



# INDIANA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

NOVEMBER 6, 2019

## RESOLUTION REGARDING THE DISTRIBUTION OF TEACHER APPRECIATION GRANTS

*WHEREAS*, On October 23, 2019, House Speaker Brian Bosma and President Pro Tempore Rodric Bray sent a letter (*see* Appendix A) regarding hold harmless policies related to teacher evaluations, Teacher Appreciation Grants (“TAGs”), and 2018-19 school letter grades to the Indiana State Board of Education (“Board”); and

*WHEREAS*, In the letter, Speaker Bosma and President Pro Tempore Bray called upon the Indiana Department of Education (“Department”) to release guidance informing schools that they may use 2017-18 school accountability grades and/or 2017-18 assessment results in this year’s teacher evaluations so that teachers do not lose eligibility for a TAG due to this year’s ILEARN results; and

*WHEREAS*, Speaker Bosma and President Pro Tempore Bray committed to expediting legislation in January directing the Board to implement similar hold harmless policies for the 2018-19 school letter grades; and

*WHEREAS*, On October 25, 2019, the Department released the requested guidance (*see* Appendix B), thereby granting schools the flexibility needed to ensure that teachers do not lose eligibility for a TAG and that TAGs are received by teachers before the statutory deadline in December.

*NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT*, The Board encourages schools to take advantage of the flexibility outlined in the Department’s guidance so that teachers do not lose eligibility for a TAG because of this year’s ILEARN results and so that teachers across the state receive their TAG before the statutory deadline in December; and

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT*, The Board will refrain from releasing 2018-19 school letter grades until January when the Indiana General Assembly passes legislation holding schools harmless.

**ADOPTED ON: November 6, 2019**

## APPENDIX A



# State of Indiana

# General Assembly

**Senator Rodric Bray**  
President Pro Tempore  
200 W. Washington Street  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204  
Senate: (317) 232-9416  
E-mail: S37@iga.in.gov

**Representative Brian Bosma**  
Speaker of the House  
200 W. Washington Street  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204  
House: (317) 232-9630  
E-mail: H88@iga.in.gov

October 23, 2019

Indiana State Board of Education  
143 W. Market St., Suite 500  
Indianapolis, IN 46204

To the Honorable State Superintendent McCormick and all members of the State Board of Education,

In August, state leaders joined together in unanimously calling for a one-year "hold harmless" policy regarding 2019 school accountability grades and Teacher Appreciation Grants (TAG's). After recent discussions among legislators and the executive branch, we are proposing the following plan for implementing this policy in the most timely, least disruptive way possible for our schools.

We call on the Department of Education to release guidance to schools informing them that they may use 2018 school accountability grades and/or 2018 assessment results in this year's teacher evaluations, if any teachers they employ would not be eligible for a TAG solely because of the yet-to-be-released 2019 school accountability grades and/or 2019 assessment results. We believe the DOE guidance should be reinforced by a resolution from the State Board.

Directing schools to take advantage of this flexibility will ensure that TAG's are received by teachers before the statutory deadline in December, and will ensure that no teacher will lose eligibility for a TAG because of this year's ILEARN results. The General Assembly will codify this policy through legislation when the 2020 session gets underway in January.

We will also expedite legislation in January directing the State Board to implement a similar "hold harmless" for 2019 school accountability grades. In the meantime, policies dependent on school accountability grades can continue with the 2018 grades in effect until the State Board adopts new grades based on 2020 legislation.

Thank you for working with us on this important initiative for our students and educators.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rodric D. Bray".

Rodric D. Bray  
President Pro Tempore, Indiana Senate

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian C. Bosma".

Brian C. Bosma  
Speaker of the House



## APPENDIX B

**Dr. Jennifer McCormick**  
Superintendent of Public Instruction

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

*Working Together for Student Success*

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](mailto:abernlohr@doe.in.gov).

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