



THE STUDENT PRODUCER PROGRAM

Founding Schools Edition · v1

# Operations *Guide*

*A step-by-step companion for your school's first SP<sup>2</sup> season — from setup through closing night.*

For Student Producers, Faculty Advisors, and Theater Directors.

**Welcome**

# You're producing more than a show.

Every high school musical is already a business. There are budgets to manage, tickets to sell, sponsors to court, audiences to delight, and teams to lead. What's usually missing is a system to run it all — and a way for students to learn from doing it.

SP<sup>2</sup> is that system. A 16-week operating cycle, a real-time dashboard, and a set of clearly defined roles that turn your production into a real-world business lab. Students lead. Directors get time back. Audiences notice the difference.

This guide walks you through setting up your first season, the order to do things in, and what good looks like at each stage. Take your time — but trust the sequence. Every step builds on the one before it.

**HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE**

*Read through once before you start. Then come back to each section as you reach it.*

**Phase 0**

## Before you touch the spreadsheet.

*The most important step in SP<sup>2</sup> happens before you open anything. It's a conversation.*

Sit down with your Faculty Advisor (and ideally your Theater Director) for about 30 minutes. Talk through what success looks like this season — not the artistic vision, that's the director's domain — but the business side.

Specifically, agree on:

- **Ticket goal.** How many seats do you want to fill across all performances? Why that number?
- **Revenue goal.** What total ticket revenue are you aiming for? At what mix of adult, student, and senior pricing?
- **Sponsorship goal.** What's a realistic but ambitious sponsorship target for your community?
- **The team.** Who's the Student Producer? Who's filling each role? Are there gaps you need to fill?
- **The director's wishes.** Are there any constraints — budget caps, partnership preferences, things to avoid?

The Setup Sequence

# Eight phases. In order.

SP<sup>2</sup> works because each tab in your workbook feeds the next. Set things up in the wrong order and you'll see #REF! errors or empty dashboards. Set them up in this order and everything flows.

Phase	Tab	What It Does
0	Foundation Meeting	Agree on goals with Faculty Advisor
1	SP <sup>2</sup> Dashboard Tab	The source of truth for every other tab
2	Box Office	Performance schedule and ticket setup
3	Finance	Budget for income and expenses
4	Sponsorship	Prospect list and pipeline
5	Team	Roles, contacts, ownership
6	Marketing	Calendar, posts, design queue
7	Action Items	Working cadence for the season
8	Hours Log	Director Hours Recovered tracking

**WHY THIS ORDER MATTERS**

*Phases 1, 2, and 3 are the dependency chain. Phase 1 must be complete before Phase 2 makes sense. Phase 2 must be complete before Phase 3 shows real numbers. After Phase 3, the rest can happen in parallel — but the order shown is what we've seen work best.*

Phase 1

## The SP<sup>2</sup> Dashboard Tab

This is the most important tab in your workbook. Every other tab — Box Office, Finance, Marketing — pulls metadata from here. If Dashboard is wrong, everything downstream is wrong. Fill in every column completely before moving on.

### What to enter

Field	Example	Notes
<b>School Name</b>	C. Milton Wright HS	The full name of your school
<b>Production Title</b>	The Drowsy Chaperone	Show being produced this season
<b>Season</b>	Spring 2026	Fall 2025, Spring 2026, etc.
<b>Opening Date</b>	2026-08-21	First performance date
<b>Closing Date</b>	2026-08-23	Last performance date
<b>Total Performances</b>	4	Count of all shows in the run
<b>House Capacity</b>	800	Seats per performance, not season total
<b>Ticket Goal</b>	2000	Tickets you want to sell across all shows
<b>Revenue Goal</b>	\$20,000	Total ticket revenue target
<b>Sponsorship Goal</b>	\$5,000	Total sponsorship dollars to raise
<b>Adult Ticket Price</b>	\$12.00	Standard adult price
<b>Student Ticket Price</b>	\$10.00	Discounted student price
<b>Senior Ticket Price</b>	\$10.00 (optional)	Leave blank if no senior pricing
<b>Ticketing System</b>	Seat Yourself	SeatYourself, Ludus, GoFan, etc.
<b>Ticketing URL</b>	https://...	Public ticket purchase link
<b>Student Producer</b>	Maya Richards	The student leading this production
<b>Faculty Advisor</b>	Ms. Bennett	The teacher overseeing the program

**DURING ONBOARDING**

*We provision this tab for you during onboarding using the information from your submission form. You won't typically need to fill in Phase 1 yourself — but it helps to know what's in there, because changes to these values ripple to every other tab.*

## Phase 2

## Box Office

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The Box Office tab is where you list each performance. Capacity and ticket prices auto-pull from Dashboard — you only enter the human-typed information.

