

AASA Fiscal Cliff Toolkit: Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is in the toolkit?

The toolkit includes a combination of materials to help education stakeholders tell the story of the sequester's impact in their district.

- a. AASA's latest Economic Impact Report, which examines the share of federal education dollars in school district operating budgets across the country. *Federal Public Education Revenues and the Sequester* is a starting point exploring how the cuts of the sequester will cut deeper in poorer districts, who have larger reliance on federal dollars.
- b. ProximityOne data: Partnering with ProximityOne, AASA is able to make available, on a state-by-state basis, details about the operating budget for each school district in the state. Here is a list/description of the data for each local education agency (school district): ***Please note that dollar amounts in the data set are listed in thousands of dollars.***
 - i. Column A: District Name
 - ii. Column B: State Name
 - iii. Column C :Students (district enrollment)
 - iv. Column D: Total El-Sec Revenue (total sum of elementary and secondary revenues in FY10 (2010-11 school year) operating budget)
 - v. Column E: Total El-Sec Rev Non-Fed Nutr (total sum of elementary and secondary revenues in FY10 (2010-11 school year) operating budget), excluding federal school nutrition dollars, as they are exempt from the cuts of the sequester)
 - vi. Column F: Total Fed Rev (total federal education revenues in FY10 (2010-11 school year) operating budget)
 - vii. Column G: Total Non-Nutr Fed (total sum of federal education revenues, excluding federal nutrition revenues, in FY10 (2010-11 school year) operating budget)
 - viii. Column H: Total State (total sum of state education revenues in FY10 (2010-11 school year) operating budget)
 - ix. Column I: Total Local (total sum of local education revenues in FY10 (2010-11 school year) operating budget)
 - x. Column J: Fed % (percentage of FY10 (2010-11 school year) operating budget composed of federal revenues)
 - xi. Column K: State % (percentage of FY10 (2010-11 school year) operating budget composed of state revenues)
 - xii. Column L: Local % (percentage of FY10 (2010-11 school year) operating budget composed of local revenues)
 - xiii. Column N: Fed % Non Nutr (percentage of FY10 (2010-11 school year) operating budget composed of federal revenue, excluding school nutrition revenues)
- c. A fiscal cliff invoice calculates the cuts of the sequester for your district (all you need is your FY12 allocation for Title I, IDEA, Perkins and Title II).
- d. The fiscal cliff template letter can be used in conjunction with the invoice. Whereas the invoice quantifies the cuts of the sequester, the letter can be used with local media and Congress members to talk about the real impact: jobs cuts, programs eliminated, and other consequences.
- e. Op/Ed: This template letter (to be used with local media) draws on the Proximity Data and your expertise of local impacts to detail the impact of the sequester. The op/ed can also be shared with local reporters who may adopt/edit it to a more general story.
- f. Letter to the Editor: Similar in style to the letter that goes with the invoice, this letter is designed to be shared with local media outlets to put a local face on the impact of this federal policy.



2. How can/should I use it?

Begin by reading the AASA report. Once you have that context, look up the share of your district's operating budget derived from federal dollars. Use the AASA invoice to calculate the sum of cuts your district will feel as a result of the sequester.

Here's the most important part: use the template letter and op/ed piece to get the word out. The invoice generates the numbers, quantifying the dollar cut your district stands to lose. Use the letters to reach out to your Congressional delegation and local media to tell the story of your district. Details about jobs that will be cut, programs that will be reduced/eliminated and other consequences will make the sequester that much more real, and the letter becomes a pressure point for urging Congress to act to avoid the sequester.

3. What types of data are available?

See the expanded explanation in question 1. The data points made available through ProximityOne represent a detailed account of FY10 (2010-11 school year) operating budgets for more than 14,500 school districts across the country. The data includes the dollar amount and percentage of each budget composed of federal, state and local revenues.

4. How is this different than the sequestration toolkit?

Not surprisingly, there are a lot of similarities between the two toolkits. The fiscal cliff and sequester are related, and the depth of the cuts used in the sequestration toolkit are identical to those of the fiscal cliff toolkit. The main difference is the expansive availability of district-specific data highlighting the share of operating budgets dependent on federal revenues. At the national level, it highlights how different states and districts will feel deeper cuts of the sequester, and at the local level can be used to increase grassroots media coverage.

5. There is a lot of data in here, but not a map for my state/Congressional district. Is one available?

If you wish to see a more detailed map of your state or Congressional district, please email Noelle Ellerson (nellerson@aasa.org). There is limited ability to make additional maps available.

6. I want to reach out to my Congress members and their staff, but don't have the appropriate contact information. Can you help?

You can find out who your members of Congress are by visiting [AASA's Legislative Action Center](#). Should you require additional information, including the name/email address for the education staffer in a specific Congressional office, email Noelle Ellerson (nellerson@aasa.org) with your state and the name of the appropriate Senator/Representative.