and also the ways that you've used supplementary resources strategically, in alignment with the goals of those funding sources, to achieve your school's vision of achievement and equity.

[Worksheet - Printable PDF version \(11x17\)](#)

[Worksheet - Google Sheet/Excel version](#)

What are some of the trade-offs that your school is having to make when allocating resources to support the continuation or development of prioritized activities?

<i>In order to ensure we can...</i>	<i>we will not be able to...</i>
•	•

How will you use supplementary funding sources (i.e., compensatory, Title, Achievement and Integration, Q Comp), if you have received any, in appropriate ways to support the continuation or development of prioritized activities and programs?

Step 5: Equity Considerations

As you identify the programs, supports, and services that you will need to change or eliminate in 2018-19, identify the specific student groups who will be most directly impacted (i.e. race/ethnicity, gender, grade, program, identification for services, etc.) and what you will do to mitigate any potential negative impacts. Also consider the positive impacts that you anticipate your activities or programs will have next year on those same student groups. Add additional rows to the table below, as needed.

[Facilitation Guide](#)

[Worksheet - Printable PDF \(8.5x11\)](#)

Which specific student groups do you anticipate will be most directly impacted by changes or eliminations to programs, supports, and services next year?

<i>Changes/eliminations to...</i>	<i>will directly impact...</i>

Describe how you plan to mitigate any potential negative impacts for the specific student groups noted above:

Describe how the activities or programs that you plan to continue, expand, or start next year will positively impact the student groups identified above:

Vision for Student Success and Equity

Facilitation Guide

- If your school community has already identified a vision for student success and equity, instead consider facilitating a review of that vision with diverse stakeholders and make any modifications, as needed.

Materials:

- Pens, pencils, and markers
- [Vision worksheets](#) (1 copy per participant)
- Post-it notes
- Three large sticky poster papers hung up, one of each labeled: Looks Like, Feels Like, Sounds Like

Process:

- Engage participants in a warm welcome activity and have participants introduce themselves.
- Explain the purpose of the activity that participants are about to engage in: *As we think about and make decisions regarding how we'll use our resources as a school next year, we want to be sure that we stay focused on the ultimate goal of ensuring that all students are successful and we are achieving educational equity with and for students. Today, you'll have the opportunity to share and hear from others about that vision.*
- Pose the following prompt to participants: ***What will our school look like, feel like, and sound like, when all students are successful and we are achieving educational equity?***
 - **First Round—Individual Brainstorming:** Have participants take one of the vision worksheets and something to write with. Ask participants to write down their initial ideas in response to the prompt, separating their ideas into the appropriate columns. Give them a few minutes to write down as many ideas as they can.
 - **Second Round—Partner Sharing:** Ask participants to turn to a neighbor (or two), and share the ideas that each person generated on her/his worksheet. Each pair should then identify the three most powerful images, sounds, or feelings that they think best reflect a vision of success and equity for all students. Ask participants to place a star next to their top three. Then have them transfer those three images, sounds, or feelings to three different post-it notes (one for each idea, so three total post-it notes per pair).
 - **Third Round—Full Group Share Out:** Go around the room and have each pair share out their top three. As a pair shares, they should read their post-it notes and then post them to the appropriate large sticky poster papers. If a pair has an idea that is the same or similar to another pair, they should read it and then post it on top of or near the same/similar idea.
- Discuss the ideas that have been generated by participants. Consider using the following questions:
 - Is there anything that another person or group came up with that really resonates with you?
 - Is anything missing?
 - Is anything up here contradictory? If so, how should we resolve those contradictions?
 - What tensions might result from attempting to achieve this vision, especially when we think about how resources are currently allocated or may be allocated differently next year? How would we propose trying to resolve those tensions, if we can?
- Wrap up the discussion with an optimistic closure, ensuring that participants understand what will happen next and how this brainstorm may impact decisions about resource allocation or programming for next year.

*What will our school look like, feel like, and sound like
when all students are successful and we are achieving educational equity?*

Looks Like	Feels Like	Sounds Like

Our School Community Values

Facilitation Guide

- The worksheet to use with this activity has a list of example value words already generated on the back page. Feel free to revise that list so that it is more relevant to your school prior to facilitating—or feel free to go without the list and ask participants to brainstorm from scratch.
- If your school community has already identified values, instead consider facilitating a review of those values with diverse stakeholders and make any modifications to them, as needed.

