

# TOOL 9

## Assessment of How Well We are FINDING MONEY

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
 strongly disagree    disagree            neutral or don't know    agree                strongly agree

**Questions for Reflection**

- Have we sought out different tools and advice for helping us develop the kind of budget we want?
- What process do we use to ensure that our school priorities are the first items funded?
  
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- What process do we use to ensure that our school priorities are the first items funded?
  
- Have we researched different resource allocation systems (e.g., school-based versus program-based; site-based versus centralized; student-based versus staffing-based)?
- If we are unsatisfied with the current system, have we proposed different allocation systems to district officials?
  
- Have we laid out what outcomes we expect for our expenditures (e.g., what specific improvements do we want to see as a result of implementing an after-school program or attending a professional development conference)?
- Have we outlined how we will measure whether or not we have attained our desired outcomes?

**1. MAKE SURE THAT YOU WANT THE IMPROVEMENT MEASURE—NOT SIMPLY THE MONEY**

**Our budget is allocated based directly on our prioritized needs and goals as found in our school improvement plan.**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

**We have identified all of the resources we need to adequately support our school improvement plan.**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

**We are satisfied with the system that the district uses to allocate funding to schools.**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

**2. ALIGN SPENDING WITH PROVEN OUTCOMES**

**We can articulate and measure the outcomes we expect for the allocation of our resources.**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
strongly disagree    disagree    neutral or don't know    agree    strongly agree

**We pursue additional funds based on their relevance to our school improvement plan.**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

**3. TRACK WHERE THE MONEY IS GOING**

**We regularly review our budget to determine if we could better allocate resources to our priorities.**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

**We are satisfied with the ratio of resources spent on regular education versus special education.**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

**Questions for Reflection**

- Have we committed to remaining true to our school's plan for improvement, even when it means missing out on additional funds (that would force us to implement activities not aligned with our school improvement plan)?
- Do we use grants in the manner for which they were intended (e.g., do we use Comprehensive School Reform funding to develop a whole-school reform effort, not pay for a computer lab?)
- What process have we developed to match our budget allocations to our priorities?
- Do we review our resource allocations to ensure we get the most "bang for the buck"?
- Do we track our spending by many different categories (e.g., source, recipient, objective)?
- Have we investigated any software that will help us track and submit our budget online?
- Have we assessed what percentage of our students participate in regular education classrooms without additional support and compared this amount to what percentage of our time and money go to regular education classrooms?
- Have we assessed what percentage of our students have special needs and compared this amount to what percentage of our time and money goes to special education? (Given the extra resources required for special education, do we spend enough time and money in this area? Do we spend too much time and money in this area?)
- What steps have we taken to simplify and expedite the process for enrolling (and unenrolling, as need be) students in special education? Have we researched different methods for special education referrals?

**Questions for Reflection**

- Have we established a team for researching funding opportunities?
- Have we contacted the district to see what funding flexibility our school qualifies for?
- Have we pursued partnership or sponsorships with area businesses?
- If we have some flexibility over our own budget, have we collaborated with other schools to share resources and/or gain economies of scale?
  
- Have we constructed a logic model or theory of change to identify what inputs and activities are necessary for reaching our goals?
- Have we explicitly determined what inputs and activities are necessary for reaching our goals? Have we budgeted accordingly?
  
- Have we internalized the fact that inadequately funding an improvement measure may result in poor results and an eventual unnecessary elimination of a potentially effective reform effort? Have we committed to “If we do something, we do it right”?
- Have we considered implementing a pilot program if we cannot fund a measure across the whole school?

1	2	3	4	5
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral or don't know	agree	strongly agree

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**4. FIND NEW RESOURCES**

**We have taken advantage of all new sources of funding flexibility in the No Child Left Behind legislation and researched all the relevant grants available from the government and private sources.**

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**5. SCALE DOWN THE ORIGINAL EFFORT**

**We understand exactly what inputs and activities are necessary for sustaining our improvement measure.**

1	2	3	4	5
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**We will invest our resources elsewhere rather than not fund the necessary inputs and activities of our improvement effort.**

1	2	3	4	5
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