TEACHER APPRECIATION GRANT (TAG)

2025-2026
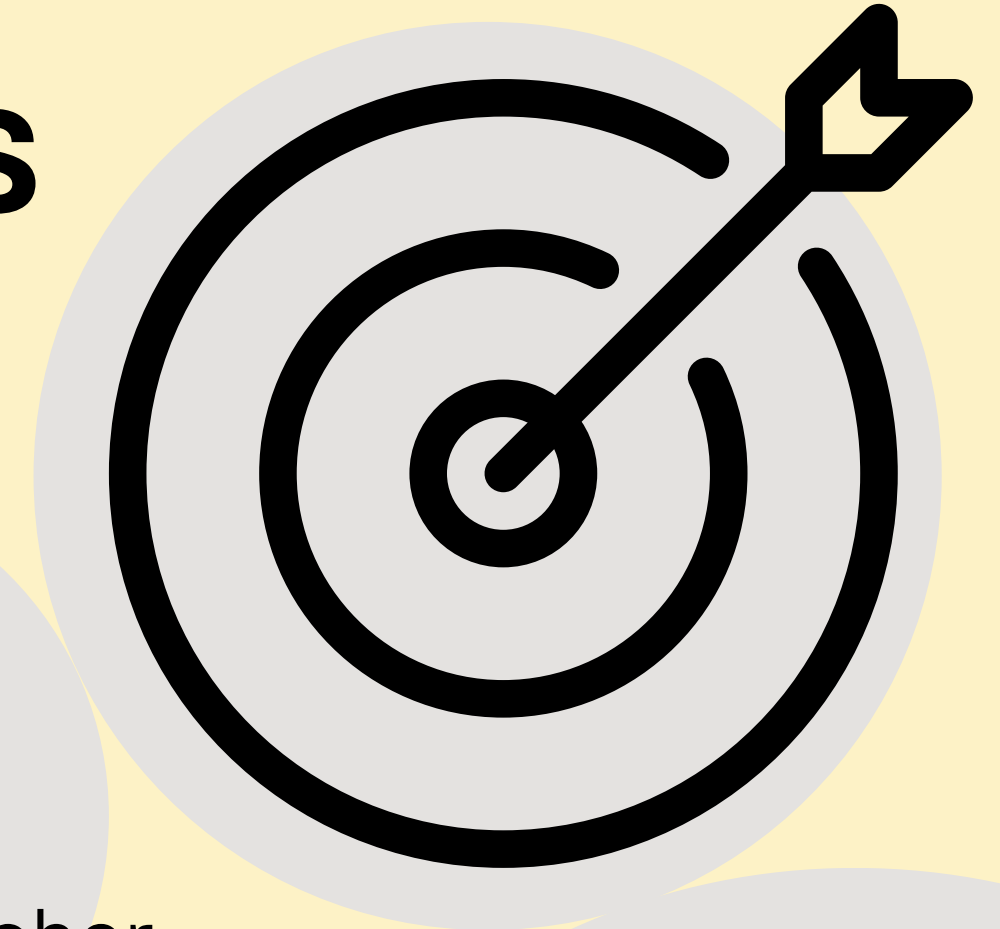
HISTORY & PURPOSE

- **Original Intent**: The TAG program was established to attract, reward, and retain Indiana's effective and highly effective teachers who significantly impact student outcomes (IC 20-43-16).
- **Previous Process (Pre-HEA 1001):**
  - Simpler Eligibility: Any teacher rated as "Effective" or "Highly Effective" on their most recent evaluation was eligible for a stipend.
  - Stipend Structure: The award was typically a relatively uniform stipend across the eligible pool.
  - Funding Mechanism: The state distributed the grant to the corporation, and we were responsible for distributing it in accordance with our state-approved, board-adopted policy.

NEW ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS
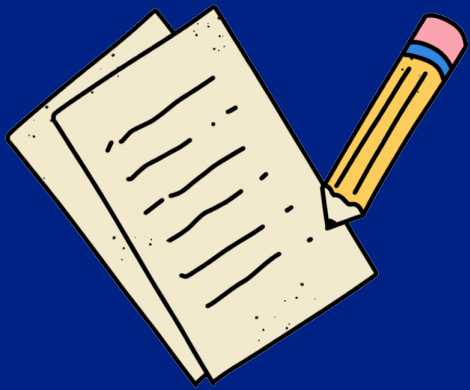
1 ## Which teachers are now eligible?

The most significant change is that the grant is no longer guaranteed for all Effective/Highly Effective teachers.

Eligibility now depends on specific criteria met by the teacher. Furthermore, only 20% of our certified staff may be awarded the grant.

2 ## How much is the grant for each teacher?

The new process establishes a tiered structure, meaning the dollar amount a teacher receives is no longer based solely on their evaluation rating but on their fulfillment of the new criteria.
- Tier I = $3500
- Tier II = $5000
- Tier III = $7500 (We are not eligible for this tier.)

