ENGLISH PLACEMENT TEST

Executive Profile · School Leadership & Finance

Candidate name	Date	Position	Campus / Network

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 4 — WRITING

20 points · 10 minutes

Write an email of 120–150 words to Laura Méndez, the Network Finance Director.

Your campus **will exceed its maintenance budget** this school year. In your email you must:

1. explain the situation clearly;
2. give the reason for the overspend;
3. propose one solution;
4. request a meeting before the Q3 review on 14 October.

To: l.mendez@network.edu

Subject: ____

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.