

How Will Sequestration Impact WUSD?

Over the past few weeks the media has been focused on what will happen if our country reaches the “fiscal cliff”, also known as “sequestration”. Most of us are concerned about this potential event because in large part because we simply don’t know what it will mean for us. I have been asked often how sequestration will impact our schools and thus I thought I would provide a bit of information in this week’s article.

My first question and likely yours too was what does sequestration mean? Well, let’s learn a little vocab today. Sequestration, which in most instances is a legal term, means to confiscate or seize property. In this case, the property which would be seized is funding for various programs which the federal government supports. In WUSD’s case, the sequestration process would most significantly impact our federal Special Education and Title 1 dollars. Currently, WUSD receives \$237,000 in Special Education and \$254,000 in Title 1 dollars on an annual basis. The latest data about the sequestration process indicates that these funds would be cut by around 9%, which would generate a combined loss between the two programs of approximately \$49,000.

The dollars we receive through the federal Special Education and Title 1 programs are primarily used to fund certified, classified and administrative staff. Clearly a loss of another \$49,000 on top of the deepest education cuts in the country would really hurt WUSD. At this stage it is not clear how these dollars will be cut through the sequestration process, but we will likely have a better idea of this impact after the first the year.

So now you have learned an additional vocabulary word and better understand the impact WUSD may face if sequestration takes place. As time progresses and we learn more about the actual impact of sequestration and the impending state budget for this next school year I will provide additional information.