

Pre-Lecture Writing Assignment for Budgeting

Please Note: This written assignment is to be handed in on the day of the lecture.

For a *school* of your choice, compile total spending for **current operation**. Your written report should not exceed *three* double spaced pages. If you turn in more than three pages, only the first three pages will be read and graded. No appendixes are necessary. (Identify the major sources of your information)

1. Specify the name of the school and provide background information such as the number of students enrolled, the grade levels served by the school, average income of households in the area served by the school, and the number of years the school has been in operation.
2. Describe and sum the major personnel and non-personnel operating costs for the school. (It may be necessary to use district averages for operations such as transportation and food service.)
3. Estimate the percentage of the total cost, and the total cost per pupil, that is related directly to instruction and discuss possible reallocations that would increase this percentage.
4. What percentage of the total school operating cost can be spent at the discretion of the principal and/or staff and parents at the school?
5. Where possible, compare the costs you have obtained with district, state and national average per pupil operating expenditures. (Divide the total operating cost by the number of pupils served to obtain a unit operating expenditure.)
6. If the school's operating cost per pupil is higher or lower than the district average, what district policies account for the school's variation from the district average?
7. What values and priorities are evident in the district's approach to budgeting?

Special Directions for Students Working in Private Schools: Students working in private schools should use their own school as the subject for this assignment. Answer Q. 1 and Q. 2 as written. In Q. 3, compare your school with public schools serving similar grade configurations using whatever data are available—the Internet is a good source. Answer Q. 4 as written. Omit Q. 5 since most private schools do not have an administrative hierarchy and most decisions are made at the school site. For Q. 6, compare your private school's costs with public school costs and speculate about the reason for any differences that may exist. For Q. 7, substitute "school" for "district."