For each performance, type:

- **Performance\_ID.** A short name like "Opening Night" or "Saturday Matinee". This is the cell that activates all the auto-formulas — leave it blank and the row stays empty.
- **Date.** The performance date in MM/DD/YYYY format.
- **Performance Number.** 1 for opening night, 2 for the second show, and so on.
- **Adult Tickets / Student Tickets / Senior Tickets / Comp Tickets.** Leave these blank for now — fill them in nightly as the run begins.

### What happens automatically

- **Capacity** fills in from the Dashboard's House Capacity field.
- **Adult Revenue, Student Revenue, Senior Revenue** calculate from tickets × prices on the Dashboard.
- **Total Revenue** sums all paid ticket revenue.
- **Percent Capacity** shows how full each performance is, including comps.

**DURING THE SEASON**

*When sales open, your Box Office Manager updates ticket counts daily. The Finance tab and the executive dashboard update in real time as Box Office changes.*

## Phase 3

## Finance

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The Finance tab is your production's budget and P&L. Two of the income rows are special — they auto-pull from Box Office and Sponsorship, so you never have to type ticket revenue or sponsorship revenue manually.

### Pre-populated income rows

Your workbook ships with two rows already in place:

- **Ticket Revenue (income)** — auto-pulled from Box Office Total Revenue.
- **Sponsorship Revenue (income)** — auto-pulled from closed sponsorships.

Don't overwrite the Actual column on these rows — the formula is doing the work. Do fill in the Budget column with your planned targets.

### Add your expense rows

Sit down with your director and Finance Lead and add every expense category you'll incur. Each row is one budget line:

- Rights and Royalties (MTI, Concord, etc.)
- Set construction and design
- Costumes
- Sound and Lighting
- Marketing and Design (posters, social ads)
- Ticketing Platform Fees
- Printing (programs, posters)
- Concession Supplies
- Miscellaneous and Contingency (always include this — 5-10% of total budget)

**VARIANCE TRACKING**

*The Variance column calculates automatically. Green = under budget. Red = over. Review this every Monday at standup.*

**Phase 4**

## Sponsorship

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The Sponsorship tab is your CRM — a moving pipeline from "prospects we haven't called yet" to "closed deals." Your Sponsorship Director owns this tab.

### Building your prospect list

Brainstorm 25-40 local businesses to approach. Start with:

- Restaurants near the school (pizza places, coffee shops, family-style)
- Local services with families as customers (orthodontists, pediatricians, family law)
- Real estate offices, financial planners, insurance agents (community-anchored businesses)
- Auto dealers, repair shops, hardware stores
- Past sponsors from prior years — even informal ones

### Pipeline stages

Each prospect moves through these stages by changing the value in the Stage column:

- **Outreach.** Identified but not yet contacted.
- **Proposal.** Deck or proposal has been sent; awaiting response.
- **Negotiation.** Active conversation about terms or amount.
- **Closed.** Signed agreement, money committed.
- **Declined.** Politely passed. Useful to track for next year.

**HONESTY MATTERS**

*Only sponsors marked "Closed" count toward your sponsorship revenue. The Finance tab pulls this number automatically. Keep stages honest — overstating closed sponsorships breaks your financial picture.*

## Phase 5

## Team

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The Team tab tells your dashboard who owns what. It's also the directory the whole team uses to find each other.

### Recommended roles

- **Student Producer.** Single point of accountability for the business side.
- **Assistant Producer.** Operational backbone; next year's successor.
- **Faculty Advisor.** Adult oversight, not day-to-day.
- **Theater Director.** Artistic lead; often distinct from Faculty Advisor.
- **Marketing Director.** Owns strategy and the campaign calendar.
- **Social Media Lead.** Reports to Marketing; runs daily posting.
- **Design Team.** Posters, graphics, programs, sponsor recognition.
- **Finance Lead.** Budget, P&L, weekly reconciliation.
- **Box Office Manager.** Ticketing platform, sales reports.
- **Sponsorship Director.** Pipeline owner, closes deals.
- **Guest Services Lead.** Front-of-house, ushers, VIPs.

**START WHERE YOU ARE**

*You don't need every role filled to launch — but every role you DO fill should be in the Team tab. Empty roles can be filled mid-season as your team grows.*

Phase 6

## Marketing

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Marketing breaks into three sub-tabs that work together: Posts, Calendar, and Design Queue. Your Marketing Director (or Student Producer if no separate lead) manages all three.

### Posts

A log of every post you publish across Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, etc. Track date, platform, post type, reach, engagement rate, and link clicks. The dashboard summarizes the last 7 and 30 days automatically.

### Calendar

A forward-looking schedule of what's planned, drafted, scheduled, or published. The dashboard shows your next 10 days at a glance.