3 How do teachers apply for the TAG funds?

After meetings and conversations with teachers, FCTA leadership, and administrators, we developed an application process to help ensure fairness.
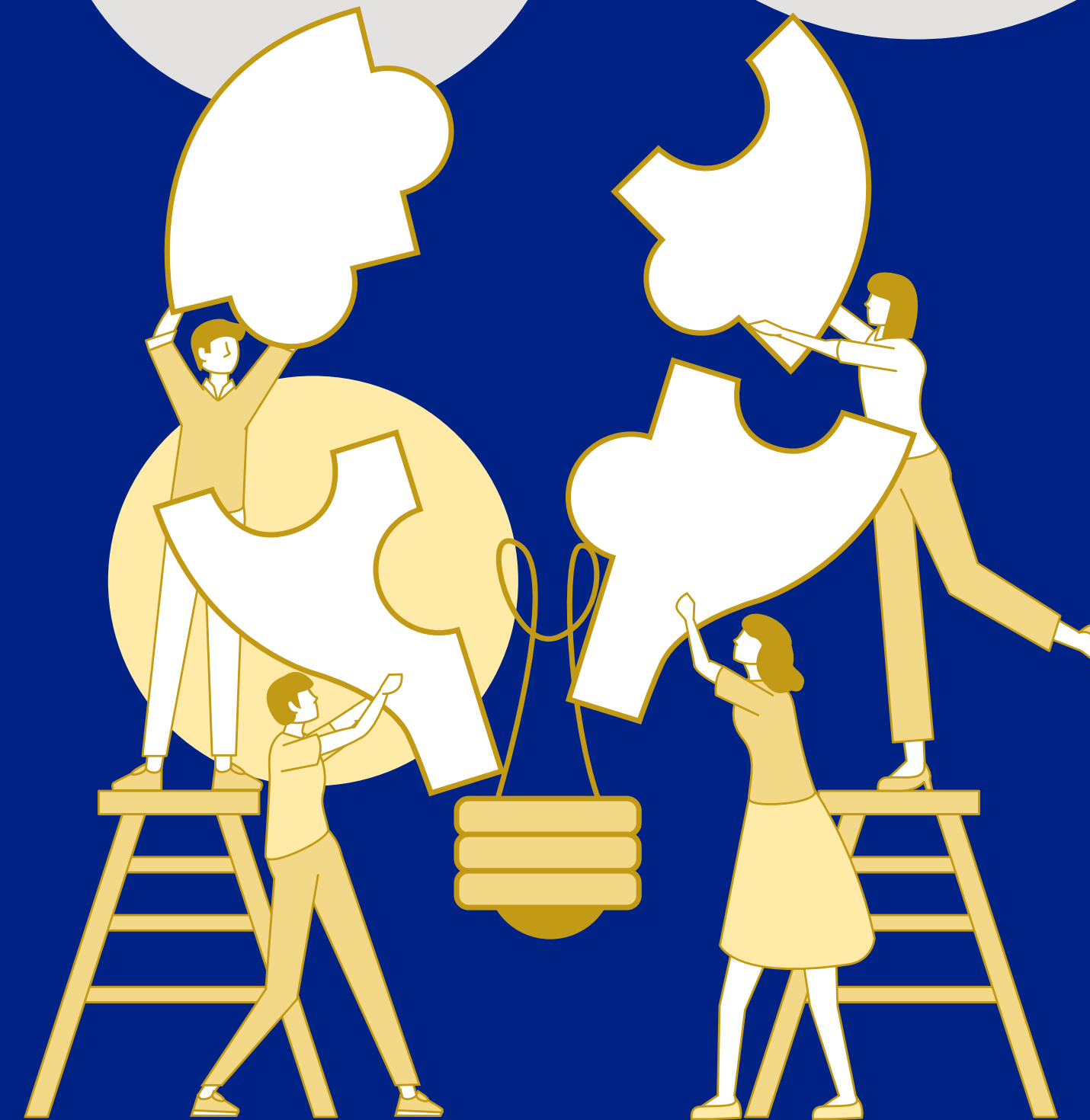
4 What are the implications of this new system?

- This new design could negatively impact teacher morale, as a once reliable bonus is no longer guaranteed.
- We have concerns about the impact on teacher collaboration, the heartbeat of our PLC culture.
- Some corporations have chosen to opt out due to the complexity and perceived unfairness of the new system.

HOW ARE WE SUPPORTING TEACHERS THROUGH THIS NEW PROCESS?

- A designated data-support team is already working with teachers to navigate data access and analysis.

- On Monday, November 24th, we hosted a Data Dig Open House for faculty interested in discussing data options. We will host a second on Tuesday, December 9th.

- We are engaging with IDOE in a feedback loop to ensure faculty voices are heard.

TAG TIMELINE

January 9th: Digital teacher submissions are due

January 16th: Decisions will be shared with teachers

January 30th: Deadline for FCS to submit all names, tiers, and evidence to IDOE

April 15th: Approved TAG funds distributed to corporations from IDOE

June 15th: Deadline for TAG funds to be distributed to teachers

THANK YOU TO THE TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS WHO HAVE INVESTED TIME, ENERGY, AND THOUGHT INTO MAKING THE FCS PROCESS THE BEST IT CAN BE.