



Projection of National Education Job Cuts for the 2011-12 School Year May 2011

TO: AASA Members
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Results from AASA's December 2010 economic impact survey, [Surviving a Thousand Cuts](#), reported that nearly half of respondents eliminated personnel in the 2010-11 school year and that two-thirds anticipated doing so in 2011-12. Earlier this month, AASA surveyed its members to document—state-by-state—the prospect of job cuts for the coming 2011-12 school year. The results of this survey illustrate that the continued economic recession at the state level, the cessation of emergency federal funding (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and Education Jobs Fund) and actual and anticipated funding cuts in federal FY11 and FY12 appropriations have created a perfect storm when it comes to staffing the nation's public schools.

This survey is the eleventh in a series of studies conducted by the American Association of School Administrators on the impact of the economic downturn on schools. AASA launched the series in fall 2008 in response to state budget shortfalls, federal buyouts and interventions, and a series of additional events characterizing a slowing, stagnating economy. As the economic situation worsened, AASA continued to monitor its impact on schools through a series of surveys to school administrators nationwide.

The previous studies in the AASA [Economic Impact Study Series](#) include:

- “Surviving a Thousand Cuts: America’s Public Schools and the Recession” (Dec. 16, 2010)
- “Impact of Preventing Projected Educator Layoffs for 2010-11 School Year” (June 22, 2010)
- “Projection of National Education Job Cuts for the 2010-11 School Year” (May 4, 2010)
- “A Cliff Hanger: How America’s Public Schools Continue to Feel the Impact of the Economic Downturn” (April 8, 2010)
- “One Year Later: How the Economic Impact Continues to Impact School Districts” (Oct. 27, 2009)
- “Schools and the Stimulus: How America’s Public School Districts Are Using ARRA Funds” (Aug. 25, 2009)
- “Looking Back, Looking Forward: How the Economic Downturn Continues to Impact School Districts” (March 25, 2009)
- “AASA Impact of the Economic Downturn on School Jobs Snapshot Survey” (Jan. 16, 2009)
- “AASA Opportunity for Federal Education Funding Survey” (Dec. 15, 2008)
- “AASA Study of the Impact of the Economic Downturn on Schools” (Nov. 12, 2008)

Over the last two and a half years, AASA has documented the impact of the recession on America’s public schools. Using survey responses from school administrators across the nation, AASA’s Economic Impact Study Series has demonstrated, time and time again, both the breadth and depth of budget pressure facing schools.

School districts started responding to the recession almost as soon as it began. Working on the periphery of their budget, they cut and trimmed budget items that least directly impacted student

achievement. The earliest surveys from this series documented that common initial cuts included limiting field trips and altering thermostats. Unfortunately, as the recession persisted and budget cuts carried over year to year, school districts faced increasingly difficult budgets, ultimately leading to cuts and reductions in budget areas that directly impact student achievement: programs and personnel.

The December 2010 survey looked broadly at the continued cuts to local school districts. This survey focused more narrowly on prospective personnel cuts for the 2011-12 school year. One year ago, in a similar survey, school administrators anticipated eliminating more than 275,000 education jobs for the 2010-11 school year. The Education Jobs Fund, passed by Congress in late summer and providing \$10 billion in emergency federal funding, helped stave off the education jobs cuts. [*Surviving a Thousand Cuts*](#) documented the crucial role EduJobs dollars played in saving educator jobs: less than half of respondents reported cutting jobs, down from 82 percent who anticipated having to do so before EduJobs funding.

The much-appreciated and well-used federal emergency funding (both ARRA and EduJobs) starts to expire during the current school year. Unfortunately, though, state and local economies have yet to experience the same fiscal stability and recovery taking place at the federal level. In fact, 44 states are projecting budget shortfalls totaling \$111.9 billion for FY2012, which begins July 1, 2011 in most states. Further, 24 states are already projecting budget shortfalls for FY12 totaling \$75.5 billion.ⁱ This means school districts will continue to feel the impact of the recession well into the 2013-14 school year, if not beyond. Education represents a large share of states' general fund budgets. While the national economy has stabilized, the reality is that state and local economies have a long, hard road ahead of them on their way to economic recovery.

Compounding the cessation of ARRA and EduJobs dollars and the continued fiscal belt-tightening at the state and local level, school districts brace for actual and anticipated cuts in annual federal education appropriations for FY11 and FY12 (the 2011-12 and 2012-13) school years. Beyond these fiscal limitations, historical experience and current economic projections indicate that FY12 will be even more trying than either FY10 or FY11.ⁱⁱ In the three previous recessions (in the early 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s), state budget problems endured for several years after federal recovery, a pattern expected to repeat itself here. It's a dark picture for school funding, which faces a perfect storm of state budget pressures, including lagging state revenues, increasing Medicaid enrollment, underfunded pension obligations, and the cessation of ARRA and EduJobs.ⁱⁱⁱ

Public education is heavily reliant on state and local funding. The endurance of the recession has shifted the response from tightening budgets and implementing moderate changes to implementing increasingly significant changes, including a marked increase in cuts to areas that more directly impact student achievement, including teacher job cuts. By the time school districts are once again operating at pre-recession budget levels, it will mean more than five consecutive years of budget cuts, an unprecedented fiscal reality whose impact is yet to be fully realized.

Complicating matters, school districts have been tasked with ever increasing data and reporting requirements at the same time that they are cutting budgets. The expansive reporting requirements for both ARRA and Race to the Top have coincided with the elimination of administrative positions within school districts. The additional projected job cuts for the 2011-12 school year come right as federal policy continues to call for increased capacity. And let's not forget the double impact that the funding 'shell game' has on school districts: some states used federal emergency education funding to supplant state education funding. Denied funds that should have been in addition to regular state dollars, school districts may feel a double-hit as their states make further cuts once the back-filled federal dollars dry up.

