

ENGLISH PLACEMENT TEST

Executive Profile · School Leadership & Finance

Candidate name	Date	Position	Campus / Network
SERGIO VILLANUEVA	SEPTEMBER 14th	HEADMASTER	BADEN POWELL/MERITED

Instructions

- Total time: 50 minutes. Do not use a dictionary, a translator or any AI tool.
- If you do not know an answer, leave it blank. Guessing at random makes the result less useful for you.
- Parts 1 to 4 are written. Part 5 is an oral interview with the examiner.
- The purpose is not to pass or fail. It is to find your exact starting point.

PART 1 — USE OF ENGLISH

Select one option only.

1. The school year _____ in August.
(a) begin (b) begins (c) is begin (d) begun
2. There _____ twelve teachers in the primary section.
(a) is (b) are (c) have (d) has
3. Last year we _____ a new library.
(a) build (b) built (c) have build (d) building
4. How much _____ the new uniforms cost?
(a) do (b) does (c) is (d) are
5. Our campus is _____ than the one in Puebla.
(a) big (b) bigger (c) biggest (d) more big
6. I _____ work in Toluca, but now I work in Mexico City.
(a) use to (b) used to (c) am used to (d) was used
7. We _____ the budget yet.
(a) didn't approve (b) haven't approved (c) don't approve (d) aren't approving
8. If we reduce tuition fees, enrollment _____ next year.
(a) will increase (b) would increase (c) increased (d) has increased
9. The board asked me _____ the report by Friday.
(a) send (b) to send (c) sending (d) that I send
10. _____ of our five campuses has its own accountant.
(a) Every (b) Each (c) All (d) Both
11. The auditor is _____ to arrive at nine.
(a) suppose (b) supposed (c) supposing (d) suppose to

12. We spent _____ money on maintenance last term.
(a) too much (b) too many (c) very many (d) so many
13. The new director, _____ started in January, has restructured the finance team.
(a) which (b) who (c) whose (d) what
14. Enrollment _____ by 8% since 2022.
(a) rose (b) has risen (c) is rising (d) had risen
15. We can't hire more staff _____ the payroll budget is frozen.
(a) although (b) despite (c) because (d) in order to
16. By the time the auditors arrived, we _____ all the invoices.
(a) filed (b) had filed (c) have filed (d) were filing
17. The tuition increase _____ approved at the last board meeting.
(a) was (b) were (c) has (d) have been
18. The finance manager suggested _____ the contract.
(a) to renegotiate (b) renegotiating (c) renegotiate (d) that renegotiate
19. I'd rather we _____ the decision until the next quarter.
(a) postpone (b) postponed (c) to postpone (d) will postpone
20. _____ the deficit, the network still opened a new campus.
(a) Despite (b) Although (c) However (d) Even
21. The report needs _____ before Monday.
(a) to review (b) reviewing (c) review (d) reviewed
22. Had we anticipated the drop in enrollment, we _____ the extra staff.
(a) wouldn't hire (b) wouldn't have hired (c) didn't hire (d) hadn't hired
23. The CFO made it clear that under no circumstances _____ the reserve fund.
(a) we should touch (b) should we touch (c) we touch (d) touching
24. Were the merger _____, the network would manage eleven campuses.
(a) go ahead (b) to go ahead (c) going ahead (d) gone ahead

PART 2 — READING

Text A

From: Laura Méndez, Network Finance Director

To: Campus Principals

Subject: Q3 budget review — action required

Dear colleagues,

As you know, the Q3 budget review takes place on 14 October. Before that date, each campus must submit an updated spending forecast for the rest of the school year. Please note two changes to last year's procedure. First, forecasts must now be uploaded to the shared drive rather than sent by email. Second, any request for additional funding above \$50,000 must be accompanied by a short written justification; smaller requests can be discussed verbally at the meeting.

I am aware that several campuses are still waiting for confirmation of the enrolment figures for the spring intake. If your figures are not final by 7 October, send your best estimate and mark it clearly as provisional. It is better to submit an approximate forecast on time than an accurate one late.

Finally, the maintenance budget will not be discussed on 14 October. It will be dealt with separately in November, once the building survey has been completed.

