**Part III FY22 TARGETED ASSISTANCE GRANT (TAG) NARRATIVE**

*SSoS is committed to supporting* [*cultural responsiveness,*](https://www.doe.mass.edu/instruction/crdw/) *an approach that promotes three outcomes supporting student learning: academic achievement, cultural competence, and sociopolitical awareness.*

1. **Background and Overview:** Districts with one or more schools identified under the Massachusetts District and School Accountability System for focused/targeted and broad/comprehensive support are eligible for this grant opportunity.[[1]](#footnote-2) There are two Targeted Assistance Grant (TAG) categories within which schools are eligible: Implementation Grants and Student Group Performance Only Grants. More explanation on the categories is on page 2.

The grant-funded activities that districts and schools engage in are expected to support the implementation of sustainable improvement plans. Districts are encouraged to strategically align TAG expenditures with other key funding sources (e.g., SOA, ESSER, other federal Title funding).

Sustainable Improvement Plan Renewals are due to DESE by **Friday October 15, 2021** (send to [SSoS@mass.gov](https://massgov-my.sharepoint.com/personal/erica_p_champagne_mass_gov/Documents/SSoS%40mass.gov)). Please see [this message](https://www.doe.mass.edu/turnaround/level4/2021-0702summer-tap-sip-update.docx) with more guidance on Sustainable Improvement Plan renewal submissions for school year 2021-2022.

1. **Guidance and Resources:** Detailed guidance to support schools in all phases of implementation can be found in the Massachusetts [Sustainable Improvement Planning Guidance](http://www.doe.mass.edu/turnaround/level4/guidance.html). Districts can also refer to the ***Fund Use Recommendations for the Targeted Assistance Grant (TAG)*** in the *Additional Information* section of the TAG RFP for research-based suggestions for using funds for planning and implementation activities.
2. **Acceleration Roadmap**: The [Acceleration Roadmap](https://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/on-desktop/roadmap/) is a tool for teachers and leaders in Massachusetts to support acceleration of student learning in the 2021–22 school year. While all students were impacted during the 2020-21 school year, the pandemic exacerbated many existing inequities and opportunity gaps. This roadmap is designed to provide a focused and phased approach to supporting students as they return to school in the new academic year. As districts apply for TAG funds this year, we ask that direct connections are made to the implementation of the Acceleration Roadmap in the table below. For guidance in meeting this expectation, please contact your Statewide System of Support (SSoS) Assistance Team.
3. **Student Agency and Culturally Responsive and Sustaining Schools and Classrooms:** While there is not a specific requirement at this time related to these resources, we encourage you to consider how you will elevate best practices in student agency as a driver of culturally responsive practices in the implementation of your FY22 Sustainable Improvement Plan and Targeted Assistance Grant fund use.

Our Statewide System of Support (SSoS) team has been reviewing the literature and research base to help shape our own understanding and guidance for student agency and how it can serve as a lever for supporting culturally responsive and sustaining schools and classrooms. This document ([pages 4-5](https://www.doe.mass.edu/turnaround/level4/2021-0702summer-tap-sip-update.docx)) shares a working resource in which we begin to lay out our rationale for focusing on student agency, a brief summary of what the research and evaluation base says about student agency, a working definition of student agency, and frameworks for thinking about strategies for supporting students and how they are implemented. We are providing this as a resource and to shed light on the direction that sustainable improvement plan guidance and related grants will take in the coming year.

The TAG Fund Use Recommendation document has been updated with suggestions for leveraging TAG funding to supporting best practices in elevating student voice.

