



Doc H's Blog

Kentucky Education Commissioner
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Perfect Storm Slowing Down

This week, we had some potentially good news from Washington D.C. Sen. Murray and Rep. Ryan announced a budget deal that hopefully would delay, or at least minimize, the impact of federal sequestration on schools across the nation. Federal sequestration is one part of the perfect storm that's brewing for Kentucky education that I have been describing in recent [blogs](#).

Sequestration would impact Kentucky schools through a \$58 million cut to programs like Title I, Title II, IDEA and others. These programs serve our most at-risk children. The cuts would lead directly to the loss of teachers and teaching support positions -- more than 1,300 positions in Kentucky could be cut.

So far, there is at least a possibility that we might avoid this. The House of Representatives voted 332-94 to send the budget deal ([H.J. Res. 59](#)) to the Senate for consideration. Once Congress passes the budget resolution, as is expected, there are still several steps that have to happen. The budget moves to the House and Senate appropriations committees where there will be substantial discussion about how to divvy up the funds among federal agencies and programs and how much each should receive. Bottom line -- there are many potential pitfalls ahead before the federal budget deal results in an actual allocation of funds to school districts.

The other two parts of the perfect storm -- the Kentucky School Boards Insurance Trust (KSBIT) fund settlement and the state budget continue to develop. During our superintendent's monthly webinar today (December 13), Commissioner of Insurance Sharon Clark provided the latest progress on the school boards insurance trust.

If everything remains on track, it appears we are moving toward resolution of two components of the perfect storm -- KSBIT and federal sequestration.

Our remaining challenge is the state budget. Many news articles across the Commonwealth are quoting legislators concerning state revenues and spending plans for the next two years. Most of the news is not positive for advocates of education funding. I hope readers will pay close attention to the local and state discussions. If you need additional information about the state budget and the loss of education funding since 2008, as well as the growing inequity of our state education budget for local districts, please check out this [presentation](#) that I made to Kentucky Association of School Superintendents on December 8.

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