

CEC's Sequestration Q & A



WHAT IS SEQUESTRATION?

Sequestration is the name of the automatic across the board federal funding cuts that will be imposed on select education, health and military programs starting on March 1, 2013. Basically, it's a wonky term for a budget procedure that stops federal funds from being spent, even if Congress approved them.

WHY ARE WE TALKING ABOUT SEQUESTRATION NOW?

Sequestration begins soon! It is part of a process set in motion in the 2011 Budget Control Act (BCA). The BCA is the law that allowed the US to raise the legal amount of money the government can borrow to pay its bills. It also included several measures to cut government spending. To decide what federal funding should be cut, Congress appointed a Joint Select Committee (referred to as the "Supercommittee") made up of members from the House and Senate, Democrats and Republicans. This Supercommittee was charged with finding \$1.2 trillion in spending cuts over the next decade. If the Supercommittee failed, then sequestration (automatic across the board cuts) would occur. Well, the Supercommittee failed; and now, unless Congress changes the law, sequestration will begin.

Expected Cuts Starting March 1, 2013*:

US Department of Education CUT by **\$2.5 Billion**

Title I CUT by **\$750 Million**

IDEA Part B Grants to states CUT by **\$600 Million**

Head Start CUT by **\$400 Million**

WAIT !! DIDN'T CONGRESS SAVE US FROM THE CLIFF?

Unfortunately, no. Instead, Congress delayed sequestration by 2 months – it just moved the cliff to March 1, 2013. It also reduced the amount of sequestration, but only for this year! So it reduced sequestration in FY2013 to a 5.1% across the board cut. Thus, the entire U.S. Department of Education's budget will be reduced by approximately **\$2.5 billion**. In the chart on the left, you can see how sequestration will impact IDEA and Title 1.

*Importantly, the cut will be first felt by districts in their July allocations – so the cut will not take place for most programs, including IDEA and Title I until July 1, 2013. **BUT Impact Aid and Head Start will feel the cut on March 1, 2013, due to the way they receive federal funding.*

ARE THESE CUTS OVER AFTER THIS YEAR?

No! Sequestration cuts continue for 10 years! Additionally, the BCA (the August 2011 bill discussed above) that started all this put limits on the total amount Congress can spend for 10 years! And when Congress reduced this year's sequestration, they lowered the amounts Congress can spend next year and beyond even further. Thus, there is no way for education to escape cuts, unless Congress and the Administration agree that investment – not cuts – are needed and change the law.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO STOP THESE CUTS?

Contact your Representative and Senators TODAY. Tell them why this funding is important to your school, your district and children and youth with disabilities. Just put your zip code into [CEC's Legislative Action Center \(LAC\)](#). It's easy and free! You don't have to be a member to use it. Send a letter we drafted about sequestration, modify it to include your state, district and personal information or start fresh and draft your own! <http://capwiz.com/cek/home/>.

WHAT IS CEC DOING TO STOP THESE CUTS?

CEC is working with our allies in coalitions telling members of Congress we need a new path. Join us! Contact your Senators and Representative today!