### Design Queue

Active design work — poster, program, sponsor ads, social graphics. Each asset has an owner and a status (Queued / In Design / In Review / Approved / Done).

## Phase 7

## Action Items

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The Action Items tab is the most-touched tab in SP<sup>2</sup>. It's where every decision, deadline, and deliverable lives. Your Student Producer maintains it.

### Each row is one action item

- **Department.** Finance, Marketing, Sponsorship, Box Office, Guest Services, or Producer.
- **Description.** What needs to happen, in plain English.
- **Owner.** The person responsible.
- **Due Date.** When it has to be done.
- **Priority.** High, Medium, or Low.
- **Status.** Open, In Progress, or Complete.

### The weekly rhythm

- **Monday standup.** Review the action list. Reassign overdue items. Add new ones from the week's plan.
- **Daily.** Owners update status as they make progress.
- **Friday check-in.** Mark Complete what's done. Flag what's slipping.

**OVERDUE TRACKING**

*The dashboard automatically flags overdue items in red and counts completions this week. A clean week (0 overdue) is one of the best signals of a healthy production.*

## Phase 8

## Hours Log

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*This is the tab that proves SP<sup>2</sup> is worth it.*

Each week, your Faculty Advisor or Student Producer logs how many hours the program saved the Theater Director — hours the director would otherwise have spent on sponsorship calls, budget reconciliation, ticket reports, social posts, or just chasing down information.

### What to log

- **Week.** Which production week this entry covers (1 through 16).
- **Date Logged.** When you logged it.
- **Hours Saved.** How many hours of director time the student team handled.
- **Activity.** Standup, Sponsorship, Box Office, Marketing, Finance, Guest Services, Communications, Recruiting, Reporting, or Other.
- **Notes.** Brief context — "3 sponsor calls and 2 hrs of social planning the director didn't have to do."
- **Logged By.** Your name.

**WHY THIS MATTERS**

*The cumulative number — hundreds of director hours recovered over a season — is the metric you'll show your administration when they ask whether SP<sup>2</sup> is worth keeping. Log every week.*

During the Season

# Your weekly rhythm.

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Once you're set up, SP<sup>2</sup> runs on a simple weekly rhythm. Three meetings anchor the week.

## Monday — Standup

- Review the prior week's action items. What got done? What didn't? Why?
- Walk the dashboard. Where are tickets? Where's sponsorship? Where's the budget?
- Set the focus for the week ahead. Three to five high-priority action items.
- 30-45 minutes is plenty. Keep it brisk.

## Wednesday — Department Check-ins

- Each department lead has a 1:1 with the Student Producer. 15 minutes each.
- Producer asks: "What do you need help with this week?"
- Producer logs hours saved for the director from each conversation.

## Friday — Close the Loop

- Update Action Items: mark Complete what's done.
- Update Hours Log: log the week's hours saved.
- Quick dashboard scan: anything trending red? Surface it for Monday's standup.

**A Note for Faculty Advisors**

# Your role in the program.

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SP<sup>2</sup> works best when the Student Producer genuinely leads. Your role is different from a traditional advisor — and probably lighter than you'd expect.

## What you do

- **Provide oversight, not direction.** Help students think through decisions; don't make decisions for them.
- **Be the bridge to administration.** When the principal asks how the program is going, you have the dashboard.
- **Hold the standard.** Make sure the team meets weekly, owns its commitments, and treats this like the real-world work it is.
- **Log the hours.** Track Director Hours Recovered in the Hours Log tab. This is the data that justifies the program to your administration.
- **Sign off on major decisions.** Final budget, sponsor agreements over a threshold, anything involving school resources.

## What students do

Everything else. They run the standups, manage the budget, call the sponsors, build the campaigns. Yes — really. They will surprise you. That's the entire point.

**A RULE OF THUMB**

*When in doubt, ask: "Would I be doing this if SP<sup>2</sup> didn't exist?" If the answer is yes, the student should do it. If it's no, neither of you should.*

**Support**

# We're here.

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SP<sup>2</sup> is built and supported by 3AM Solutions. As a Founding School, you have direct access to us throughout your season.

## How to reach us

- **Email.** [kevin@solutionsfor3AM.com](mailto:kevin@solutionsfor3AM.com) — usually a response within 24 hours.
- **The dashboard.** [studentproducers.com](http://studentproducers.com)
- **The form.** If something major needs to change about your setup (new production added, capacity changed, role swap), email us — we'll handle the data side so you can focus on the show.

*We built SP<sup>2</sup> because every high school production deserves to be run like the real business it is — and every student deserves to learn what that means. Thank you for being a Founding School.*

— *The 3AM Solutions Team*