Materials:

- Pens, pencils, and markers
- [Values worksheets](#) (1 copy per participant)
- Post-it notes
- Large sticky poster paper or somewhere to post post-it notes
- *Dot stickers (optional)*

Process:

- Engage participants in a warm welcome activity and have participants introduce themselves.
- Explain the purpose of the activity that participants are about to engage in: *As we think about and make decisions regarding how we'll use our resources as a school next year, we want to ensure that we continue to support initiatives and programs that align with the values of our school community. Today, we'll work together to identify and come to some consensus around what our school community values are and how we currently see them reflected our school.*
- Handout the values worksheets to participants and make sure they each have something to write with.
- Read through the top of the worksheet with participants to ground everyone in the same definition of what a “value” is, in the context of a school community.
- **Round 1—Individual Brainstorm:** Ask participants to individually create a list of words that they feel like represent the values of their ideal school community. They can use a provided list of words as a starting place, or think of whatever naturally comes to mind, or both.
- **Round 2—Small Group Share Our and Categorization:** Ask participants to form small groups of two to four people. Have each small group share their lists with one another, noting where they have similarities or differences. Then, have each small group combine their lists by grouping similar value words together into categories.
 - * **For example the following words could go in the same category:** Humor, Fun, Happiness, JoySmall groups can use one of the worksheets to create categories, or give each small group a poster paper to use post-it notes and/or write on.
- **Round 3—Small Group Identify Top Five:** Ask small groups to identify ONE WORD in each of their categories that best represents the label for the other words in that category.
 - * **For example:** Selecting **Joy** as the label for the example aboveHave groups circle or somehow note the label for each category. Then, ask the small groups to identify their top five (if they have more than five categories) value words that they think best represent what they think should be the school community's core values. Emphasize that not selecting a value as part of the top five doesn't mean “throwing it away,” you're just narrowing down your list to what you think is the school community's *core* values.

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- **Round 4—Large Group Share Out and Categorization:** Similar to the process for the small groups, bring all participants back together as a large group. Have each small group share out their top five value words. As the small groups share, collect their ideas on post it notes or by writing them on a large poster paper. Once each small group has had a chance to share, take all of the value words you have as a large group and again put them into similar categories. Attempt to fit them into as few categories as possible, with a goal of no more than five.
- Have the large group choose one of the words in each category that best represents the label for that category.
 - ◊ **Tip:** Give each participant one dot sticker per category (i.e., if you have 5 categories, each person gets 5 stickers), and then ask each participant to put a sticker next to the word that they want to be the label for each category. Then the word in each category with the most stickers becomes the label.

Check-In: Was equity selected by the group as a core value for the school community? If not, would the group consider stating equity as a core school community value, or not? If the group feels that equity is represented in one of the established categories, how?

- Once you have the top five (or fewer) value words for the large group, brainstorm belief statements for each value: ***“We value... therefore, we...”***
 - ◊ **Tip:** Write each of the top five (or fewer) value words on large poster papers. Let people walk around the room as individuals and write or use post-it notes to provide examples of how they see the value reflected in the school. Or, working in small groups, rotate the posters around the room so that each group has a few minutes to write their ideas on each poster.
- Discuss the overall activity and participant reactions and feelings. Consider using the following questions:
 - What was valuable to you about engaging in this activity?
 - If we were to do an activity like this again, what would you recommend doing differently?
 - How do you see yourself, as a member of our school community, practicing or promoting these values?
- Wrap up the discussion with an optimistic closure, ensuring that participants understand what will happen next and how this values generation may impact decisions about resource allocation or programming for the future.

School Community Values Brainstorm

What are school community values? A value is a quality or standard that helps guide people. Our school community values are statements of how we want everyone in our community to act, make decisions, and work with one another.

Step 1: Make a list below of words that you think represent the ideal values of our school community.

“Ideal” means that they may be the values we’re operating with currently or they may be the values that you think we should be operating with moving forward.

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Step 2: Form a small group, compare your lists, and categorize them.

As you combine each of your individual lists into a list for your group, put your value words into categories. Try to come up with no more than five categories for the value words that are similar across your lists.

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Step 3: Choose ONE word in each of your categories above as the best label for that category.

If you have more than five categories, once you’ve selected a label for each - then select the top five labels that you think should be our school community’s core values. You’ll share your top five with the large group.

Example Values

You can use this list a starting place for generating your own list, but feel free to come up with your own ideas that aren't on this list.

Acceptance	Impact	Well-being
Achievement	Inclusiveness	Wisdom
Adventure	Independence	Wit
Advocacy	Individuality	
Ambition	Innovation	Other ideas:
Appreciation	Inspiration	
Authenticity	Integrity	
Awareness	Intelligence	
Balance	Joy	
Bravery	Kindness	
Brilliance	Knowledge	
Caring	Leadership	
Challenge	Learning	
Cheerfulness	Love	
Community	Loyalty	
Commitment	Mindfulness	
Compassion	Motivation	
Cooperation	Optimism	
Collaboration	Open-Mindedness	
Consistency	Originality	
Creativity	Passion	
Curiosity	Peace	
Daring	Professionalism	
Decisiveness	Quality	
Dedication	Recognition	
Dependability	Reliability	
Diversity	Resilience	
Empathy	Responsibility	
Encouragement	Respect	
Enthusiasm	Risk	
Excitement	Safety	
Equity	Security	
Family	Self-expression	
Friendship	Selflessness	
Flexibility	Service	
Freedom	Social Justice	
Fun	Stability	
Generosity	Teamwork	
Growth	Thankfulness	
Happiness	Truth	
Health	Trust	
Honesty	Understanding	
Humility	Uniqueness	
Humor	Warmth	

Activity Inventory and Prioritization

Facilitation Guide

- This facilitation guide is broken into three parts. Determine ahead of time whether to go through each part at once with stakeholders, or break them into separate meetings. Also think about which stakeholders you think should be involved in each part.

