

# Leadership for Educational and Organizational Advancement



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## Save Money by Reducing Student Suspensions

Hidden cost associated with student suspensions are costing school districts thousands of dollars annually.

School districts lose money when administrators spend time processing disciplinary referrals. Administrators are required by law to provide students with disciplinary hearings before giving a consequence. It takes approximately 10 minutes to process a disciplinary referral. If an administrator has 1,200 discipline referrals annually then the time spent processing the disciplinary referrals is the equivalent of 200 hours. For an administrator that earns \$70,000.00 per year this translates into a loss of \$6,730.77. Over a five year period this results in a loss of \$33,653.83. The administrator has also lost the equivalent of 27 school days which could have been spent working with or coaching teachers.

Processing student suspensions results in school districts losing money due to the time required to suspend students. The average time that it takes for an administrator to process a student for suspension is forty five minutes. If an

administrator earns \$70,000.00 per year which averages to \$291.67 per day and suspends 500 students in one year the cost for suspending the students is \$14,583.50. Over a five year period this is a lost of \$72,917.50. The administrator has lost the equivalent of 50 school days which could have been spent working with or coaching teachers.

As you can see, school districts with higher disciplinary referrals and suspensions will incur higher monetary losses.

Most school districts with a high number of student suspensions also have low student academic achievement on state standardized assessments which often results in No Child Left Behind penalties. No Child Left Behind requires that Title 1 schools identified for improvement are required to reserve thirty percent of their Title 1, Part A funds. Ten percent is for professional development and twenty percent is for providing students the option to attend schools districts that are not identified as in need of improvement. For a school district that receives \$100,000.00 in Title 1 funds this results in a lost of

\$30,000.00 for one year. Over a five year period this results in a loss of \$150,000.00.

While it is imperative that students are socialized to exhibit behaviors that are acceptable in the school setting, we must find ways to reduce student suspensions and the hidden cost associated with student suspensions.

Reducing student suspensions begins with scientifically evaluating the culture of the school to determine the behavior that results from the conflicting values that educators and students bring to the classroom and school. The evaluation must include the participation of teachers and students as well as an evaluation of cultural, non-verbal, and verbal behaviors. Each school has a different culture and therefore the analyzed results will differ.

The final step is to bring together “caring” educators in that specific school and use a transformational process that reduces student suspensions and improves relationships between educators and students.

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