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Shuttering Public Schools Is a Strategy That Rarely Saves Much Money and Often Leads to Test Score Declines

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As a researcher who studies school closings and counsels local districts facing closure decisions, I know the pressures are multiple.

Many districts are facing **dropping enrollments**. In some places, like **Boston**, rising housing costs are fueling the decline; in other, more rural, areas, dropping birthrates and a graying population are causing it.

Lots of students who left public schools for private ones during the pandemic still have not returned, with new voucher programs fueling the exodus. As districts lose students, they also lose state funding. This, coupled with rising costs and uncertain **state** and **federal** support, has meant that many districts, including dozens in **New York** and **Maine**, have failed to pass school budgets