Part 1. Identifying and Analyzing Current Activities

Materials:

- Pens, pencils, and markers
- Copies of the [Activity Inventory 11x17 Worksheet](#) (or access to [Google Sheet version](#))
- Large sticky poster paper

Process:

- Engage participants in a warm welcome activity and have participants introduce themselves
- Ground participants in a review of the vision and values that have been developed
 - * Consider posting these somewhere in the room for reference during the activity
- Explain the purpose of the activity: *We're going to work together to identify the activities—or efforts, programs, and strategies—that we're currently using as a school to reach our goals of improving student outcomes and achieving equity. We're also going to spend some time thinking about how well each of our current activities align with our vision and values, how they align to larger priorities for the district, what's going well and what challenges we're facing, and how resources are being used—or may need to be used in the future—to support each activity.*
- Start by having participants brainstorm a list of all current activities (efforts, strategies, programs) at the school. You could have people brainstorm separately, or in small groups, or as a large group.
 - * **Tip:** Consider how you will capture these ideas, for example on poster paper. Consider school improvement strategies, but also any other program, strategy, or effort that your school is currently using to reach a desired outcome (i.e. improved student outcomes)
- Once you have a list of all current activities, have participants work through the prompts on the Activity Inventory worksheet. You could have people work individually first, or in small groups, or just work together as a large group.
 - * **Tip:** Break people into small groups and assign each group one activity. Have them generate their responses on poster paper, and then share out each poster with the large group for feedback.
- Remember to wrap up and discuss next steps, if the meeting will adjourn at this point.

Part 2. Brainstorming New Activities

Materials:

- Pens, pencils, and markers
- Copies of the [Activity Inventory 11x17 Worksheet](#) (or access to [Google Sheet version](#))
- Large sticky poster paper

Process:

- Engage participants in a warm welcome activity and have participants introduce themselves
- Ground participants in a review of the vision and values that have been developed
 - * Consider posting these somewhere in the room for reference during the activity
- Explain the purpose of the activity: *Now that we've thought about all of the activities—or efforts, programs, and strategies—that we're currently using as a school, we want to brainstorm what other activities we are already thinking about or want to consider adding in the future.*

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- Start by having participants brainstorm some of the challenges that your school is currently facing. People could work as individuals, in small groups, or as a large group.
 - * **Tip:** Consider how you will capture these ideas, for example on poster paper. They could think about challenges that came up when thinking about current activities, or think about some of the root causes that are behind what you see in data on student achievement and equity—like those identified during your Comprehensive Needs Assessment in your SIP.
- Then, have participants brainstorm current ideas that have been circulating in the school community already or new ideas for activities that they think could address a specific challenge that has been identified. People could work as individuals, in small groups, or as a large group.
 - * **Tip:** Consider how you will capture these ideas, for example on poster paper. Depending on the stakeholder group involved, activity ideas could be general or could name specific programs. Keep in mind that eventually, the adoption of a new activity at the school should be based on research that shows evidence of the efficacy of the activity in a similar school setting.
- Once you have a list of new activity ideas, have participants work through the prompts on the back of the Activity Inventory worksheet. You could have people work individually first, or in small groups, or just work together as a large group.
 - * **Tip:** Break people into small groups and assign each group one activity idea. Have them generate their responses on poster paper, and then share out each poster with the large group for feedback.
- Remember to wrap up and discuss next steps, if the meeting will adjourn at this point.

Part 3. Prioritizing Activities and New Ideas

- *The guidance below is one idea for how to lead participants through a process of prioritizing current and potential activities, however it isn't the only way you could accomplish this goal. The plan below utilizes voting and a "majority rules" approach to building consensus. Feel free to use whatever process works best for your stakeholders.*

Materials:

- Pens, pencils, and markers
- A list of current activities and any brainstormed ideas for new activities that resulted from Parts 1 and 2, written out on large poster paper and hung around the room
- Extra, blank large sticky poster paper
- Dot stickers
 - * **Tip:** Consider using different colored stickers for different stakeholders (i.e., green for staff, blue for parents, red for community members, orange for students, etc.)

