



PACE Conference

"Promising Practices for Continuous Improvement in California"

Panel:

Promising Practices in School District Budgeting Under LCFF

The California Smarter School Spending Project

Panelists: Dr. Arun Ramanathan – Pivot Learning

Dr. Stephanie Phillips – SAUSD

Myong Leigh – SFUSD

January 27, 2017

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*Districts today are being asked to do more
and are being stretched thin*

How can your district find the
time, people, and money to
support these initiatives?



Is your district looking to carry out a **strategic planning process**?

Is your district facing a **budget deficit**?

Are you evaluating a major **new investment**?

How can your district find the **time, people, and money** to support these initiatives?

Do you need support **engaging** with your district's **community**?

Do you feel as if your district has **no where else to look** in the budget for savings?

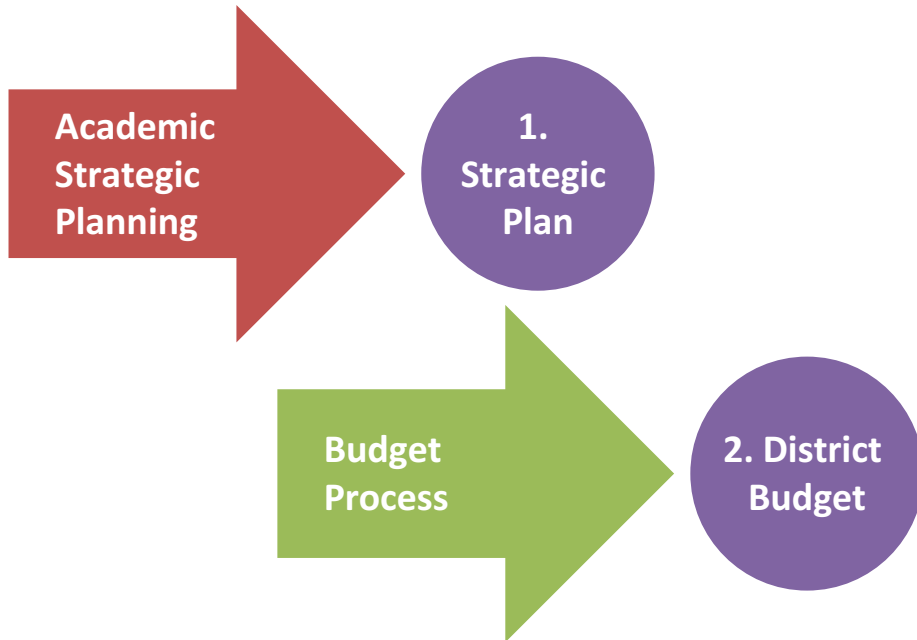


The Smarter School Spending process brings together strategic academic planning and budgeting



In many districts...

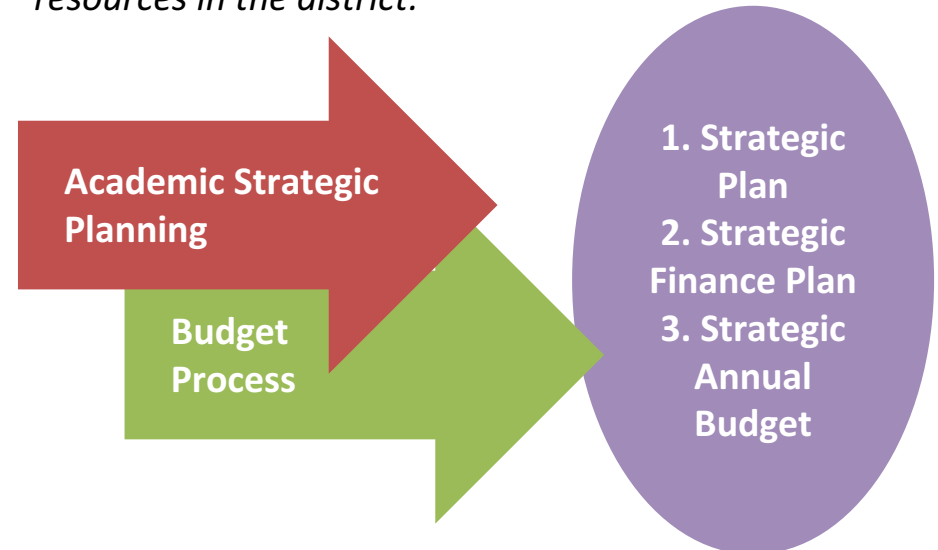
...strategic planning and budget processes happen in parallel tracks that don't intersect:



When these processes happen in isolation, a district is at risk for creating a strategic plan that cannot be funded and a budget that has no strategic basis

In Smarter School Spending...

...strategic planning and the budgeting process are merged to create a process for strategic use of resources in the district:



Merging these processes allows for greater alignment of district strategy and finances, and allows the district to balance financial decisions as tradeoffs for increasing strategic investments in students

At the core of the process is “Resource Tradeoffs”

What are the district’s instructional priorities?

How can the district pay for those priorities?

