

# Targeted Assistance Grant (TAG) FY26 Overview May 27, 2025



## **Agenda**

1. Eligibility and Requirements
2. Funding and Fund Use
3. Similarities and Differences
4. Submission
5. Grant Review Process
6. Next Steps
7. Questions and Resources

# Which Districts are Eligible for TAG Funding?

- Any district with one or more schools:
  - With a federal designation of TSI, ATSI, and CSI
  - In the lowest 10 percentiles on the 2024 state accountability system
  - Identified as underperforming
- All schools eligible from 2024 accountability data are eligible all year, even if 2025 accountability data demonstrates they are not eligible
- More schools might become eligible based on 2025 accountability data

**Not eligible**: school served by the Office of Strategic Transformation, charter schools, and virtual schools.

## Districts Accepting TAG Funding Agree to:

- Engaging with assigned CSDP assistance staff (SSoS Regional Team or another CSDP team)
- Provide your updated district instructional prioritization plans to DESE (for SSoS districts)
- Taking part in a CSDP-sponsored progress monitoring processes

Note: This is all the same as last year.

# TAG Funding Sources

TAG is comprised of two funding sources totaling \$3,450,000:

1. Title I School Improvement funding (FC 325): \$2,960,000
2. State targeted assistance funds (FC 222): \$490,000

- All funds must be expended by **June 30, 2026\***

\* Districts will NOT have the option to extend the grant through the summer like previous years

# What is the same as last year?

- Same focus on district systems to support schools
- Same alignment with TAG funding to a district priority identified in the instructional prioritization plan
- Most of the 2025-2026 TAG application looks like last year

# What is different from last year?

- Process is months earlier this year!
- Allocations were reduced by 20%
- There won't be increases in allocations after accountability data is released in September

# TAG Allocation Update

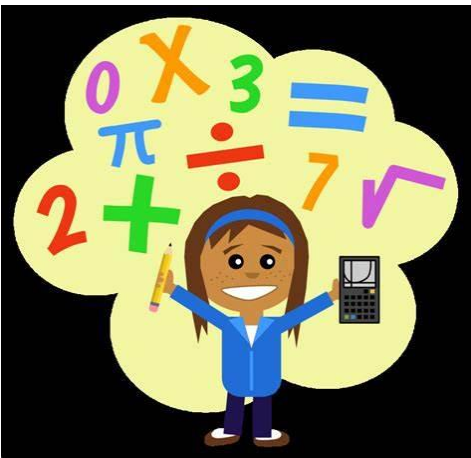
- Many DESE grants are subject to reductions this year, including TAG
- When 2025 accountability figures are released in the fall, we will add any eligible schools to your district total.
  - Allocation changes would occur in the 2026-27 grant
- Schools no longer eligible will NOT be deducted from the district total for the 2025-2026 school year



# TAG Fund Use Example

**Primary Purpose:** to support the implementation of strategies in your district instructional prioritization plans and monitor the progress of its implementation and outcomes

*Let's say your district is focusing on strengthening Tier 1 Mathematics instruction*



- Stipends/substitutes
- External contractors and PD providers
- Instructional materials, technology, and supplies\*

# TAG Fund Use Alignment

- **TAG funds should be aligned to each district's District Instructional Prioritization Plan or a district identified priority for improvement**
- Fund use recommendations have been aligned to core agency priorities: DESE's [Educational Vision](#) and [CSDP Coherence Guidebook](#),
- Within those priorities, there are flexibilities in expending TAG funds

# When is the TAG Application Due?

## Application Deadline:

**Tuesday September 30, 2025**

Districts are *strongly encouraged* to submit TAG applications prior to this deadline, especially if TAG funds are needed in the summer. District are eligible to use TAG funds back to the date of approval.

# What Gets Submitted in GEM\$: Contact Info

The screenshot shows the GEM\$ (Massachusetts Grants for Education Management System) web application. The top navigation bar includes links for Time & Attendance, Login - Commonwe..., EdGrants, OneDrive, SSoS Spt, DEI Spt, REDT ShareED, GEM\$, GEM\$ Spt, SOA Spt, and FY25 TAG Tracker. The left sidebar contains a menu with items: GEM\$ Home, Administer, Search, Reports, Inbox, Reader Review, Application Supplement, Funding, Reimbursement Requests, Project Overview, LEA Document Library, Address Book, DESE Resources, Help for Current Page, and Contact DESE. The main content area is titled 'District and School Staff Involved in TAG' and shows the path: Athol-Royalston (0615) Public School District - FY 2025 - FC 0222/0325 Targeted Assistance Grant- TAG (Federal&State/ENT) - Rev 0 - TAG Contact Info. A 'Go To' button is present. A note states: '\* Please list at least 2 names and email addresses of each person involved with TAG. This list will be used to communicate with your district regarding all information TAG related.' Below the note is a large, empty text input area.

Make sure to include email addresses of 2 people!