Process:

- Engage participants in a warm welcome activity and have participants introduce themselves
- Ground participants in a review of the vision and values that have been developed
 - * Consider posting these somewhere in the room for reference during the activity
- Explain the purpose of the activity: *Together, we've generated a list of our current activities and also ideas for new activities that we think could help us address some of our challenges and reach our goals as a community. Now, we're going to engage in a process to help identify which activities, current or new, we think will lead to the biggest impact. Knowing what our school community believes are the most important things for us to invest our time and resources in will help guide decisions about programming and budgeting for next year.*

- First, go through each of the activities, current and new ideas, that are posted around the room. Make sure that participants know what each activity is, and talk a little about the discussion that has occurred up to this point (especially if not everyone was involved in Parts 1 and 2 of this process).
- Allow time for participants to discuss the activities, as needed.
- * **Tips for the dot voting process:**
 - ◊ *You can make a judgement call concerning how many dot stickers to give each participant. It will likely depend on how many people are there, how many activities you have listed, and how many rounds you want to do. Feel free to change the numbers indicated below.*
 - ◊ *Feel free to change the “rules” or number of rounds of voting you do, so that it makes sense for your group(s).*
- Handout the dot stickers and explain the instructions for voting in the first round.
 1. Each person will receive 5 stickers
 2. Walk around the room and review the list of current activities and ideas for new activities
 3. Put your stickers next to the five activities that you think are currently having— or will have— the biggest impact on increasing student success and achieving equity
 4. Only one sticker per activity, and you must keep your stickers whole (no splitting them in half)
 5. Don’t worry about where other people put their stickers
 6. When you’re done, sit down
- When voting for the first round is done, identify the 10 activities that got the most votes (the top 10).
- Re-write those 10 onto a new poster paper, or on a few different poster papers.
- Handout the dot stickers and explain the instructions for voting in the second round.
 1. Each person will receive 3 stickers
 2. Review the list of top 10 activities
 3. Put your stickers next to the three activities that you think are currently having— or will have— the biggest impact on increasing student success and achieving equity
 4. Only one sticker per activity, and you must keep your stickers whole (no splitting them in half)
 5. Don’t worry about where other people put their stickers
 6. When you’re done, sit down
- When voting for the second round is done, identify the 5 activities that got the most votes (the top 5)
- Re-write those 5 onto a new poster paper
- Handout the dot stickers and explain the instructions for voting in the final round.
 1. Each person will receive 1 sticker
 2. Review the list of top 5 activities
 3. Put your sticker next to the one activity that you think is currently having— or will have—the biggest impact on increasing student success and achieving equity
 4. You must keep your sticker whole (no splitting it in half)
 5. Don’t worry about where other people put their stickers
 6. When you’re done, sit down
- When voting for the final round is done, identify the 3 activities that got the most votes (the top 3)
- Discuss the overall process and participant reactions and feelings.
- Wrap up the discussion with an optimistic closure, ensuring that participants understand what will happen next and how their input and help prioritizing current and potential activities may impact decisions about resource allocation or programming for the future.

Equity Considerations

Facilitation Guide

Materials:

- Pens and pencils
- [Equity Considerations worksheets](#) (1 copy per participant or per small group)
- **Tip:** Either have the anticipated changes/eliminations to efforts, strategies, or programs already identified on the worksheets that you'll give participants, or have a way to display them during the meeting

Process:

- Engage participants in a warm welcome activity and have participants introduce themselves.
- Explain the purpose of the activity that participants are about to engage in: *Many of you were involved in the process to identify the most high leverage activities that we want to continue or work on putting into place next school year. However, given limited resources, we have had to make some tough decisions about how best to support the activities that we think will have the biggest impact for our students. As a result, we've identified some things that we will need to eliminate or change next year. Today, you'll have an opportunity to help us anticipate which of our students may be most impacted by those changes, and help us think creatively about how we can mitigate any potential negative impacts.*
- Have participants form pairs or small groups. Handout the Equity Considerations worksheets.
- Describe to the large group the changes and/or eliminations that you are anticipating for next year. These could already be on their worksheets, or displayed in the room. Answer any questions.
- Ask each pair or small group to think about one particular anticipated change or elimination—or you can allow them to spend time on all of them. You may want to provide some examples of what “specific student groups” means (i.e., race/ethnicity, gender, grade, designation for services, etc.). Give participants work time to answer the questions on the worksheet.
- After some work time in pairs or small groups, ask participants to share out their thinking and discuss as a large group.
 - * **Tip:** Be sure to document thoughts from all groups, or ask participants to turn in their worksheets when they leave.
- Discuss the activity as a group. Consider asking participants what role they anticipate playing next year to help ensure that you're achieving your vision and staying true to your community values.
- Wrap up the discussion with an optimistic closure, ensuring that participants understand what will happen next regarding budget decision-making or finalization.