Frequently Asked Questions

Question	Answer
Are all schools eligible to receive TAG funds?	Per Indiana statute, to be eligible for a Teacher Appreciation Grant under the program, a school corporation or charter school must: ● identify no more than 20% of certified teachers as eligible grant recipients based on criteria provided by IDOE; ● determine the appropriate stipend tier for each identified educator; and ● report how each certified teacher met the specified designation criteria within that tier.
Are interlocal cooperatives eligible to apply for TAG funds?	Yes. Per IC 20-43-16 the lead school corporation or interlocal cooperative administering a cooperative or other special education program or administering a career and technical education program, including programs managed under IC 20-26-10, IC 20-35-5, IC 20-37, or IC 36-1-7, shall award stipends to and carry out the other responsibilities of an employing school corporation under this chapter for the teachers in the special education program or the career and technical education program.
Do all teachers qualify to receive TAG funds?	Per IC 20-43-16-5, a grant received by a school corporation or charter school may only be used to pay stipends to teachers who: ● have instructed students in a school or district for at least one (1) school year prior to the grant distribution year; ● maintain employment at the same school or district at the time of the grant distribution; ● are determined to *significantly impact student outcomes* using national, state, or local assessment measures; and ● are designated as meeting all stated eligibility requirements within their respective tier.
Are teachers able to receive TAG funds two years in a row?	Yes, as long as all eligibility criteria has been met, a teacher can receive TAG funds in consecutive years.
Are school counselors considered "teachers" and therefore eligible to receive TAG funds?	No, school counselors are not an eligible recipient of TAG funds since their primary responsibility is not the academic instruction of students.

Are instructional coaches considered "teachers" and therefore eligible to receive TAG funds?	The job description and daily duties for an instructional coach varies greatly statewide and as such, eligibility would be decided locally. An instructional coach would be eligible if: ● their daily schedule clearly and consistently demonstrates more *instructional* time with students than any other duty; ● they had full-year instructional responsibilities with the same group of students; and ● there is academic data from a national, state, or local assessment that points to their *isolated contribution* to "significant student outcomes." *This could look like providing Tier 2 support to a group of students using a separate intervention curriculum from which the classroom teacher does not instruct.*
Are Special Education teachers eligible to receive a teacher appreciation grant?	Assuming they meet all criteria for the tier in which they are being awarded, Special Education teachers qualify as an eligible TAG recipient if they taught a self-contained special education class and/or served as a teacher of record during the 2025-2026 school year for a group of students. They must have data that shows their specific contribution to significant student outcomes, likely mastery of individual IEP goals ahead of progress monitoring benchmarks or beyond predetermined goals.
Are English Language Learner teachers eligible to receive a teacher appreciation grant?	Assuming they meet all criteria for the tier in which they are being awarded, ELL teachers qualify as an eligible TAG recipient if they taught a self-contained English language learner class and/or served as a teacher of record during the 2025-2026 school year for a group of students. They must have data that shows their specific contribution to significant student outcomes, likely mastery of individual ILP goals.
Is a teacher with an emergency license eligible to receive TAG funds?	Teachers should be fully licensed in the subject area for which they are being awarded.
Are PreK teachers eligible?	Licensed PreK teachers are eligible, as long as they meet the TAG eligibility requirements: ● have instructed students in a school or district for at least one school year prior to the 2026-2027 school year; ● maintain employment at the same school or district at the time of the grant distribution; ● significantly impacted student outcomes using national, state, or local assessment measures; ***and*** are designated as meeting **all** stated eligibility requirements within their respective stipend tier (1-3).
What does it mean to formally mentor or coach another teacher?	When a teacher formally mentors another teacher, it means they are part of a structured, corporation-supported program designed to support the professional growth of teachers with a focus on coaching designed to improve student learning. This is a defined role with clear expectations, goals, and training while maintaining student-facing teaching responsibilities.
What if we've had a position open for more than 90 days because none of the applicants are qualified or best meet our needs?	Any position posted for more than 90 days is considered a "high needs subject area" for your local context, regardless of the number of applicants or interviews held.
What defines a "geographic shortage area"?	This is a local decision, but could be based on county workforce data, teacher turnover, etc.
If a teacher has left the district at the time of grant distribution, can another teacher be awarded in their	Yes, as long as they meet all eligibility criteria. Please update the eligibility spreadsheet accordingly and resubmit to TAG@doe.in.gov.

place?	
Are schools required to award TAG funds to teachers who are new to the district?	No, teachers who are new to the district are not eligible to receive TAG funds. Per Indiana statute, a grant received by a school corporation or charter school may only be used to pay stipends to select teachers who have instructed students in a school or district for at least one school year prior to the 2026-2027 school year
Are districts allowed to use part of the grant funds to pay FICA and TRF?	Yes, TAG funds may be used to cover FICA and TRF at current rates.
Will IDOE make public a list of TAG recipients?	No, IDOE has no intention of releasing teacher names. A school corporation or charter school may opt to celebrate locally.
How should excess or undistributed TAG funds be handled?	Excess/undistributed funds must be returned by June 30, 2027 to the following address: Indiana Department of Education C/O Neil Broshears Indiana Government Center North, 9th Floor 100 N Senate Avenue Indianapolis, IN 46204 *In the memo please indicate: 2027 TAG excess*

For additional information, please email tag@doe.in.gov.

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