

All costs from Columbine High shooting may reach \$50 million, top official says

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LITTLETON, Colo. (AP) -- It could cost \$50 million to repair damage to Columbine High School and help students and staff deal with the shooting attack's aftermath, a top administrator said.

Jefferson County Schools Superintendent Jane Hammond asked state lawmakers Tuesday for \$5 million to help cover the cost, citing a cash-flow problem that the district had before the April 20 massacre that left 15 people dead, including two student gunmen. Although lawmakers rejected her request, Gov. Bill Owens allocated \$1 million for the district from the state's disaster fund. President Clinton has promised at least \$1.5 million and the state Board of Education is looking at kicking in about \$600,000.

The costs, which Hammond said could reach \$50 million, would include building repairs, replacement of supplies, victims' assistance counseling, increased security and replacement of traditional keys with electronically coded ones that cannot be duplicated. Police have said the two gunmen had duplicated metal school keys.

The request came two weeks after Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold killed 12 students and a teacher and wounded 23 others before killing themselves in the lunchtime massacre.

Jefferson County Sheriff John Stone has identified one of Klebold's classmates, Brooks Brown, as a possible suspect. Harris saw Brown

outside the school moments before the attack and warned him to stay away.

Brown has repeatedly denied involvement, noting his brother was in the cafeteria when the shooting happened.

The New York Times reported Thursday the deputy sheriff who investigated a van break-in by the two gunmen last year received a complaint not long afterward that they were setting off pipe bombs.

A week after deputy Mark Miller wrote a report on the pipe bomb complaint, a juvenile magistrate gave the two teens a form of probation for the break-in.

Magistrate John DeVita told the Times he would not have allowed probation had he known of the complaint, which also included information that Harris had posted three death threats against a classmate on the Internet.

Meanwhile, support for gun control jumped in the week after the shootings in Colorado, according to an Associated Press poll, and people said reducing violence in TV shows and the movies were key to avoiding future school violence.

The 51 percent who think tougher gun laws are more effective than tighter enforcement of current laws is up 9 percentage points from just before the deaths at the school in Littleton, Colo. Also, 40 percent of adults said parents should face charges if a child younger than 18 commits a crime with a gun.

Before the school shootings, 47 percent said better enforcement of existing laws was the way to limit gun violence, while 42 percent said tougher gun laws would be more effective. After the shootings, 51 percent said tougher gun laws would be more effective, while 39 percent said better enforcement.