

2024-25

Regional Assistance Grant

August 13, 2024

Please mute your Zoom mic and submit your questions via the chat function.

(Your Zoom mic is located at the bottom left-hand of your Zoom screen)

Today's Agenda

RAG Updates – Bill Witt

RAG Application and Allowable Activities – Connie McCall

5-minute break

RAG Accounting Codes Overview – Connie McCall

RAG Updates for 2024-25

BILL WITT

RAG Updates for 2024-25 pg.2

- Office Introductions
- Allocations and ATS
- Eligibility, newly identified schools/ISDs
- The RAG and Partnership Districts
- 15% carryover limit
- Administrative Costs
- Supplement vs. Supplant
- Program Review
- Service Plans and MICIP
- SSoS Evaluation

NEW: 2024-25 RAG Allocations for ATS

- MDE is now able to make awards for schools identified for ATS
- Will not affect CSI award amounts
- Awards are based on enrollment (same as CSI)
- Award amounts range from approximately \$25,000 to \$45,000 per building identified for ATS

2024-25 RAG Allocations

- Preliminary allocations will be available shortly; be aware these are subject to change
- Allocations are based on the schools identified for CSI and ATS on the November 2022 MI School Index
- We are awaiting internal approval before we are allowed to release the final award amounts

Eligibility

Q: How should we prioritize supports?

A: CSI and ATS identified schools determine the amount of the RAG award for the 2024-25 school year. The data-based needs of CSI and ATS-identified schools and their districts must be met first. After those needs have been met, grantees may then support the data-based needs of TSI-identified schools with any remaining current year or carryover funds.

Eligibility pg.2

Q: If TSI Schools are identified every year, which grant cycle are they eligible to receive RAG-funded services?

A: You may begin supporting them with RAG funds as soon as the index is released that identifies the school as TSI.

The RAG and Partnership Districts

Q. If a District is identified as a Partnership District, are they eligible for RAG funds?

A. Schools within the Partnership District must be identified as CSI/ATS/TSI to be eligible for RAG funds.

- CSI and ATS-identified schools must be served first.
- TSI-identified schools are eligible to participate in RAG-funded activities.

Unexpended Funds and Carryover

Q: Are there any rules affecting carryover for the RAG?

A: A 15% carryover limit, consistent with Title I rules, will be applied to unexpended funds from the 2023-24 RAG award and all future RAG awards.

Administrative Costs

ISD/RESA/ESD personnel can be supported with RAG funds if the individual is performing RAG services/work; however, that position must clearly show this work on a position description and complete time & effort documentation.

Supplement vs Supplant

Q. Are ISD RAG recipients subject to rules about supplanting?

A. Yes, the ESA/ISD has the responsibility of ensuring their own compliance with the supplement/supplant requirements for any ISD/ESA level funded activities or positions.

Supplement vs Supplant pg.2

Q. Are identified schools receiving RAG funded services subject to rules about supplanting?

A. When acting as a flow-through entity for RAG funded positions or other services/supports, the ESA/ISD has the responsibility of ensuring compliance with the supplement/supplant requirements at the district level for the activities funded by the RAG.

Program Review

- MDE will roll out a new RAG program review this school year. The program review will consist of a self-study that focuses on the MICIP process as a means for the ISD/ESA RAG recipient to assist districts in the context of continuous improvement as well as to meet applicable ESSA requirements.
- The self-study also focuses on the collaborative process used to develop, implement, and monitor the RAG service plan.
- The self-study is intended to be used as a continuous improvement tool for ISD/ESA staff to understand and identify capacity and effective practices.

Program Review pg.2

The methodology and process for selection of grantees that will receive a program review is under development.

Service Plans and MICIP Plans

The RAG service plan serves as an extension of/support for/is in alignment with the district and school MICIP plans.

RAG-funded activities are defined as those the district does not have the capacity or funds to implement, which are intended to increase student outcomes as identified in the MICIP plan.

Questions to Consider

1. How do the RAG budget request and Service Plan support the MICIP plan and the school and district's data-based needs?
2. How will the RAG Service plan/budgets identify or connect to the goals, strategies, or activities of the MICIP plan?
3. How does the ISD/ESA align their budgeted activities in the context of the MICIP plan and process?

SSoS Evaluation

- Basis Policy Research (BPR) will continue collecting program evaluation data/information.
- End of Year Reports will **not be collected** for the 2024-25 school year. The last year for End of Year reports is the 2023-24 school year. The self-study replaces the End of Year Report.

RAG Application & Allowable Activities

CONNIE MCCALL

NexSys 2023-24

- ✓ Applications
- ✓ Amendments
- ✓ Cash Draws
- ✓ Final Expenditure Reports (FERs)

RAG Amendment Windows

Oct 1 – Nov 29	Application open for submission
Jan 15 – Feb 28	First Round of Amendments (adjustments since the application was approved)
May 15 – June 30	Second Round of Amendments (finalize summer program requests)
Sept 30	Last date for activities

RAG Amendment Windows p2

The May 15 – June 30 amendment window is the time to adjust budget line items for:

- items already approved and purchased, but the actual costs may be more or less than the original request. Adjustments are made to reflect actual costs
- new items requested for use during summer programming

New requests with intended use during the upcoming school year must be obligated in the 2024-25 RAG application.