In an effort to garner only one response from each district, AASA surveyed only its superintendent members in May 2011. Illustrating the pressing significance of this issue, 1,011 members from 49 states completed this survey in less than 10 days. This significant sample size represents roughly eight percent^{iv} of the nation's school districts, is representative of the nation's schools and lends itself to reliable national projection. What did we learn about the actual and anticipated job cuts for both the 2010-11 and 2011-12 school years?

- Two-thirds (65%) of respondents eliminated positions in the 2010-11 school year.
- Nearly three-quarters (74%) of respondents will cut/eliminate 17,502 education jobs in the 2011-12 school year.
 - 8,523.9 teacher jobs;
 - 3,185.9 pupil support services jobs;
 - 982.7 administrative jobs; and
 - 4,810.1 classified jobs.
- We estimate that nationally, **227,000 education jobs are on the chopping block for the 2011-12 school year.**
- The projected jobs cuts will translate into larger class sizes, pushing pupil-to-teacher ratios from 15.5::1 to 16.8::1^v.
- Cutting 227,000 education jobs would deal a devastating blow to public education and will have a negative effect on economic recovery. Dr. Lawrence Mishel of the Economic Policy Institute told AASA, "Every 100,000 education jobs lost will be roughly 30,000 jobs lost in other sectors due to lost spending and those laid off."
 - Collectively, then, the 227,000 education jobs will translate into more than 67,500 job cuts in other sectors, bringing the total job loss across job sectors to 294,500.
- Demographics
 - More than 1,000 superintendents from 49 state submitted responses.
 - Almost three quarters (71%) of respondents work in districts enrolling fewer than 3,000 students.
 - More than two-thirds (70%) of respondents describe their community type as rural, compared to 23% reporting suburban and 6% reporting urban.

Forty-nine million students will show up for school this fall, regardless of the number of teachers and educators school districts are able to provide. School districts will operate and open their doors, regardless of fiscal strain. AASA members continue to address the recession with a sense of pragmatism, an approach that has helped them survive numerous cuts over the past two years and will help them weather the budget hardships coming their way over the next two or three years.

ⁱ Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, [States Continue to Feel Recessions' Impact](#), March 2011.

ⁱⁱ Ibid.

ⁱⁱⁱ Rick Hess & W. Downs, [K-12 Budget picture: Lean Years Ahead](#), Nov. 2010

^{iv} National Center for Education Statistics, [Digest of Education Statistics, 2010](#). Representing education statistics for the Fall 2010 school year, the digest reported 13,505 districts employing 3,174,000 teachers and educating 49,386,000 students in America's public elementary and secondary schools.

^v Ibid.

The table on the next page lists survey responses, by state, of projected job cuts for teachers, support service personnel (counselors, psychologists, therapists, etc.), administrators, and classified staff (maintenance, transportation, cafeteria, etc.)

State	Responses	Teachers	Support	Admin	Classified	Total
AK	5	6	9	2	55	72.0
AL	35	609	93	48	258	1,008.0
AR	73	90.2	29.5	7	50.6	177.3
AZ	10	76.5	20	7	16	119.5
CA	4	329	22	12	107	470.0
CO	1	6	0	0	6	12.0
CT	33	109	45	9	53	216.0
DE	1	0	0	0	0	-
FL	2	19	14	5	70	108.0
GA	12	176	13	8.5	15	212.5
IA	19	44	2.25	4.25	39.5	90.0
ID	9	80	6	6	30	122.0
IL	20	30.6	9.4	4	21	65.0
IN	54	864.5	236	65	511	1,676.5
KS	17	42	5	4	16	67.0
KY	38	141.5	48	18	154	361.5
LA	1	10	7	0	0	17.0
MA	9	39	37	3	6	85.0
MD	4	20	2	8	15	45.0
ME	7	19	16	1	2	38.0
MI	22	470	75	30.9	159	734.9
MN	26	221.5	67	11.2	32	331.7
MO	15	132	31	14	50	227.0
MS	1	7	0	0	0	7.0
MT	24	127.5	66	14.6	48.5	256.6
NC	14	251.5	97.9	26.5	341.9	717.8
ND	6	1	1	1	0	3.0
NE	11	35.5	3.5	1	5	45.0
NH	64	433	319			752.0
NJ	25	97	80	7.5	10	194.5
NM	1	25	25	3	5	58.0
NV	3	54	11	3	26	94.0
NY	45	439	245.8	51.7	311.5	1,048.0
OH	15	85	8	7	30	130.0
OK	104	287	231	76	130	724.0
OR	6	300.34	26.5	17	289.5	633.3
PA	37	300.5	86	26.5	152.5	565.5
RI	4	29.7	9	2	10	50.7
SC	4	76	31	31	22	160.0
SD	22	84	26	5.5	25.25	140.8
TN	5	17	1	8	9	35.0
TX	62	1553	803	340	1313.5	4,009.5
UT	2	1	0	1	0	2.0
VA	19	76.5	96.5	24	91	288.0
VT	3	18	11	1	5	35.0
WA	70	538.6	131.5	49	273.3	992.4
WI	32	115	55	14	33	217.0
WV	3	20	21	1	2	44.0
WY	8	14	9	1.5	6	30.5
N/A	4	3	4	2	4	13.0
Total	1,011.00	8,523.9	3,185.9	982.7	4,810.1	17,502.5