Best regards,
Laura

33. What must each campus do before 14 October?
- (a) Attend a preparatory meeting (b) Submit an updated spending forecast (c) Confirm its final enrolment figures (d) Justify all of its spending in writing
34. How are forecasts submitted this year?
- (a) By email to Laura (b) In print at the meeting (c) Uploaded to the shared drive (d) Verbally, campus by campus
35. A campus wants an extra \$30,000. What does it have to do?
- (a) Write a formal justification (b) Nothing — it can raise it at the meeting (c) Wait until November (d) Get approval before 7 October
36. If enrolment figures are not confirmed by 7 October, a principal should:
- (a) delay the forecast until the figures are final (b) send an estimate and label it as provisional (c) use last year's figures without comment (d) contact the finance office for an extension

Text B

Extract from the Annual Report of the Board of Trustees

The past academic year has been one of cautious consolidation. Following the rapid expansion of 2019–2022, when the network grew from three to six campuses, the Board took the deliberate decision to pause further acquisitions. That decision, though unpopular with some investors at the time, now appears to have been prudent. Two of our competitors have since closed sites, and one has entered administration.

Consolidated revenue rose by 4.1%, slightly below inflation, while operating costs rose by 6.3%, driven largely by a salary adjustment agreed in the previous cycle. The resulting pressure on margins was partly offset by a reduction in bad debt, which fell from 3.8% to 2.1% of billed tuition after the introduction of a stricter collection policy. It should be stressed, however, that this improvement reflects better administration rather than any increase in families' ability to pay.

Looking ahead, the Board is conscious that the network cannot continue to absorb above-inflation cost increases indefinitely. A working group has been asked to report by March on the scope for shared services across campuses — procurement, IT and payroll in particular — where duplication remains considerable.

37. How is the decision to stop expanding viewed now?
(a) As a missed commercial opportunity (b) As sensible, in hindsight (c) As a mistake forced on the Board by investors (d) As a decision that is still too early to judge
38. What happened to revenue and costs?
(a) Both grew at the same rate (b) Revenue grew faster than costs (c) Costs grew faster than revenue (d) Revenue fell while costs grew
39. The fall in bad debt was mainly the result of:
(a) families being in a better financial position (b) a reduction in tuition fees (c) tighter procedures for collecting payment (d) writing off older unpaid accounts
40. In paragraph 2, offset is closest in meaning to:
(a) increased (b) balanced out (c) postponed (d) explained
41. What does the Board say about future cost increases?
(a) They are expected to fall below inflation (b) The network cannot keep absorbing them indefinitely (c) They will be passed on to families next year (d) They are no longer a concern after this year's results
42. The working group has been asked to examine:
(a) whether to acquire more campuses (b) whether functions could be shared between campuses (c) how to reduce teaching salaries (d) why two competitors closed

PART 3 — LISTENING

8 points · 8 minutes · You will hear each recording twice. You may take notes.

Task 1 — A voicemail message

43. When can the new transport provider start?
(a) 15 February (b) 1 March (c) This Friday (d) In two weeks
44. What is the monthly cost per bus? _____
45. Why does Daniel say the real increase is smaller than it looks?
(a) The contract is longer (b) Insurance is now included in the price (c) There will be fewer buses (d) Last year's price was wrong
46. What will Daniel do if nobody replies to him?
(a) Cancel the contract (b) Call the board directly (c) Go ahead and prepare the paperwork (d) Look for another provider

Task 2 — A talk to campus principals

47. According to the speaker, the shared services proposal is not:
(a) a genuine efficiency measure (b) a cost-cutting plan presented as efficiency (c) a decision taken by the board (d) relevant to the smallest campus
48. Why does the smallest campus pay the most?
(a) Its leadership negotiates badly (b) It buys from more expensive suppliers (c) It negotiates alone and has no scale (d) It has higher transport costs
49. What does the speaker admit principals will lose?
(a) Control over hiring (b) Some discretion over day-to-day purchasing (c) Their local budget entirely (d) Access to the three main suppliers
50. What is the speaker's attitude at the end of the talk?
(a) He wants to avoid any disagreement (b) He prefers objections to be raised now rather than later (c) He has decided and will not discuss it further (d) He is unsure whether the savings are real

PART 5 — SPEAKING

30 points · 12 minutes · The examiner will guide this section. Do not prepare in advance.

Prompt card — do not read until the examiner tells you to.

CAMPUS BUDGET — NEXT SCHOOL YEAR

The network has asked your campus to reduce its non-salary spending by **8%**.

Area	Current annual spend
Technology and software	\$420,000
Extracurricular programmes	\$260,000
Building maintenance	\$310,000
Marketing and admissions	\$180,000
Staff training	\$95,000

Explain where you would make the cut, and why. What would the consequences be?

End of test.