

To: Superintendents, Principals, School Leaders, and Educators

From: Andrew Bernlohr, General Counsel

Date: October 25, 2019

Subject: Teacher Appreciation Grant (TAG) Distribution

On October 23, 2019, House Speaker Bosma and President Pro Tempore Bray sent a letter to Dr. McCormick voicing their support and intention to implement “hold harmless” legislation for 2018-2019 school accountability grades. The legislators indicated the intention to enact this legislation in January, 2020.

School accountability grades impact TAG made under IC 20-43-10-3.5. In light of this, the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) has been called upon to “release guidance informing [school corporations and charter schools] that they may use [2017-2018] school accountability grades and/or [2017-2018] assessment results in this year’s teacher evaluations.” As a result, IDOE is announcing the following procedures and timelines governing the distribution of 2019-2020 TAG awards:

- IDOE will distribute TAG dollars to qualifying school corporations, to include qualifying charter schools, during the first full week of November. Guidance will be available in the November 1 Superintendent’s Weekly Update. Pursuant to IC 20-43-10-3.5(j), a school must distribute a TAG to eligible individual teachers within twenty (20) business days from the date the school receives the money.
- In determining which teachers are eligible for TAG, school corporations and charter schools may use either their 2017-2018 school accountability grades and assessment performance results, or their 2018-2019 school accountability grades and assessment performance results. Projected 2018-2019 State school accountability grades and all assessment performance results will be available to individual school corporations on November 1.
- All TAG distributions to individual teachers must be made pursuant to the school corporation’s annually adopted policy concerning the distribution of TAG. If, based on this guidance, your corporation intends to make TAG awards in a manner inconsistent with your previously approved policy, local boards should amend their policies as early as is practicable. Such amended policies need not be submitted for approval to IDOE.

If you have any questions, please contact Andrew Bernlohr at abernlohr@doe.in.gov.