

LocknCharge White Paper Exposes Hidden Costs of 1:1 Device Programs in U.S. Schools

LocknCharge's 2025 white paper uncovers the five hidden costs of K-12 1:1 device programs — from repairs and loaners to support tickets and budgets, and more.

MADISON, WI, UNITED STATES, September 4, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A new white paper from [LocknCharge, The Hidden Costs of 1:1 Programs: What IT Leaders in Education Should Know](#), reveals that while nearly all U.S. schools now provide students with personal learning devices, many districts are struggling to sustain these programs due to overlooked operational and financial challenges.



Drawing on a 2025 LocknCharge survey of 241 schools and districts worldwide, combined with leading third-party research, the report uncovers the hidden costs that threaten the long-term viability of 1:1 initiatives.

“

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James Symons - CEO of LocknCharge

The reality behind the numbers

Today, 84% of elementary schools and 90% of middle and high schools in the U.S. report operating 1:1 programs, giving each student a personal laptop or tablet.

On the surface, these programs represent a victory for digital equity and innovation. In practice, however, IT departments are drowning in daily device repairs, loaner distribution, and support tickets — leaving them with little time for strategic priorities.

“Many districts think the hard part ends once devices are purchased. In reality, that’s when the real work begins,” said James Symons, CEO of LocknCharge. “Our survey shows the hidden costs of 1:1 programs aren’t just financial — they’re measured in lost learning time, IT staff burnout, and sustainability crises that put educational progress at risk.”

Five hidden cost drivers of 1:1 programs

The white paper identifies five underlying challenges that consistently drain resources and reduce instructional time:

#1 - Frequent device breakages

More than 60% of districts manage up to 10 broken devices weekly, most often due to screen and keyboard damage, creating repair backlogs that leave students without working devices.

#2 - Inefficient loaner processes

Nearly half of IT leaders report that students frequently request loaners for broken or forgotten devices. Without automated systems, teachers and librarians are pulled away from instruction to manage checkouts.

#3 - Rising volume of support tickets

Half of surveyed districts receive 1–5 device-related support tickets daily, and 20% receive up to 20 per day. More than half lack automated ticketing systems, forcing IT staff to manage requests manually.

#4 - Weak tracking and accountability

Although 80% of schools use tracking systems, many rely on spreadsheets or siloed tools. This leads to accountability gaps — in one U.S. district, poor tracking contributed to \$1.5 million worth of missing devices.

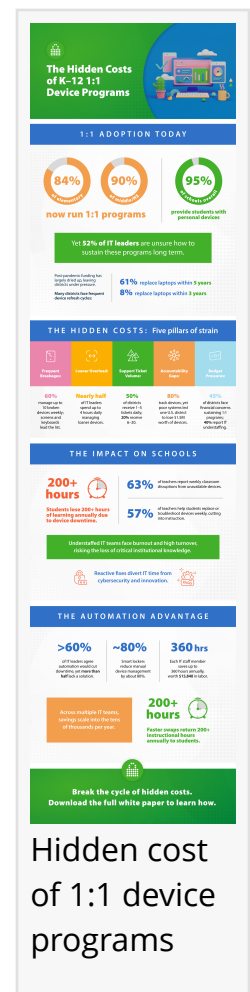
#5 - Unsustainable budget pressures

Nearly 52% of districts express concerns about sustaining their 1:1 programs long-term, and more than half admit they have no plan in place to cover the growing costs.

Together, these challenges create a cycle of inefficiency that strains budgets, reduces learning time, and fuels IT staff burnout.

Smart lockers: A practical solution

The white paper highlights FUYL™ Smart Lockers as a scalable, cost-effective solution to these challenges. By automating device loaning, charging, deployments, and repairs, smart lockers free IT teams from daily manual tasks and ensure students have access to learning-ready devices.



LocknCharge analysis shows smart lockers save up to 360 IT staff hours per year per team member — equal to \$19,800 in labor costs.*

Real-world results - Districts and schools adopting smart locker automation are reporting dramatic improvements:

- Hamilton County Schools (TN): Serving more than 44,500 students, reduced Chromebook replacement times by 99% — from days to minutes — saving an estimated \$110,000 annually in IT labor.
- SUNY Fredonia (NY): Streamlined its laptop lending program, cutting nearly \$10,000 in annual IT staff time while giving students faster, easier access to devices.
- Ogdensburg City School District (NY): Reduced device exchange times from 30 minutes to 2 minutes, saving approximately \$18,000 annually and easing the burden on its sole IT coordinator.

Despite these successes, LocknCharge's survey found that while more than 60% of IT leaders believe automation would significantly reduce downtime, over half have not yet implemented a solution. This gap highlights a pressing need: many districts know what would help but lack a clear plan to get there.

Read the full report

The full white paper, The Hidden Costs of 1:1 Programs: What IT Leaders in Education Should Know, is [available for free download](https://hubs.la/Q03GhCs30) at <https://hubs.la/Q03GhCs30>

About LocknCharge

For more than 25 years, LocknCharge has partnered with over 15,000 schools worldwide to simplify device management. With innovative solutions like the FUYL Smart Locker, LocknCharge helps schools reclaim learning time, reduce IT burdens, and ensure the long-term sustainability of 1:1 device programs.

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