NexSys/RAG Application Help Resources

Application: MDE-NexSys-Applications@Michigan.gov

Cash Management: MDE-NexSys-Accounting@Michigan.gov

MDE NexSys Website: [NexSys \(michigan.gov\)](http://NexSys (michigan.gov))

Basic Factors of Allowability

- Be necessary, reasonable, and allocable
- Comply with the cost principles and federal award
- Be consistent/applying uniformly to federal and non-federal activities and costs
- Be consistently treated as either direct or indirect costs
- Be determined in accordance with GAAP (*Generally Accepted Accounting Principles*)
- Not be included or used to meet cost sharing/match requirements
- Be adequately documented
- Be incurred during the approved budget period

Obligated During the Approved Budget Period

In any given grant year, all activities and expenditures must occur within the grant year.

- This means the implementation, application, or otherwise initial usage/utilization of the contracted service, equipment, materials, supplies, etc. must be intended for the current grant year.
- The ISD/ESA/ESD may not forward fund a purchase for the coming grant/school year out of the current year award/budget.
- Budget requests intended for the 2024-25 school year must be charged to the 2024-25 grant. Planning can be dated back to July 1, 2024.

Grant Reimbursement Process

Please Note:

The reimbursement process applies
to all federal grant funds.

Reimbursement Process

School District Requests - Identified schools engage in the planning process

- Determine needs for services, equipment, or supplies based on data analysis (needs, data story)
- Determine interventions to address needs (plans, goals)
- Consider funding streams (funds, strategies/activities implementation)
- Align requests with the RAG District Service Plan and the school-level Continuous Improvement Plan submitted in MICIP
- Develop a request for RAG reimbursement

Reimbursement Process pg.2

District submits the request to the ISD requesting reimbursement with RAG funds

- Requests for RAG reimbursement must be submitted prior to the purchased services, equipment, or supplies
- Requests can be submitted using the Prior Approval Service Request Form
- Submit an estimated itemized budget with a detailed request description

Reimbursement Process pg.3

The ISD/RAG manager reviews all ISD and school district requests for RAG Reimbursement

- Determine if the school district request aligns with the school's goals (MICIP)
- Determine if the ISD request aligns with the ISD goals for servicing identified school districts
- Determine whether requests are charged to the RAG as an ISD or district-level budget (MICIP-Strategy Implementation)
- Collect all necessary documentation to support the request

Reimbursement Process pg.4

The ISD submits the request to OES for approval

- Requests for RAG reimbursement approval must be submitted prior to the activity, purchased services, equipment, or supplies and materials
- The ISD can submit the request as a pre-approval, prior to submitting it as an initial or amended application
- Submit all required application and budget support documentation when submitting the application
- The ISD ensures the request aligns with the RAG district service plan and the continuous improvement plan submitted in MICIP

Reimbursement Process pg.5

OES Reviews the request (Allowable, Reasonable, Necessary)

- Reviews pre-approvals and/or applications
- Collects required documentation and budget support documentation
- Approves or denies the pre-approval request
- Returns the request for modifications required (if applicable)
- Final approvals for applications, modifications, and amendments must be done in the NexSys application

Reimbursement Process pg.6

The ISD or district/school pays for requested services, equipment, or supplies

- Planning for the activity continues
- The ISD or school district funds the request upfront
- Equipment, supplies, and materials are purchased
- Contracts are signed and obligated for the current grant year
- Positions are posted

Reimbursement Process pg.7

The activity takes place

- Positions are filled
- The requested services are implemented
- Equipment and supplies are in place

Reimbursement Process pg.8

The school district submits an invoice to the ISD for reimbursement

- Invoices are submitted in a timely manner
- Required documentation is submitted to the ISD
- Expenditures do not exceed the approved dollar amount requested
- Assurances for district-level positions are complete

Reimbursement Process pg.9

The ISD reimburses the school district

- Expenditures were approved in the RAG application
- Actual expenditures did not exceed the approved dollar amount requested
- Expenditures are under the same function code and object code as the approved application
- Assurances for district-level positions are complete
- All budget support documentation has been received prior to paying invoices

Reimbursement Process pg.10

The ISD draws down funds from cash management in the NexSys application

- Reimbursement for approved ISD and school district expenditures
- Draw down amount must match expenditures leading up to the draw

The Application

Available October 1



The RAG Application

What documentation do we need to collect upfront when submitting the Regional Assistance Grant Application in NexSys?

The ISD/RESA/ESD must submit:

- The RAG District Service Plan
- The RAG District Signature Page
- Position Descriptions for all ISD/ESA/ESD positions
- Assurances for all district-level positions
- Other budget support documents – Contact me if you have questions about the required documentation

District Service Plans

Follow the tabs at the bottom of the document

- District
- School

Pages have Dropdown functions

- Click on the blank field for the most appropriate selection

School Tab

- Service or Support Written Description – use this section for additional information or narrative (No drop-down box)

Update and resubmit service plans when requesting amendments.

