



ABOUT H&R BLOCK BUDGET CHALLENGE



THE SITUATION



High schoolers are graduating without basic financial skills. As young adults, their first exposure to real-life situations can result in costly mistakes, overwhelming debt and an unstable financial future.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW



Free to high school teachers and home school educators, the H&R Block Budget Challenge is a teacher-tested, online simulation tool that replicates real-world budgeting and personal finance decision-making. By simulating an adult's financial life – paying bills, investing in retirement, managing loans and more – students take a personal finance “road test.” This learn-by-doing educational approach allows high schoolers to make real-world mistakes without facing real-world consequences.

THE GOAL



Through exposure to real-life personal finance situations, the H&R Block Budget Challenge equips teens with the skills, habits and confidence to manage their money wisely.

SIGNING UP

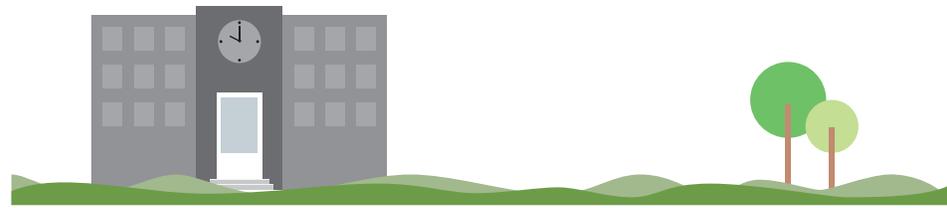


Participation in the H&R Block Budget Challenge must be facilitated by a classroom teacher at an accredited high school or home study program. Educators may visit hrbds.org to register their classrooms. Class creation closes one week prior to the simulation start date.





HOW IT WORKS



The H&R Block Budget Challenge immerses students in the life of a recent college graduate who has been working for six months. Each participant receives a virtual salary and must make smart budgeting decisions regarding expenses, such as rent, utilities, car payments and more. Students are challenged to balance current and future financial needs and demonstrate resourcefulness, understanding and practical application of financial concepts.

Students receive bills on a regular basis and must pay them on time, while maximizing savings via a virtual 401(k) and minimizing penalties such as late fees, overdraft fees or finance charges. The simulation includes realistic surprise scenarios and monetary challenges such as a car accident or lost cell phone.

Participants earn bonus points for completing quizzes on personal finance topics such as interest or starting a 401(k).

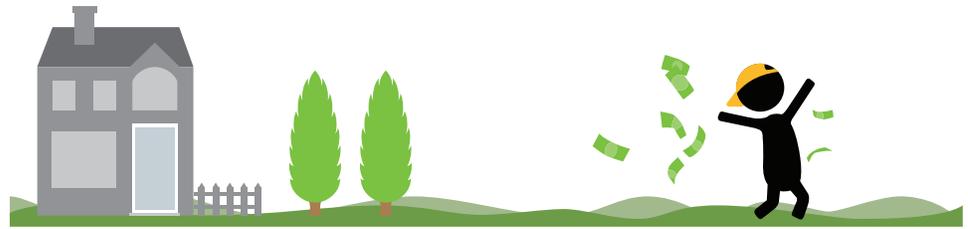
GRANTS & SCHOLARSHIPS



H&R Block will award \$200,000 in scholarships and cash prizes via the H&R Block Budget Challenge. Winners will be determined on an individual basis.

Students:

- The top five students who demonstrate they are the most “real-world ready” at the conclusion of each semester will receive a \$20,000 college scholarship.



METRICS & SCORING



Individual students compete among all participants for the high score in each simulation. Classroom rankings are determined by calculating the average score of all participating students in each class.

An individual student's score is equal to the total amount of his/her savings, minus the sum total of fees and late penalties, plus total bonus points earned. Students earn a point per dollar saved in their 401(k) or earned in interest, while losing a point per dollar in fees incurred – including an extra 150-point penalty for every late fee incurred.

Savings  Fees/Penalties  Quiz/Survey  Score

“REAL-WORLD READY”



The scholarship winners are determined through a unique “Real-World Ready” formula, showcasing the student who is truly prepared to embark on a fiscally responsible future:

Behavior (100 points) – Because H&R Block believes in learning by doing, students who are learning and engaged will be rewarded. By logging in every five days, paying bills on time and taking all available quizzes, a perfect “behavior” score is possible.

Knowledge (100 points) – The H&R Block Budget Challenge increases teens’ understanding of important financial topics. “Knowledge” points are based on the student’s percentage of correct answers on quizzes.

Skill (200 points) – The H&R Block Budget Challenge teaches students the skills necessary to confidently and smartly navigate finances in the real world. The skill tally is equal to the student’s individual score as a percentage of the maximum score for an individual simulation.





SIMULATIONS SCHEDULE



Simulation #	Begins at 12 a.m. ET on:	Ends at 11:55 p.m. ET on:	Class Creation Close Date:
1	September 8, 2016	November 17, 2016	September 1, 2016
2	September 22, 2016	December 1, 2016	September 15, 2016
3	October 6, 2016	December 15, 2016	September 29, 2016
4	January 12, 2017	March 23, 2017	January 5, 2017
5	January 26, 2017	April 6, 2017	January 19, 2017
6	February 9, 2017	April 20, 2017	February 2, 2017

MEETING EDUCATION STANDARDS



The H&R Block Budget Challenge and accompanying lesson plans adhere to Common Core standards for English language arts and mathematics, as well as personal finance benchmarks established by the Council for Economic Education (CEE) and the Jump\$Tart Coalition for Personal Financial Literacy.

Educators who participate in the H&R Block Budget Challenge simulation are supported with lesson plans, educational videos and additional resources that complement the online challenge.



FOR MORE INFORMATION



Visit hrbds.org and [Pinterest.com/hrblockds](https://www.pinterest.com/hrblockds).