1. **An Important Note about Evidence-Based Interventions:** In order to meet both state and federal requirements, schools with sustainable improvement plans are expected to incorporate *at least one* strategy backed by evidence that meets the criteria from one of the [*top three evidence tiers* as defined by ESSA](https://ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/guidanceuseseinvestment.pdf)**.** The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s (DESE) [“How Do We Know Initiative”](http://www.doe.mass.edu/research/howdoweknow/) resources can help support districts’ efforts in meeting this funding requirement. If you require further support in this area, please contact Kendra Winner at kendra.l.winner@mass.gov.
2. **Targeted Assistance Grant (TAG) Categories[[2]](#footnote-3)**
3. **Implementation:** Funds ranging between $15,000-$45,000 to support the Implementation phase will be awarded to districts to support and enhance the implementation of sustainable improvement plan(s) currently in place, and on file at DESE, in eligible school(s). Schools in the 1st-5th percentiles are eligible for up to $45,000, schools in the 6th-10th percentiles are eligible for up to $25,000, and student group only schools are eligible for $15,000. Activities listed in the chart below are expected to align with strategies as outlined in the sustainable improvement plan. Please be sure to include the page number(s) in the sustainable improvement plan(s) that contains the challenge, strategy, or priority area to be enhanced with grant funding. The chart below should include each school the district is serving. Schools engaging in Implementation grants can select one of two vendors (American Institutes for Research (AIR) or SchoolWorks) to conduct a virtual or in-person Targeted Site Visit. DESE will contract directly with the selected vendor using grant funding separate from TAG. Please read carefully the ***MSV/TSV FAQ document*** in the RFP posting for more information and instructions relative to the TSV process.
4. **Student Group Performance Only:** Schools above the lowest 10 percentiles with low-performing student groups can use up to $15,000 to support the implementation phase of sustained improvement plan(s) currently in place in eligible school(s). Activities and strategies listed in the chart below are expected to align with challenges, strategies, and/or priority areas for improvement as outlined in the sustainable improvement plan. Please be sure to include the page number(s) in the sustainable improvement plan(s) that contains the challenge, strategy, or priority area to be enhanced with grant funding. The chart should include each school the district is serving. Schools in this category will not receive a site visit as part of this grant opportunity.
5. **Targeted Assistance Grant Narrative:** Once a district determines how grant funds will be utilized in its eligible school(s), it can complete the grant narrative.
* The ***Targeted Assistance Grant Narrative*** is required and must be submitted in EdGrants as part of a complete application.
* Districts will submit one grant narrative, regardless of how many schools will receive funding.
* The *Summary* and *Grant-Funded Activities* tables must both be filled in completely in order to be considered for funding.
* Once complete, save with the file name *FY22 TAG Application [Name of district]* and upload it as an attachment in EdGrants.

**Summary Table**

*Please indicate the district name and the total amount of funds being requested. List each school that will be receiving Targeted Assistance Grant funds, indicate the grades each school serves, and note the TAG grant category. If necessary, rows may be added to this table.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **District** | ***(insert name of district here)*** |
| **Total Funds Requested:** | $ |
| **School** | **Grades Served** | **Grant Category** *(Implementation or Student Group-Only Implementation)* |
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**Targeted Assistance Grant: Funded Activities/Strategies**

In the table below please list each activity/strategy TAG funds will support. If necessary, rows may be added to this table.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **District** |  | ***(insert name of district here)*** |  |
| Activity/Strategy1 | What page number(s) in the plan(s) is the activity listed?  | Alignment to Acceleration Roadmap | Description: Provide a **brief** explanation for how the activity/strategy supports and/or enhances the implementation of the sustainable improvement plan (***one paragraph maximum per activity***). | Is this a district strategy (yes or no)?  | If not a district strategy, list schools engaged in this activity/strategy2 | Activity/strategy Cost3 |
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1Districts may budget funds to support district activities/strategies that directly support multiple schools. Please flag these as district-level activities in the Activity/Strategy column and indicate the schools to which it is providing supports in the *Schools engaged in this Activity/Strategy* column.

2Additional information required for districts requesting funds for implementation activities: In the **List schools engaged in this activity/strategy** column, next to the name of each school, please reference the page number(s) indicating where this strategy appears in its sustainable improvement plan.

3District Indirect Costs should be considered when estimating final costs. See “Indirect Cost” tab in Budget Workbook.

1. A complete list of eligible districts, district grant allocations by funding source, and schools eligible to use TAG funds appears in the ***Targeted Assistance Grants: District Allotments*** document attached in the *Additional Information* section of the TAG RFP. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Fund use must be consistent with applicable state and/or federal requirements. Cost calculations should reflect realistic estimates, with all final costs uploaded into EdGrants. All expenditures will be closely reviewed as they relate to the priorities of this grant opportunity and align directly with proposed sustainable improvement implementation and/or planning activities aligned to evidence-based practices. Funding will only be approved after programmatic and budgetary reviews by Department staff and upon review by the Office of the Governor. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)