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WINTER/SPRING 2026

**Protecting Student Learning in  
the Era of Immigration Enforcement**

# **Appendix.** Estimated Costs of Recommended Actions

From Coalition for Authentic Community Engagement & Kids First Chicago

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## 01 Prioritize and Prepare High-Risk Communities

**This recommendation focuses primarily on coordination, training, and reporting infrastructure rather than new staffing or capital expenditures.**

### Estimated Cost: Low

Costs are limited to coordination time, modest training implementation, and routine data reporting. Most activities leverage existing CPS and City staffing, data systems, and professional development structures. Weekly absenteeism reporting can be generated from existing attendance systems with minimal administrative adjustment. Rapid-response training can be delivered through existing PD days or through free partner-provided sessions, requiring no new permanent positions or major expenditures.

## 02 Build School-Based Sanctuary Teams

**This recommendation includes two components: Staff Sanctuary Teams and Parent Action Teams.**

### Estimated Cost: Modest and Flexible

- This recommendation relies primarily on designating existing school staff to serve as Sanctuary Team leads and coordinating among existing partners. Encrypted communication platforms are available at no cost. Incremental costs are limited to staff time and, where needed, modest stipends or release time in schools with limited capacity. No new permanent positions or major technology purchases are required.
  - Parent Action Teams rely primarily on volunteer participation coordinated through schools and community partners. Direct costs are limited to modest stipends for parents. Mentors or designated parent leaders who take on expanded coordination, outreach, and multilingual communication responsibilities. If CPS or the City were to provide small stipends (e.g., \$1,000–\$2,000 annually) to 200–300 designated parent leaders across high-need schools, total annual costs would range from approximately \$200,000–\$600,000. Schools could scale participation based on need and available funding.
  - Additional minor costs may include meeting materials, translation support, and communication tools, which can largely be absorbed within existing school and partner budgets.
  - These investments strengthen coordination and trust without requiring new permanent staff positions or large structural expenditures.
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## 03 Strengthen Safe Passage and Expand Community Safety Coverage

**This recommendation includes baseline restoration and optional surge capacity.**

### Estimated Cost: Targeted and Scalable

#### Baseline Restoration and Expansion

- CPS has estimated that restoring Safe Passage coverage to prior levels (one hour before and after school) would cost approximately \$3 million annually.
- Expanding routes in priority communities—including Brighton Park, Little Village, Back of the Yards, South Chicago, Belmont Cragin, and Albany Park—is estimated at approximately \$4 million annually.

**Subtotal (Baseline Safe Passage): ~\$7 million annually**

#### Targeted Perimeter and Surge Support

- Stipends for additional CPS staff supporting arrival and dismissal are estimated at approximately \$25 per hour.
- Assuming four staff members per impacted school providing one additional hour of coverage per day, this equals \$100 per day per school.
- Over approximately 90 high-risk school days, this totals \$9,000 per school annually.
- If applied to up to 200 high-need schools, the total annual cost would be approximately \$1.8 million.

#### Targeted Transportation Pilots (Optional and Needs-Based)

Limited shuttle or van pilots in a small number of high-impact neighborhoods could range from \$500,000–\$1 million annually, depending on scope and duration. These supports would be deployed only where walking routes are demonstrably unsafe or impractical.

#### Total Estimated Annual Cost (Fully Implemented)

- Approximately \$9–11 million, depending on the number of schools requiring surge staffing and whether targeted transportation pilots are activated.
  - These costs are targeted relative to CPS's overall budget and could be supported through recently approved TIF surplus allocations, associated property tax adjustments, and existing public safety resources. The investment is proportionate to the scale of attendance disruption experienced in the fall and helps prevent deeper academic and long-term social costs.
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## 04 Establish Safe Routes and Coordinate a Citywide Safe Haven Network

**This recommendation relies primarily on coordination rather than new investments.**

### **Estimated Cost: Low and Primarily Coordination-Based**

Most components of this recommendation rely on coordination rather than new capital investment. Primary costs are limited to City and CPS staff time to:

- Map safe routes and travel corridors.
- Develop multilingual route materials.
- Coordinate agency roles.
- Establish participation criteria for CBOs and businesses.

This work aligns with existing public safety, emergency preparedness, and interagency coordination functions and can largely be absorbed within current capacity.

### **Signage and Traffic Controls**

There may be modest, one-time costs associated with signage and temporary barriers. CPS has identified approximately 100 schools where additional parking and perimeter controls would improve safety. Approximately 200 temporary barriers at \$150 per unit would total roughly \$30,000.

To reduce or eliminate this cost, the City should coordinate with CPD and other agencies to temporarily deploy existing traffic-control equipment to schools and designated safe-haven sites during arrival and dismissal windows.

Designation of CFD stations, Park District fieldhouses, and Library branches as youth safe havens does not require investment. Costs are limited to signage, staff guidance, and interagency coordination.

## 05 Ensure Academic Continuity and Mental-Health Support During Disruptions

**This recommendation contains the largest variable cost range, depending on scale.**

### Estimated Cost: Modest and Scalable

Mental-health and continuity supports require targeted investment but remain manageable relative to CPS and City budgets. Most supports build on existing staff, infrastructure, and partnerships.

#### Illustrative Mental-Health Cost Scenarios

- **Low estimate (\$1–2 million)**  
Focused on the highest-impact schools.
  - Supports approximately 10–15 temporary or part-time mental-health positions (counselors, social workers, clinicians) at roughly \$100,000 per fully loaded position. Includes limited short-term CBO contracts and targeted micro-grants (\$10,000–\$25,000 per school) for rapid-response needs.
- **Medium estimate (\$3–5 million)**  
Expands coverage to a broader set of impacted schools.
  - Funds approximately 25–40 positions (combination of temporary hires, overtime, and contracted clinicians), regular virtual drop-in hours, peer support circles facilitated by CBO partners, refresher trauma-informed training, and a larger pool of school-level micro-grants.

- **High estimate (\$6–8 million):**  
Creates citywide surge capacity during enforcement spikes.
  - Funds approximately 60–80 positions or contracted equivalents, expanded bridge counseling for students returning after extended absences, broader CBO partnerships across multiple regions, enhanced family counseling access, and flexible discretionary resources for principals responding to acute needs.

#### Academic Continuity Costs

Academic continuity costs are expected to be minimal relative to mental-health supports. Schools are not being asked to create new instructional systems, but to temporarily reactivate practices developed during COVID.

Most schools already possess:

- Devices and learning management systems.
- Staff familiarity with virtual tools.
- Digital submission infrastructure.

Incremental costs are likely limited to:

- Short-term staffing adjustments or overtime.
- Minor technology troubleshooting.
- Coordination time.

No new systemwide remote learning model is required.

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# Key Partners



## **Coalition for Authentic Community Engagement (CACE)**

30+ local organizations advancing community voice in CPS policymaking.

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## **Questions?**

If you would like more information, please contact us at  
(312) 853-1212 or [info@kidsfirstchicago.org](mailto:info@kidsfirstchicago.org).