RTAP GEM$ Planning Grant Walkthrough

Application and Planning Overview

Session Agenda

- Welcome and purpose of the GEM$ planning grant
- Overview of RTAP and planning-year expectations
- Walkthrough of application sections
- Budget and use of funds
- Timeline and submission tips

Welcome and Introductions

Lakia Baymon
Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Program Coordinator

Claire Abbott
Director of Educator Effectiveness

Erin Dunn
Strategic Initiatives Specialist

RTAP Overview and Planning Year

- Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Program is an initial licensure pathway
- Combines paid, job-embedded learning with coursework and mentoring
- Designed to address teacher shortages and diversify the workforce
- **Planning year focuses on design, readiness, and partnership development (approx. $25,000 awards)**

Purpose of the RTAP Planning Grant

Support aspiring RTAP LEAs in designing a high-quality RTAP model

Provide time and resources for needs assessment and planning

Build strong LEA, union, and EPP partnerships

Prepare LEAs to submit a full RTAP application

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Who Is the RTAP Planning Grant For?

Eligible Applicants

- Districts, schools, and collaboratives not currently implementing an RTAP
- Aspiring RTAP LEAs needing time to assess readiness, design a program, and build partnerships

Not the Purpose of the Planning Grant

- Not intended for districts already implementing an RTAP
- Cohort 1 districts planning to add a licensure area should use their RTAP implementation grant budget

Application Walkthrough

Application Section 1: District Context, Need, and Readiness

Describe staffing challenges and high-need licensure areas

Explain impact on students, schools, and community

Use vacancy, turnover, or licensure data where possible

Explain why RTAP is a promising strategy for your district

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Application Section 2: Priority Licensure Areas

Identify licensure areas the district is considering for RTAP (SPED, ESL, Secondary STEM, Early Childhood)

Explain why these areas are priorities

Describe potential candidate pools such as paraprofessionals or career-changers

Licensure selections are exploratory during planning year

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Application Section 3: Planning Team and Stakeholder Engagement

Identify district leaders and staff involved in planning

Describe engagement with unions and school committee

Explain how mentors and potential apprentices will provide input

Emphasize collaboration and shared decision-making

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Application Section 4: Planning Activities and Milestones

Needs assessment and workforce analysis

Program design and supervision planning

Partnership development and MOU drafting

Tracking progress and deliverables throughout the year

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Application Section 5: Equity, Access, and Support Commitments

Center equity and access in all planning decisions

Use Culturally & Linguistically Sustaining Instructional Practices and DESE Model Evaluation Rubrics to guide design

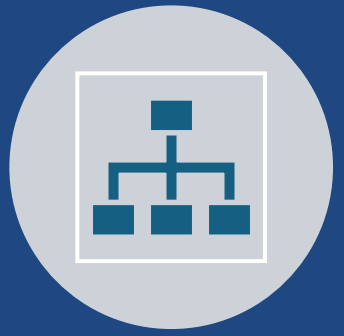
Identify barriers such as cost, scheduling, or transportation

Plan strategies to foster belonging and apprentice support

Application Section 6: Budget and Use of Funds

Funds support planning, not program implementation

Staff time, facilitation, and partnership coordination



Design work related to supervision and program structure

RTAP application development and sustainability planning

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Application Section 7: Sustainability Vision

Describe how RTAP may become part of long-term workforce strategy

Identify potential funding sources and district structures

Consider partnerships with EPPs and labor

Vision should be high-level and forward-looking

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Timeline and Logistics

Planning Grant Timeline

- Planning year runs during the 2026–2027 school year
- Focus is design and readiness, not apprentice launch
- Full RTAP application submitted in Spring 2027
- Implementation occurs after Full RTAP application approval

FY27 RTAP Planning Grant Overview

- Grant: Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Program (RTAP) Planning Grant (FC221P)
- Award: Up to $25,000 per LEA or coalition
- Grant Opens: January 30
- Due Date: March 20
- DESE review occurs within 30 days of submission
- Period: July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027
- Purpose: Support planning and design for RTAP implementation (no apprentices launched)
- Apply through GEM$: https://mass.egrantsmanagement.com
- Submission is complete only after Superintendent approval; confirm grant roles early

Looking Ahead: Planning Year vs. Implementation Year

Planning Year (Design and Readiness)

- The planning year is focused on building the RTAP.
- LEAs use this time to design the program, build partnerships, and prepare for launch. There is no expectation that apprentices are hired or launched during this year.

During the Planning Year, LEAs focus on:

- Program design and licensure planning
- Partnership development with EPPs and other partners
- Readiness and internal planning activities
- Submitting the RTAP application for approval

Implementation Year (Launch and Operation)

- After the RTAP application is approved and implementation funding is awarded, LEAs may move into implementation.

During Implementation, LEAs may:

- Hire and onboard apprentices
- Begin on-the-job learning and related instruction
- Operate the RTAP program

Strong Application Tips

Be	Focus on	Align	Use
Be clear, specific, and realistic	Focus on readiness and planning, not final answers	Align relevant data (hiring, staffing, retention data) with proposal	Use district context and needs to guide decisions

For More Information…

Learn more about the Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Program (RTAP)

- Visit the RTAP webpage: **MA's Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Program (RTAP) - Center for Strategic Initiatives**
- Questions or follow-up support: **educatorapprenticeships@mass.gov**
- Additional resources and updates will be posted on the webpage as they become available

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Next Steps

Review application materials and FAQs

Prepare for GEM$ submission deadline

Frequently Asked Questions

Can two or more LEAs apply together?	Yes. Two or more LEAs may apply as a coalition. One LEA must serve as the lead applicant and submit the application in GEM$ on behalf of the group.
Can approved special education schools apply?	Yes. Approved special education schools are eligible to apply, either independently or as part of a coalition.
Can Cohort 1 LEAs apply for the planning grant?	No. The planning grant is only for LEAs that are not currently implementing an RTAP.
Can Cohort 1 LEAs apply for other RTAP funding?	Yes. Cohort 1 LEAs may apply for the FC221-I targeted implementation grant.
Does a planning grant guarantee implementation funding?	No. Receiving a planning grant does not guarantee future implementation funding. A separate application is required.

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Thank you!