**Fund Use Recommendations for the FY23 Targeted Assistance Grant (TAG)**

**Context**

The grant-funded activities that districts and schools engage in are expected to support the implementation of needs identified in the [district prioritization process](https://www.doe.mass.edu/turnaround/level4/guidance.html?#accordion). Districts are encouraged to use funds to support the implementation of district priorities, with specific attention paid to schools that need differentiated assistance.[[1]](#footnote-2)

Our center has recently released a consolidation and update of many of our resources called the [Coherence Guidebook.](https://www.doe.mass.edu/csdp/guidebook/default.html) This guidebook can be a valuable support for schools and districts as they identify elements of great schools and efforts that will improve student outcomes. This guidebook pulls together myriad frameworks and resources to support a systems-level path towards deeper learning and educational equity. Districts may wish to reference the Guidebook while determining how TAG funds can best be leveraged to advance improved outcomes for students who are least well served.

Finally, districts are encouraged to strategically align grant expenditures with other key funding sources like [SOA](https://www.doe.mass.edu/soa/), [ESSER](https://www.doe.mass.edu/federalgrants/esser/default.html), and other [federal Title funding](https://www.doe.mass.edu/federalgrants/esser/default.html).

**Examples of TAG Fund Use**

The examples below are excerpts from district prioritization submissions from across the Commonwealth. Please keep in mind these are intended to be illustrative, not exhaustive. These examples are intended to demonstrate how TAG funds can be used to systemically support schools. If you have any questions about planned expenditures that do not appear in these examples, please do not hesitate to contact your Statewide Systems of Support (SSoS) Regional Assistance Team.

*Example priority from a district submission:* Culturally responsive, grade appropriate, Tier 1 literacy instruction through high quality instructional materials (HQIM):

District Level:

* District Leadership Team stipends to:
  + Research and select high-quality curriculum that support culturally responsive instruction
  + Develop instructional leadership skills to support educators’ understanding of the instructional approach of those materials and how they align to the district’s instructional vision
  + Develop a calendar/assessment schedule that supports educators with the skillful use of materials
  + Provide PD on differentiated supports for students to ensure all students can access Tier 1 instruction.

School Level

* School Leadership Team stipends (could include stipends for data analysis to regularly assess if student needs are being met, particularly students who have historically been least well served, if the new curriculum is being implemented with fidelity, or to provide professional development for providing differentiated supports to students)
* Literacy PD on new curriculum, including for teachers of English Learners and students with disabilities
* Stipends to support implementation and analysis of student surveys that capture levels of student belonging and engagement and how culturally responsive teaching and learning is enacted in classrooms
* Stipends for teacher leaders to support the implementation and analysis of teacher surveys for PD development needs
* Support for a coaching position(s) (or expand an existing one) to facilitate planning, support instruction, ensure implementation with fidelity

*Example priority from a district submission*: Support transitioning 9th graders to foster a greater sense of belonging.

District Level

* Stipends for District Leadership Team to engage students, families, and staff in developing and implementing a district-wide vision for fostering a sense of belonging
* Stipends to build partnerships with local universities and work placement organizations for students, including local MassHire Workforce Investment Boards

School Level

* Stipends for common planning time for 8th and 9th grade teachers to best support student needs as they enter high school
* Stipends for the creation of more in-depth orientation for incoming 9th graders, including summer transition programs
* Provide opportunities for middle school students to understand options, opportunities, and the structure of high school prior to their high school orientation
* Stipends to implement a revamped schedule to better meet 9th grade student needs
* Provide PD to educators on how to best support students at all levels of need
* Stipends to build partnerships with local universities and work placement organizations, especially the MassHire Workforce Investment Board
* Provide additional staff to ensure counseling is available to all students
* Create a Family Engagement Specialist position to ensure positive family connectedness
* Stipends for staff to increase outreach and build relationships with families
* Providing interpreters and translation for family engagement activities and communications
* Implement My Career and Academic Plan (MyCAP) to support student identification of individual interests, skills, and talents for students to make connections and better align high school experiences with future plans

*Example priority from a district submission*: All students will have access to high-quality, grade-level instructional materials in every class to lead to a student demonstration of mastery.

District Level

* Stipends to educators to assess and revise district curriculum
* Stipends to develop effective systems of coaching, collaboration, and evaluation that support educators’ skillful use of high-quality materials.
* Stipends to develop effective data systems that support educators to provide the correct supports for all students
* PD for educators (such as special education and ESL teachers) on how to ensure all students can access Tier 1 instruction.

School Level

* Stipends to teachers to pilot curriculum
* Stipends to teachers to implement, analyze, and respond to student survey data
* Family engagement activities centered around gathering feedback to inform school decisions
* Design, schedule, and implement Professional Learning Communities (PLC’s) focusing on instruction and HQIM
* PD for student-centered strategies and differentiating student learning needs and experiences
* Stipends to support school and district leader walk-throughs to ensure fidelity with HQIM implementation
* Stipends for Instructional Leadership Team (ILTs) to focus on HQIM implementation and the monitoring and collection of data (this can include the design, scheduling, and participation in the meetings required to accomplish the implementing and monitoring)
* Stipends to develop and implement diagnostic and formative assessments

1. Districts can use TAG funds to support all schools, however, as per state and federal funding requirements, schools that had a designation of broad/comprehensive or targeted/focused support based on 2021 Massachusetts Accountability System determinations should directly benefit from TAG funding. A list of these schools is provided for context in the **District Allocation** document. Note that when 2022 accountability designations are available in the fall of 2022, districts will have the opportunity to revisit the distribution of TAG funds in consideration of newly eligible schools and file an amendment if necessary. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)