



Federal Funding: Appropriations, & Sequestration

Sequestration: Last year, as part of the deal to raise the debt ceiling, Congress passed the Budget Control Act. In addition to raising the debt ceiling, the BCA established 10 years of budget caps for the federal budget and created a Super Committee tasked with identifying \$1.2 trillion in savings over 10 years. When the Super Committee failed this task, it triggered a process of sequestration. Sequestration is an across-the-board cut that will be used to realize the same level of savings the Super Committee was supposed to identify. One crucial difference, however, is that while the Super Committee would consider spending cuts, revenue increases AND mandatory program reform, sequestration would be applied only to spending. The cuts of sequestration will be roughly 9% and will go into effect in January of 2013, but won't be applied to USED K-12 programs until the 2013-14 school year (with the exception of Impact Aid). The cuts will apply to each and every K-12 federal education program, from Title I and IDEA to REAP and Troops to Teachers. The cuts severely impact schools, whose funding was already disproportionately reduced during the recession. The cuts of sequestration will translate into job cuts, elimination of professional development, and reducing academic course offerings (AASA Sequestration Survey, July 2012).

FY13 Appropriations: This is the second of ten years with consecutive spending caps for the federal budget. The good news is that this year's cap is a modest increase over FY12, meaning it is very unlikely we will have any appropriations-related cuts. The Senate Appropriations LHHS Subcommittee and Full Appropriations Committee passed its FY13 LHHS bill in June. The bill provides \$100 million increases for Title I and IDEA, smaller increases for RttT, Advanced Placement, Promise Neighborhoods, and a small number of other programs. Virtually all other programs—including REAP—were level funded. The following programs were cut: Transition to Teaching, Safe/Drug-Free Schools/Communities Program, NAEP and National Assessment Governing Board. The House Appropriations Committee marked up an LHHS bill that was \$6 billion below FY12 levels and cuts funding to USED by \$1.1 billion. Within this overall \$1.1 billion reduction, Title I is level funded and IDEA receives an additional \$500 million. Virtually all other programs were level funded or cut. Process-wise, Congress has laid the groundwork for a six-month CR that would level-fund government into the new year and new Congress. Either way, it is widely anticipated that the lower funding levels advocated by the House are more political fodder than not, and that the final appropriations bills—when they come—will be at a level that mirrors the Senate numbers.

Talking Points:

- Urge your Congressional delegation to work with their colleagues across the aisle and across the hill to avoid the cuts of sequestration. Explain to them what budget cuts would mean to your district: How many job cuts? What programs would be impacted/eliminated?
- Urge your Senators and Representative to support increased investment to Congress' outstanding commitments to underserved populations through Title I and IDEA. Many of the reform and innovation ideas the Administration pushes through competitive funding can be accomplished through existing statute. Changes to ESEA within reauthorization, as well as increased flexibility at the local level, will allow all districts—not just those winning a funding competition—to implement long-term, systemic changes.
- Remind your Senators and Representatives that not every dollar in the federal budget is equal: just as a dollar invested in education garners more than a dollar in return, a dollar cut from education is more than a dollar lost. Education is an investment, and Congressional effort should reflect this priority.

- Encourage your Senators and Representatives to steer any additional education dollars toward existing federal formula programs, instead of competitive grants, in any appropriations bill, whether a CR, omnibus, or regular appropriation.
- Urge your Senator to support the Senate LHHS bill, which is funded at Budget Control Act levels. Explain to your Representative that the House should remain committed to the BCA-levels they signed in to law last year and that Chairman Ryan's budget is damaging to schools.