What Will Bullying, Violence and Vandalism Cost Your School this Year? Do this Quick, Easy Audit to See How Much You Could Recover and Save.

What is the financial impact of negative behaviors on your school? How much could you save with effective preventive action? Calculate your losses and costs to find out!

About the Calculator

Developed by Community Matters, the School Climate Loss and Cost Calculator is designed to help school administrators answer key questions:

- How can we quantify the economic impact of negative school climate?
- What is the cost of not implementing effective preventive measures?
- What losses does the average school incur each year?
- How does your school compare to that?
- How much could you save by reducing negative climate behaviors?

Get the Facts Yourself in Just 15 Minutes

Use the calculator to determine what negative behaviors are costing your school. Get the information you need to take preventive action. Begin reducing the impact of losses and costs on your budget this year.
School administrators are in a no-win situation. Bullying, violence, vandalism and other problems grow more intense and frequent as economic and family stressors worsen. Yet, this is the time that most schools have less money for prevention and early intervention.

There are fewer counselors, school resource officers, administrators and teachers. Those staff remaining have more responsibilities—and less time to handle problematic situations. It’s a “perfect storm” in the making.

**School Climate Impacts Staff, Time and Budget. Security Measures Alone Aren’t Enough.**

Even with security cameras, security guards, metal detectors, etc., schools face additional costs due to bullying, violence and vandalism that these measures don’t prevent. When students feel emotionally and physically unsafe, negative behaviors increase. Suspension and expulsion rates will rise, while grades and attendance of targeted and alienated students fall.

Not only does this mean staff spend more time handling problems, but it directly affects the school’s budget. Use the Loss and Cost Calculator to estimate the impact that bullying, violence and vandalism currently have on your school.

As the Average School Example shows on page 3, a typical high school with 1,000 students currently spends about $54,000 each year on budget items directly related to school climate issues. And, ADA losses for secondary schools can exceed $2.2 million. What can be done to reduce the losses and costs?

**Reducing the Actual Cost of Negative School Climate Behaviors: The Proven Solution**

Safe School Ambassadors® (SSA), a research-based, best-practice program, has been shown to reduce these losses and costs by decreasing the underlying causative behaviors:

- 29% decrease, suspensions
- 43% reduction, false fire alarms
- 75% decrease, assaults on staff
- 43% decrease, drug and alcohol possession
- 76% decrease, fighting

1- Los Angeles Unified School District, Los Angeles, CA; 2- Clear Creek Independent School District, Houston, TX; 3- El Molino High School, Forestville, CA

Already in more than 700 schools across North America, the $6,000 SSA program quickly pays for itself. In the LA Unified School District example, a 29% decrease in suspensions equates to $6,240 saved in one year alone. The SSA Program provides a positive return on investment, because it can help prevent at least...

- 17 incidents of truancy/missed attendance or expulsions
- 7 suspensions
- 15 incidents of vandalism
- 1 student from dropping out
- 3 mandatory placements

**Program Spending Should Show Results and Return on Investment. The SSA Program Does Both!**

With these kinds of results, even a modest improvement in school climate leads to a significant return on investment for the SSA program. Staff have more time to focus on their core mission—education—rather than spend their time handling disciplinary issues.

As school climate improves, schools can realize additional benefits beyond saving money and time. These may include:

- Improved test scores and grades
- Reduced staff turnover
- Improved student morale
- Lower insurance rates

**How to Use the Loss and Cost Calculator**

This calculator shows the annual financial impact of behaviors associated with negative school climate.

1. Review the Average School Example on page 3.
2. Use the Loss and Cost Calculator Excel worksheet to calculate your own annual costs. You can use the default data from the example or fill in your own where known.
3. Refer to the Data Sources and Research for Statistics and Calculations on page 4 for additional information.
The following table estimates the annual losses and costs of bullying, violence, and vandalism to a school, using national averages and our research. Footnotes refer to sources and calculation processes, detailed on page 4. **NOTE: Example based on 1,000 students.** Once you have reviewed this example table, you can use the Loss and Cost Calculator Excel worksheet to calculate your own annual losses and costs due to bullying, violence, and vandalism.

