

Top Ten Questions to Ask about Your Budget



- 1. What is our budget process?**
 - a. Do we have a budget calendar?
 - b. How do you gather input, and what is the involvement of other staff?
- 2. How are our financials looking?**
 - a. How do revenues this year compare to the budget?
 - b. Are expenditures aligned with expectations?
- 3. What does our fund balance look like?**
 - a. Do we anticipate ending this year where we expected?
 - b. What is the 3 to 5-year trend for the fund balance, and what does this suggest?
- 4. What are our Revenue and Expense Assumptions?**
 - a. How did you develop these?
 - b. What questions should I be asking about specific budget categories?
- 5. What if we don't make our budget?**
 - a. What is our Plan B if we overspend?
 - b. What is our plan to repurpose expenses if we underspend?
- 6. How long could we operate with no additional revenue?**
 - a. How is this question different for districts than charters?
 - b. What does this question try to answer?
- 7. How does the budget align with our strategic plan and priorities?**
 - a. Do the expenses align with our goals?
 - b. Does the budget tell the story of where we want to go and how we are getting there?
- 8. How will we discuss our budget with our community?**
 - a. How do we demonstrate transparency and accountability?
 - b. What are strategies to make our communication most effective?
- 9. Will this budget help us maintain and/or recruit new staff?**
 - a. How does the budget effect our staffing numbers?
 - b. Will our budget allow us to recruit more people?
- 10. How do you see this budget impacting our operations?**
 - a. How does the budget help move our organization forward for students and staff?
 - b. What are the implications of this budget for us five years from now?