Budget



Instructional Priorities

Add funding to high priority areas that will have the greatest impact on student achievement

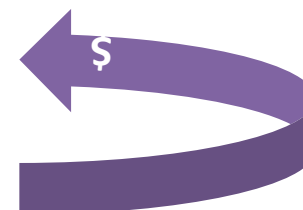


Savings Options

Reallocate spending from lower priority areas in order to fund instructional priorities



Within both investments and savings options, there are opportunities to make current spending more efficient



The Five Step Smarter School Spending Process

Smarter School Spending is a five-step process to develop and implement a strategic finance plan over 9–18 months. Some districts choose to focus on just one specific step and set of resources most relevant to them with the support of a technical assistance provider.



From <http://k12education.gatesfoundation.org/smarter-school-spending/>



The Smarter School Spending Cost Savings Screening & Sizing Tool

31 Cost
savings
opportunities
within
7 focus areas

Category	#	Opportunity
Reducing operational costs	1	Can the district free up funds from general education transportation ?
	2	Can the district free up funds from energy expenditures ?
	3	Can the district free up funds from maintenance services ?
	4	Can the district free up funds from custodial services ?
	5	Can the district free up funds from food services ?
	6	Can the district free up funds from classroom and other instructional technology ?
Rethinking service delivery models for students who struggle	7	Can the district address mild special needs differently?
	8	Can the district free up funds from paraprofessional positions ?
	9	Can the district free up funds by increasing the impact of intervention teaching positions ?
	10	Can the district free up funds from special education teaching positions ?
	11	Can the district free up funds from speech and language therapist positions ?
	12	Can the district increase the impact of Title I spending ?
	13	Can the district free up funds by reducing reliance on out-of-district special education placements ?
	14	Can the district free up funds by reducing its reliance on alternative schools for students with behavioral challenges?
Maximizing revenue	15	Can the district increase state and federal funding by maximizing free and reduced-priced meals enrollment ?
	16	Can the district increase federal Medicaid reimbursement for health-related student services?
Boosting the impact and cost-effectiveness of professional development for teachers	17	Can the district free up funds from professional development expenditures ?
	18	Can the district provide more professional development opportunities for core teachers at little or no additional cost?
	19	Can the district increase the impact of the coaching model at little to no additional cost?
	20	Can the district free up funds from instructional coaching positions ?
Examining staffing levels of non-instructional staff	21	Can the district free up funds from central office spending ?
	22	Can the district free up funds from school-based administrator positions and/or increase the impact of existing
	23	Can the district free up funds from clerical support positions ?
	24	Can the district free up funds from library/media specialist positions and/or increase the impact of existing positions ?
	25	Can the district free up funds from guidance counselor positions ?
Using instructional time more cost-effectively	26	Can the district free up funds associated with teacher absences ?
	27	Can the district free up funds from extended school day and/or year programs ?
	28	Can the district free up funds from blended learning and/or online classes and/or increase the impact at little or no additional cost?
Managing class size	29	Can the district free up funds by managing class sizes differently at the elementary schools ?
	30	Can the district free up funds by managing class sizes differently at the middle schools ?
	31	Can the district free up funds by managing class sizes differently at the high schools ?

5 steps for analyzing reallocation opportunities

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 Understand budget/program details | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Work with subject matter experts to break down aspects of the budget (e.g., budget tree) and understand basic operational information |
| 2 Identify cost drivers | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Use budget breakdown to identify both:<ul style="list-style-type: none">— Largest areas of cost— Drivers of cost going up or down (e.g., number of buses, number of students requiring busing, cost per bus, etc.) |
| 3 Determine policy and other constraints | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Identify constraints for potential change to areas<ul style="list-style-type: none">— Classify constraints into district preferences vs. more rigid restrictions (e.g., state policy, contracts, etc.)— For contracts, identify time when lifted for renegotiation |
| 4 Size and prioritize | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Estimate \$ impact (savings) of adjusting cost drivers and what changes would be required to achieve savings▪ Prioritize most attractive options to achieve cost savings based on size of impact, ease of implementation and any other considerations pertinent to a specific district |
| 5 Support work plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Identify appropriate reallocation opportunity owner within district and share findings & analysis▪ Assist as needed in planning for capture of savings |



Smarter School Spending tools & resources

<http://www.smarterschoolspending.org/>

Smarter School Spending

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[Success Stories](#)

[Framework](#)

[Resources](#)



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A new way to align resources with student achievement goals through:

- ✓ A true partnership between academic and finance staff
- ✓ Putting money where it will do the most good for kids
- ✓ Better planning and decision-making

[Learn more](#)

[Self Assessment](#)

[Success Stories](#)

What is the “California Smarter School Spending Initiative?”

Pivot’s Smarter School Spending is ...