### Average School Example

The following table estimates the annual losses and costs of bullying, violence, and vandalism to a school, using national averages and our research. Footnotes refer to sources and calculation processes, detailed on page 4. **NOTE: Example based on 1,000 students.** Once you have reviewed this example table, you can use the Loss and Cost Calculator Excel worksheet to calculate your own annual losses and costs due to bullying, violence, and vandalism.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loss and Cost Driver</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Student Pop.</th>
<th># Incidents</th>
<th>ADA or Other Rate</th>
<th>Cost per Student or Incident</th>
<th>Example School Calculation (N=1,000)</th>
<th>Losses Annual, One School</th>
<th>Costs Annual, One School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Truancy / Low Attendance¹</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>$40</td>
<td>$360</td>
<td>1 day/month x 9 months x $40/day = $360 LOSS per student per year; 6% X 1,000 students = 60 students truant monthly. 60 truancies X $360 = $21,600 Total LOSS Per Year</td>
<td>$21,600</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suspensions²</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>$40</td>
<td>$290</td>
<td>[(6% x 1000 students = 60) x $170 avg. Suspension COST = $10,200] + [(3 days x $40 LOST ADA) = $120) = $7,200] = $17,400</td>
<td>$7,200</td>
<td>$10,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vandalism³</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>38</td>
<td>$400</td>
<td>$400</td>
<td>1 incident per week X 38 weeks = 38 incidents X $400= $15,200 Total COST Per Year</td>
<td></td>
<td>$15,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dropping Out⁴</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>$40</td>
<td>$18,000</td>
<td>(12% x 1000 students=120 students) x $40 x 450 days = $2,160,000 Total LOSS per dropout group</td>
<td></td>
<td>$2,160,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandatory Alt. Placements⁵</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>$2,500</td>
<td>$2,500</td>
<td>(1% X 1,000 students = 10 students) X $2,500 = $25,000 Total COST Per Year</td>
<td></td>
<td>$25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expulsions⁶ (Costs)</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>$170</td>
<td>$170</td>
<td>(2% X 1,000 students = 20 expulsions) X $170 = $3,400 Total COST per year.</td>
<td></td>
<td>$3,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expulsions⁶ (Losses)</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>$40</td>
<td>$3600</td>
<td>(2% X 1,000 students = 20 expulsions) X 90 days X $40 = $72,000 Total LOSS per year</td>
<td></td>
<td>$72,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ANNUAL TOTAL**

$2,260,800 $53,800

**Total Annual Financial Impact** $2,314,600

(combine Losses and Costs totals from above)
Background on this Calculator and Data

School climate is an extremely important factor that helps shape the ability of our schools to deliver on their mission. At Community Matters, we believe its impact on the school budget is largely ignored, chiefly because there is no standardized way to track and report the costs associated with school climate. But this doesn’t mean the impact is not significant and should be ignored.

Accordingly, we have developed this calculator as a means to identify the costs of negative climate behaviors. It is our hope that this information will eventually be standardized for national tracking and reporting. In the meantime, we have used the following data to make reasonable (and even conservative) estimates of losses and costs schools actually incur each year. We welcome your comments and suggestions.

1. LOSSES due to Truancy / Low Attendance

There is a financial consequence associated with students who miss school. Truancy is calculated simply by applying the number of truancies by the $40 per day of lost ADA funds. 6% is the national average for truancy, which is defined as unexcused absences of at least one day per month per truant student, x 9 months for average school year.

2. LOSSES & COSTS due to Suspensions

In our book, Safe School Ambassadors: Harnessing Student Power to Stop Bullying and Violence, we developed a basis for the cost of and loss due to suspensions. The formula, listed on pages 47-48, included approximately $170 of combined staff time plus $120 in lost ADA funds (average, three-day suspension @ $40 per day) for a total of $290 cost/loss per incident. 2006, Natl. Avg. = 6% of students are suspended each year. Source: http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d08/tables/dt08_160.asp

3. COSTS of Vandalism

Average cost for vandalism = $400/incident. Some districts have spent more than $500,000 on 1,248 repairs in the 2007-08 school year. Added to the financial costs are combined time of the staff, materials and/or replacement costs that can range from false fire alarms (e.g., $250) to broken window replacements to broken fixtures (e.g., broken urinal = $1,700).

4. LOSSES due to Dropping Out

Dropout rates vary widely and are not derived consistently. We are using a rate of 12%, but the range is 7% - 55% for students who leave school without completing high school, as of 2009. Most students who drop out leave in the middle of 10th grade, so we’re using a total of 450 days of school missed to compute the ADA money lost. Source: P.E. Barton, 2005, One-Third of a Nation: Rising Dropout Rates and Declining Opportunities.

5. COSTS of Mandatory Disciplinary Alternative Educational Placements

Mandatory Disciplinary Alternative Educational Placements (to continuation or pre-expulsion secondary schools) for drugs, alcohol, weapons, fights/assaults in one Texas school district, Cleary Creek ISD, cost $2500/student/year in 2008-9.

6. LOSSES & COSTS due to Expulsions

Expulsions incur costs both in the handling of the incident as well as in the lost ADA funds that school would have earned if the expelled student had stayed enrolled. The formula duplicates the suspension cost analysis noted in Suspensions, in #2, above, as well as the $40 per day of lost attendance. The midpoint of the school year is assumed as the average expulsion date, or 90 days per expulsion.

For More Information

For information on using this calculator, or to learn more about the SSA program, contact Community Matters’ Outreach Team at (707) 823-6159, x102, or email: outreach@community-matters.org. You may also visit our web site: www.community-matters.org