

Strategy 3

Safe Learning Environments

Nearly one-third of LGBT students reported skipping a class at least once in the past month and missing at least one day of school in the past month because they felt uncomfortable or unsafe.

Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network, The 2007 National School Climate Survey



CS² Network-Wide Results: Safe Learning Environments (2007-2008)

Number of Programs	Students Impacted	Parents/Guardians Engaged	Staff Engaged	Community Partners
7	855	40	40	15

CS² Site: Fitchburg Public Schools, Fitchburg

Program: Academy Advisory Program

In school year 2006-07 the suspension rate at Academy Middle School was over 17%. The goal of this program was to get everyone—teachers, staff, and students—involved in creating a positive school climate. The CS² Entrepreneur worked closely with Academy's Principal to develop a school-wide plan for school safety and clear expectations for student behavior. Faculty and school counselors participated in developing a new Advisory curriculum focused on classroom management and teaching positive behaviors. All of Academy's 375 students took the Advisory lessons four times a week, focusing on anti-bullying, school pride, and cultural pride. A school-wide poster contest resulted in a winning design for a new school mascot: a phoenix rising proudly out of the ashes. Behavioral incidents at Academy were reduced by 29 percent in February–April compared to the previous three-month period. Professional development, data analysis, and incentive programs are ongoing.

CS² Site: Springfield Public Schools, Springfield

Program: Middle School Transition Initiative

A team of school staff focused on risk factors including grades, attendance, behavior, and testing, and identified students for this program at two district middle schools. The CS² Entrepreneur met with the pilot group of students twice weekly, both individually and in groups. In individual meetings, students worked on personal goals, progress in their classes, and received Academic support. Groups discussed conflict resolution, bullying, anger management, MCAS preparation, study skills, organization, and career exploration. They also attended the Peacemaker's Summit at Hampshire College, where they participated in workshops and interactive lectures all designed to refine communication skills and handle difficult issues of when working in diverse groups.

Additional CS² Network Safe Learning Environments Programs

- Benefits Package, Amherst Regional Public Schools
- Chart Room, Barnstable Public Schools
- Drug Resistance Education and Mentoring Students, Brockton Public Schools
- Middle School Enrichment, Northampton
- Smith Vocational and Agricultural School Summer Jump Start, Northampton