

Campus Spending Norms:

Our approach to campus spending is based on equity and adequacy. We want our kids to have everything they need to *thrive*, as our mission says. Therefore, we strive to balance an abundance mindset with being thrifty and thoughtful on how we spend our funds. As a double check on these norms, we will review campus spending on a quarterly and as needed basis to calibrate across the network.

Note on Budgets: Funds for each category will be allotted per campus in July and may be adjusted if needed in October based in part on student enrollment and staffing numbers.

- The finance team will provide quarterly updates to these spending categories to ensure campuses can remain on track. This reporting will typically be on at least a one month lag. Campuses can choose to track expenses on their own more closely using a monthly expense sheet.
- If one category is over budget it needs to be covered by another category. ie. your total cannot be exceeded without explicit permission.

Classroom Materials

- Curriculum Materials - we order consumable materials each year as needed based on inventories and requests from teachers.
 - We should be 3 units ahead in terms of inventorying and ordering for supplies at all times.
 - Many materials can be reused every year and do not need to be replaced.
 - Unit materials should not be in poor condition, if they are please replace them.
 - When do we know to discard and reorder?
 - Dirty - if after cleaning its still not clean - lets replace it
 - Old - if it looks beyond its useful lifecycle - lets replace it
 - Any consumable materials that have mold or have been around critters, and are not able to be effectively cleaned
 - Who decides what supplemental materials items are acceptable?
 - This should be a collaboration between each Operations Team Member and Principal, generally we can reasonably say no to something when it is:
 - Very expensive and you find something cheaper
 - Seems excessive
 - Could be something you make without much effort (ie. 'Teacher Created Resource' according to the curriculum guide)
 - Not age appropriate
 - When in doubt, consult the Curriculum Team & Director of Operations
 - As an example of the discretion delegated to campuses - some campuses like reusable backdrops for dramatic play and save them from year to year, while others prefer if those backdrops are made with butcher paper each year - both are fine approaches
 - Snacks for students

- Midday - For self-managed campuses, we order snacks through our food service provider.
- Extended Day - Healthy snacks are provided by the food service program. If there are special occasions where snacks need to be available, then special thought should be given to ensuring they comply with the NSLP guidelines. Snacks purchased for students should be used for students only.
- Partnership schools - Defer to their food service program and plan.
- Budgets include funds to provide accommodations for students with special needs (sometimes purchased by the SPED team, sometimes by the campus)
- Yearbook production is not supported (unless paid through the partnership school)
- Extended Day supplies are INCLUDED in the budget
- Preferred Vendor List:
 - Amazon
 - Discount School Supplies
 - WB Mason
 - DrinkMore Water
 - Uline
 - Lakeshore (generally more expensive so limit to items that cannot be found elsewhere)
- Option for managing classroom budgets:
 - Some campuses elect to give each classroom a budget, this is a fine way to manage the overall campus budget. As an example:
 - Each teacher has a budget of \$100 per unit per classroom for supplemental materials (not ECR required supplies)
 - If that teacher has lost materials or books in the past, that budget may be reduced to \$50

Note on Amazon Approvals: Oversight is ensured through separation of duties and spending thresholds. Any ordering from online systems is placed by the Campus Operations Team Member, then approved by the Principal. If it exceeds \$500 it requires an additional approval prior to releasing the order. If it is a 'restricted type' item then it requires additional approval (ie. technology and furniture). Please plan ahead so orders are not needed urgently if they fall into these categories requiring additional approval. If someone is planning to go on PTO for an extended period, be sure that you have ordered ahead or they have 'delegated' someone to approve in their absence.

School Wide Materials

- Our standard is that we do not want to have anything that is broken or in poor condition.
- IT Purchases - Should generally go through the IT Department via the ticket system (includes laminator but not lamination supplies).
- Furniture Purchases - Should generally go through the Facility Department via the ticket system.
- Prior to disposing of any materials, please double check with the Director of Operations as some materials and supplies have required compliance for disposal based on funding.

- If a student is in need of necessities (uniforms, coats, transportation...) please check with your Social Worker first to see if they have resources available.
- Social workers have small budgets to support homeless students - they manage that separately. On a case by case basis social workers can also support non-homeless students and families in need.
- Grills, Large Coolers, Popcorn Makers, Snow Cone Machines, etc. should not be purchased without approval from the Director of Operations or Chief of Schools. Our goal is to borrow and share these items across the network and not purchase each of these items for each campus.

Staff Spending

- Monthly appreciation for staff - Spend is no more than \$15 -18 per person per month (this includes meals). If you choose to go over that one month then please go under the next. And remember, most educators actually prefer words of affirmation and recognition that do not cost anything ([article from EdWeek](#)).
- Food for staff professional development:
 - If it is a full day PD, provide one meal (not breakfast and lunch). The cost for lunch per person should be in the \$15 - \$18 range - NOT more than that. We do not need to supply additional snacks.
 - Meals for the entire staff should be ordered no more than once monthly, with the exception of school-wide events such as Back to School Night.
 - During campus week only, you may provide a total of 3 meals for the week.
 - During Teacher Appreciation Week, you may purchase up to one additional meal beyond your once-a-month meal allowance.
- Basic 'breakroom' supplies like coffee and tea are okay. Please do not over purchase.
- Snacks for staff - we generally do not want to purchase snacks and food for staff outside of staff appreciation. Once or twice a month it is okay.
- Gift cards are NOT supported. (If we gave gift cards we would have to tax the individuals as it is now considered compensation for tax purposes.)
- Deaths - We can purchase items less than \$75 (ie. flowers, plants)
- Births/Birthdays - Usually the "sunshine committee" will coordinate a shower for the teacher/staff. People purchase items out of pocket. Please do not use school funds to purchase gifts, food or decorations.

Student Enrichments and Field Trips

- Suggested: 2 **external** field trips throughout the year (quarterly), not including any network planned field trips.
- Additional **internal** unit based field trips/enrichment opportunities should be planned for each unit.
- We have 2 preferred bus vendors based on price - see Operations Portal.
- If the enrichment/field trip is beyond your budget, provide a proposal to the Chief of Schools.
- Chaperones - target ratio is 1 adult to every 6 students
 - We covers extra costs for staff and ratio needed chaperones

- We covers extra costs for students requiring additional adult for IEP/ 504
- If you have more volunteer chaperones beyond this ratio it is okay, but we cannot cover their costs in most circumstances

Examples

- Aquarium - free admission for kids
- Pumpkin Patch
- Zoo
- Smithsonian
- Reptile Guy
- Science Guy

Family Engagement Events

- 2 event per month that incurs costs
- Please reference the expectations from the enrollment team

Notes on Contracts:

- Do not sign vendor contracts. The Chief of Schools and Chief Financial Officer are the only ones to sign contracts per our financial policies.
- Fundraising is not permitted without written approval from the Chief of Schools.
- Generally, we do not ask parents to contribute to field trips and other events.