# What Gets Submitted in GEM\$: Budget



- GEM\$ Home
- Administer ▶
- Search ▶
- Reports
- Inbox ▶
- Reader Review
- Application Supplement ▶
- Funding ▶
- Reimbursement Requests ▶
- Project Overview
- LEA Document Library
- Address Book
- DESE Resources
- Help for Current Page
- Contact DESE

## Budget

Framingham (0100) Public School District - FY 2025 - FC 0222/0325 Targeted Assistance Grant- TAG (Federal&State/ENT) - Rev 0 - FC 0325 - Targeted Assistance Grant

Go To ▶

Indirect Cost	
Total Contributing to Indirect Cost	\$0.00
Indirect Cost Rate	3.60%
Maximum Allowed for Indirect Cost	\$0.00

[Download Budget Data](#)

[Budget by Function Code](#)

<a href="#">View All</a>	Object Code	Total
<a href="#">View</a>	01M - Professional Salaries (MTRS)	\$0.00
<a href="#">View</a>	01NM - Professional Salaries (Non-MTRS)	\$0.00
<a href="#">View</a>	02 - Clerical Salaries	\$0.00
<a href="#">View</a>	03 - Other Salaries	\$0.00
<a href="#">View</a>	04C - Contracted Services	\$0.00
<a href="#">View</a>	04MC - Contracted Services (major)	\$0.00
<a href="#">View</a>	05 - Supplies and Materials	\$0.00
<a href="#">View</a>	06 - Other Expenses	\$0.00
<a href="#">View</a>	07 - Equipment	\$0.00
<a href="#">View</a>	08 - Indirect Costs	\$0.00
<a href="#">View</a>	09 - MTRS	\$0.00



Session Timeout: 59:32 ([Hide Timer](#))

# What Gets Submitted in GEM\$: Narrative

## TARGETED ASSISTANCE GRANT: FUNDED ACTIVITIES/STRATEGIES

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



Activity (ex. Professional development to all elementary teachers to support implementation of new curriculum.)	Connection to District Priority (ex. High Quality Instructional Materials for literacy in elementary schools)	Description: Provide <u>either</u> a <b>brief</b> explanation for how the activity/strategy supports and/or enhances the implementation of the identified district priority ( <b>one paragraph maximum per activity</b> ) or direct us to the location in the district prioritization submission where the language is located (page or section).	Cost	Who is Supported by this Activity? (Ex. 1. The district OR 2. All schools OR 3. X Elementary School, Y Middle School, and Z High School)



# Grant Review

A DESE review team will review all submissions for:

- Alignment to district instructional prioritization plan
- Technical requirements (e.g., budget details, indirect costs)
- Are the expenses reasonable and allowable

# Grant Review Process for TAG

- District submits
  - The step in GEM\$ is called "LEA Fiscal Representative Approved"
- DESE reviews
  - Revisions are made if needed
  - Once approvable, DESE sends the application back to the district
  - The step in GEM\$ is called "DESE Program Reviewed"
- Superintendent approves
  - The step in GEM\$ is called LEA Superintendent / Chief Executive Approved
  - This step is so the superintendent only needs to approve once
  - This step replaces the signed cover page needed in EdGrants
- DESE approves
  - The step in GEM\$ is "DESE Program Approved"



## Frequently Asked Questions

Question: What is the difference between fund code 222 and 325?

*Answer: essentially nothing. They are accounting figures DESE uses to know where the money is coming from. They are subject to the same spending rules, same end date, same everything.*

# Frequently Asked Questions

Question: What if the 2025 data shows that we have fewer TAG eligible schools? Will our allocation be reduced?

*Answer: No district allocation will be reduced mid-year in 2025-2026.*

## Frequently Asked Questions

Question: What if the 2025 data shows that we have more TAG eligible schools? Will our allocation be increased?

*Answer: In years past, maybe. For this year, no. No district's TAG allocation will go up or down from the figure you've already been provided.*

## Frequently Asked Questions

Question: Since we can't extend the grant into the summer, how can we use TAG for summer spending?

*Answer: We are rolling out the grant months earlier than before so districts can have their TAG funding in time for the summer. Please apply early if you need the funding for the summer!*

## Next Steps for Districts

1. Consult with your regional SSoS team or other CSDP liaison.
2. As you develop your application, make certain it aligns to strategies in your [district instructional prioritization](#) plan or other district identified priority
3. Submit application in GEM\$ (DESE will notify you when it's ready)



# Questions about TAG?

## **Substantive questions related to your application**

Reach out to your regional SSoS team or CSDP liaison

## **Technical questions about completing grant forms:**

Contact Michael Seymour [michael.j.seymour@mass.gov](mailto:michael.j.seymour@mass.gov)

## **Questions about progress monitoring**

Contact Erica Champagne [Erica.Champagne@mass.gov](mailto:Erica.Champagne@mass.gov)

## Link to RFP

- Targeted Assistance Grant RFP has all the information you'll need (includes narrative application, district allocations, eligibility, grant information, etc.)
  - <https://www.doe.mass.edu/grants/2026/0222-0325/>
- In the meantime, you have your allocations already (contact me if you don't) and know the narrative from last year hasn't undergone changes so you can start now.

Thank you!

*Thank  
you*