- **A transformative process using the Smarter School Spending Toolkit and Pivot’s Change Design model** to narrow strategic priorities, build collaboration between finance, student supports and instructional departments and find the money to fund them
- **A methodology requiring deep district engagement and ownership** from leaders AND “working” team members, in addition to support from Pivot
- **A set of tools designed to “jumpstart”** the LCAP prioritization and savings identification process, based on other districts’ experiences
- **A strategic partnership to co-create new best practices** in strategic planning & budgeting, integrating lessons from other districts with the unique needs of your district in California



Participating Districts & CMO



Cohort 1:

Pomona Unified School District
Enrollment: 25,000

Tracy Unified School District
Enrollment: 17,000

Hayward Unified School District
Enrollment: 23,000

Santa Ana Unified School District
Enrollment: 55,000

Cohort 2:

San Francisco Unified School District
Enrollment: 53,000

Cohort 3 (Charter Management Organization)

Education for Change
Enrollment: 6 K-8 Schools



Goals of the initiative



The primary objective of this project is to identify the necessary resources to fund instructional priorities and provide schools and educators with the support they need to equitably implement the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Through this project, Pivot will work with the district/CMO to better allocate resources to support student success by:

- More sharply defining strategic priorities to make them more actionable/fundable.
- Identifying operational and other savings efficiencies that can unleash funds to support students.
- Identifying ongoing initiatives that should be discontinued in favor of supporting higher impact efforts.
- Improving ability to engage stakeholders and revising engagement/budgeting/strategic planning process in a way that ensures scarce resources are allocated to highest priority initiatives with community support.
- Enhancing capabilities to annually refresh strategy and identify further reallocation opportunities.



Results of the initiative



Pivot worked with districts to better allocate resources to support student success by:

- Identifying approximately \$8 Million in operational and other savings efficiencies to invest in fundable initiatives/programs supporting students.
- Supporting communication of academic priorities as well as revised budgeting and strategic planning process resulting in improved stakeholder engagement.
- Facilitating development of plan to institutionalize Smarter School Spending through the Design Team process, including annual strategy and identification of additional reallocation opportunities.
- Working with districts to integrate LCAP into this year-long process of aligning resources with core strategies

Districts are willing and excited to align resources to their strategies, as shown by:

- **Superintendent sponsorship for this work.** In all districts, superintendents have been involved and vocally supportive of aligning academics with budget
- **Commitment of meaningful, year-round time and attention.** Academic, finance, and LCAP leaders have joined “Design Teams” where they will collect stakeholder input, analyze data, and ultimately guide the district towards tough decisions on academic priorities and budget
- **Appetite for ensuring *every* dollar is driving student achievement** by reviewing the full budget for opportunities to drive impact

However, challenges remain in implementation, particularly around:

- **Articulating clear, fundable priorities.** In particular, districts often have priorities at different levels of “fundability” (e.g., online AP courses vs. increasing graduation rates)
- **Engaging the community meaningfully,** both in educating community members and soliciting specific, actionable input

Strategic planning and budgeting is a systems change process.

Transformational change takes time.

Santa Ana USD
Superintendent: Stefanie Phillips, Ed.D.

- **Alignment on top academic priorities and short list of current/potential academic initiatives** (Increase academic achievement for English Learner students) focused on early literacy interventions (K-5)
 - **Tradeoffs/Reallocation** hiring additional job-embedded coaches
- **Identification of cost savings** (Maintenance) investigated and assigned owners to drive deeper dive and implementation
- **Clear alignment on next steps and timing** for upcoming decisions

Alignment with SY 2017-2018 budget planning

During the upcoming budget process SAUSD will begin to intentionally align resources with strategic priorities:

Key considerations will include:

- What is the theory of action or intended outcome of the initiative? How will the dollars allocated support this?
- What are the indicators of effectiveness for key initiatives? What does success look like?
- How is implementation measured and tracked over time for initiatives to help ensure intended outcomes are reached?
- How does this initiative align with system priorities and the best use of resources to support students?



- This will allow leaders to make a compelling case for resources aligned to areas that are most beneficial to students
- Scaling tools and processes from Smarter School Spending across SAUSD will help to answer these key questions in a consistent and actionable way

San Francisco USD
Interim Superintendent: Myong Leigh

Smarter School Spending/ROI Team Structure

Project Sponsor: Myong Leigh

Project Driver: Thu Cung

<i>ROLE</i>	<i>SFUSD Structure</i>	<i>Responsibilities</i>
Steering Committee	Executive Leadership Team (ELT) & ROI Working Group (GG/ML/JH/RK/RM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set overall district vision, goals, priorities • Present findings to addtl. stakeholders (i.e., BoE)
Design Team	SMART	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary coordinators of initiatives • Produce deliverables and monitor regular output
Internal Support (<i>SFUSD specific</i>)	ROI Analysts (<i>Central Office IRFs</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct deep-dive analysis • Work with Design Team to use tools and progress monitor implementation and impact

- **Refinement of top academic priorities and short list of current/potential academic initiatives** (Increase academic achievement for African-American students) aligned with strategic plan refresh and supporting initiatives
 - Analyzed effectiveness of “first wave” of initiatives using the impact assessment framework and incorporated findings into LCAP and budget (2016-17)
- **Identification of cost savings/increased reimbursement** (FARM) investigated and assigned owners to drive deeper dive and implementation
- **Additional steps**
 - Developed Self Assessment budget tool aligned with Smarter School Spending principles
 - Developed new budget forms linking funding to district priorities and LCAP



Thank You

Questions?

contact us at

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