

STUDENTS FACE UP to the NATION'S FINANCES

Ready, On Your Mark, Balance That Budget!

Why just talk about balancing the budget, when you can take a crack at balancing it yourself?

Participants in Public Agenda's **Students Face Up to the Nation's Finances** curriculum can use the **Budget Hero** online budget-balancing game for tournaments. It's all about dollars and sense, as players rack up spending decisions while courting public opinion, in the form of votes from other contestants.



Here's how to play:

* Log onto to **Budget Hero** by American Public Media (http://marketplace.publicradio.org/features/budget_hero). Students may compete either as individuals, or, in teams of two or more persons (teams not recommended for small or medium-size classes).

* Round One: contestants have five minutes to make spending decisions on the federal budget, and when time runs out, the six players with the lowest cost budgets are the winners of the round. All other contestants are thrown out of the game and become the jury to vote on which of the semifinalists will advance to the next round of the competition.

* Members of the jury examine the six budgets that won Round One (budget details can be printed out or posted to Facebook), may ask each of the round's winners to defend specific funding choices or budget cuts, and the jury then votes on Best Budget. The three players with the most votes advance to the next round, and the losing players join the jury.

* In Round Two, the three remaining players start from scratch, have five minutes to make spending and budget cut decisions, and in the hopes of winning votes, can adjust their fiscal strategies based on the jury's previous comments.

* The two lowest-cost budgets win Round Two, and the losing player joins the jury. Jury members may ask the finalists to defend their spending decisions. The jury then votes on Best Budget, and the player with the most votes is the winner.

* Variation: players can begin the first round of Budget Hero at home, with no time limits, preparing Budgets whose results are either printed out or posted to Facebook.

* What will you cut? What will you save? **Winners and others are encouraged to share their budget-balancing stories and ideas** - - send them to us at HallOfFame@FacingUp.org and you may be invited to be a guest blogger at FacingUp.org.