



Evidence-based tools and guidance  
for delivering effective programs

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[summerlearningtoolkit.org](http://summerlearningtoolkit.org)



## GUIDANCE FOR TOOL: SUMMER BUDGET

This document provides guidance on how to use the Summer Budget tool available in the Summer Learning Toolkit. You can also access the tool in the Planning and Management section of the Toolkit.

### What is the *SUMMER BUDGET* tool and how can you use it?

The Summer Budget Tool, developed by The Learning Agenda, is designed to provide a detailed look at the expenses and revenues involved in operating a summer program. It is intended to be used by district and nonprofit summer program operators to project all of the direct and indirect expenses of a summer program.

### Why is detailed budgeting important?

Designating sufficient resources to implement your summer plan with high quality and fidelity to program design is critical to its success. Careful resource planning and allocation can also ensure that you are spending precious funds on the most important elements of your program.

### Who can benefit from this resource?

- Operational leaders in district central offices
- Operational leaders (e.g., COO or CFO) of nonprofit summer program operators or intermediaries

### Tips for developing an effective budget

- Start planning the program early—in the fall if possible but no later than January.
- Dedicate a lead to manage cross-functional planning who has the influence and authority to organize cross-departmental planning and dedicated time to plan summer.

- Engage key departments, subject experts, and site leaders in planning and budgeting.
- Consider the purpose of your budget before you begin. Depending on the purpose, you may decide that you want to see fully-loaded costs, including all overhead, allocated expenses, etc. This has an impact on what you will include in your budget. For other purposes (e.g., knowing how much money you need to raise), you may not need to include overhead or allocated expenses, if those expenses are already covered by other funding. Be clear about your purpose and consistent in how you apply it.
- Be careful not to double count expenses. If you've entered maintenance staff on the Personnel tab, don't enter the contract that includes maintenance staff on the Site Facilities tab. There's no right or wrong about *where* you enter an expense, as long as you don't enter it twice.
- Read the Instructions tab and the instructions at the top of each worksheet very carefully. The template has many embedded formulas, and it is important that you enter data in the right form and in the right places.
- The template can be as simple or as complex as your program! If you are an experienced Excel user, feel free to add additional tabs or make adjustments (just be sure new tabs feed into the Budget Summary tab). If you are not an experienced Excel user, just stick closely to the instructions and make edits to customize your budget only where you are instructed to do so.