School Planning & Strategic Budget Questions

Below are a list of school planning and strategic budgeting questions to guide your school priority and budget decisions.

Key Lever	School Planning Question	Strategic Budget Implication
School Vision	What are the school's vision and focus areas that will enable academic improvement?	School's vision and strategic focus areas should guide how resources can be used to boost student outcomes.
Culture	i. What is the school's demographic, student population and staffing dynamics? ii. What is the current school culture? iii. What changes do you want to make to student and staff culture?	School leaders should consider the unique needs of their students, parents and communities in improving academic achievement. Also, it is important to consider how resources are supporting the appropriate school culture and aligned with student needs.
Instructional Leadership	i. What is the vision for learning in your school? ii. What systems, structures, and expertise are in place at your school to support the implementation of a new curricular or assessment resource or a new small group instruction program? iii. What is the level of teacher experience, expertise, and knowledge of standards in your school? iv. What systems, structures, and resources do you have in place to support teachers in lesson planning, scope and sequence design, etc.? v. What is the instructional model that exists within your school and how are teachers trained to deliver the model?	School leaders should assess whether the expertise and capacity of their leadership team align with the school's vision for learning. Schools should evaluate whether the appropriate systems and structures are in place to support teachers. This may necessitate creating more planning time, adjusting master schedule or additional instructional support.
Planning	i. Does the school schedule for next year support your decisions? ii. How will your strategic planning decisions impact budget and staffing? iii. Does the resource you are choosing have consumable materials that need to be replenished annually? Does it have licensing fees? iv. Does your school have the required devices and/or bandwidth to implement a specific online curriculum or assessment, if desired?	Based on your level of flexibility, school leaders should consider the operational needs and financial costs related to school planning and staffing decisions.
Data Driven Instruction	i. Do you have a data team and data cycle in place to inform instruction? ii. How do you currently use data to inform classroom decisions? iii. Does your school use a DDI cycles and where does the evidence of effectiveness exist?	School leaders should use data to drive decisions around instructional resources, talent and social and emotional support.

Key Lever	School Planning Question	Strategic Budget Implication
Student Support	i. How will school's strategic planning decisions impact your most at-risk populations (e.g., economically disadvantaged, ELL, SPED, overaged, etc.)? ii. What interventions do you currently have in place to support your school's population? iii. Based on flexibilities, how will additional supports be leveraged for ESSA accountability categories?	School leaders should consider ways to meet the unique needs of their student populations and ensure alignment with their school planning decisions.
Parent Engagement	What systems and structures do you have in place to ensure parent engagement and student ownership of their learning? What additional supports will you provide to your stakeholders to ensure student learning exists beyond school hours?	School leaders should consider the voice of parents in the school planning and strategic budgeting decisions, particularly as it related to Title I funds.
Professional Development	What is the Professional Development Plan (PDP) for preparing teachers for implementing new curricula, assessments, and/or RTI2?	School leaders should determine what resources are needed to execute PDPs for their teachers and counsel with Academics on how to strengthen capacity.