District Signature Page

NEW

Which box do I check?

RAG-funded Positions

- District-level Positions - The ISD/ESA/ESD must submit an Assurance that the District positions (FTE) are appropriately placed, teachers are appropriately certified, paraprofessionals are eligible, and background checks have been performed (see next slide). The Assurance is in lieu of collecting position descriptions from the districts.
- ISD/ESA/ESD-level Positions - The ISD/ESA/ESD must submit position descriptions for all RAG-funded positions (FTE).

Title I Regional Assistance Grant District-Level Position Assurance Example

Date:

Position Title:

Employee Name:

ISD/RESA/ESD Name:

District:

School:

The ISD/RESA/ESD is assuring the following steps have been completed for all RAG-funded, District-level positions **for each employee:**

- ✓ Appropriate Placement
- ✓ Current Teacher Certification
- ✓ Paraprofessional Work Keys Proficiency Certificate for Teacher Assistants*
- ✓ Background checks have been performed

District Representative Signature: _____

ISD/RESA/ESD Representative Signature: _____

* Passage of WorkKeys is not acceptable for being appropriately placed if business writing was part of the assessment. It must be writing, not business writing.

** [Michigan Legislature: Revised School Code Act 451 of 1976](#)

Note: Upload this document in NexSys under Budget Support Documents. Please state in your RAG budget narrative that you have uploaded this form into NexSys.

Position Assurances

Q: What if the school district wants to get approval in the RAG application prior to filling a RAG-eligible position? We can't submit an Assurance with an individual's name on it if the position isn't filled yet!

A.1: Get pre-approval from our office, wait until the position is filled, and submit an amendment.

A.2: Submit your district-level position request without an Assurance and submit the Assurance as an amendment once the position is filled.

- Indicate the vacancy and the anticipated hire date in the budget line-item description.
- The ISD/ESA/ESD with RAG-funded school district positions will be required to provide Assurance documentation if selected for fiscal monitoring.

Allowable Activities

Recruitment & Retention

Teacher and Building Leadership Recruitment: includes activities such as contracting with recruitment companies, relocation assistance, sign-on or hiring bonuses, and career fairs.

Teacher, Para-pro, and Building Leadership Retention: includes activities such as incentive bonuses, merit pay, mentoring stipend, and professional learning.

Recruitment & Retention pg.2

Revised School Code Sec. 1250 – *Repealed effective July 1, 2024*

(1)shall implement and maintain a method of compensation for its teachers and school administrators that **includes job performance and job accomplishments** as a significant factor in determining compensation and additional compensation.

(2)if that **collective bargaining agreement prevents compliance** with subsection (1), then subsection (1) does not apply.....

Now considered best practice!

Recruitment & Retention pg.3

2 CFR 200.430 (f)

Incentive Compensation to employees based on cost reduction, or efficient performance..... is allowable to the extent that:

- the overall compensation is **determined to be reasonable**, and
- such costs are paid or accrued **pursuant to an agreement** entered into in good faith between the non-Federal entity and the employees **before the services were rendered**, or pursuant to an established plan.....

Recruitment & Retention pg.4

- Recruitment and retention using RAG funds can only be used to recruit or retain **teachers, para-pros, and school-building Principals.**
- Requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- An agreement must be established before the services are rendered.
- The school district must have policies and procedures in place for recruitment and retention.
- If there is a merit pay system in place at the district level, RAG funds may only be used to “supplement” the merit pay that is applicable to all eligible district employees.
- Use function code 411 for district-level recruitment and retention activities.

Food Reimbursement

- RAG funds may not be used to provide catered meals or food for in-house professional learning, technical assistance sessions, staff meetings, and similar events.
- RAG funds may not be used for food or snacks provided as student incentives.
- RAG funds may be used to reimburse for individual meals when submitted as an approved travel expense. Such reimbursement must follow the local ISD/ESA/District travel/meal reimbursement policies and procedures as appropriate.
- RAG funds may be used to pay for food that is part of a parent and community engagement/involvement activity.

Student Incentives

Q: Can RAG Funds be used for Student Incentives?

A: Educational or incentives that are academic in nature are allowable, including career items that support work experiences and readiness: work bags, culinary items, safety shoes, and trade uniforms.

Non-academic items such as college gear and clothing include, but are not limited to, t-shirts, sweatshirts, water bottles, headphones, and phone chargers and are not considered educational or academic in nature and are not allowable. Student personal hygiene items are not allowable.

Student incentive requests are reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Out-of-State Professional Learning Requests

Is the professional learning taking place within the state of Michigan or is it an out-of-state travel request?

Out-of-state travel requests must be:

- pre-approved by the MDE on a case-by-case basis,
- submitted on the RAG Prior Approval Service Request form,
- listed on a separate budget line item in the application,
- reimbursed to the participant/school after the professional learning activity date.

Out-of-State Professional Learning Requests pg.2

Required Written Justification:

- Can the ISD/ESA/ESD schedule a speaker or program to present on the relevant topics locally to serve more Michigan teachers and education leaders?
- How does the ISD/ESA/ESD and school district implement/transfer professional learning to impact continuous improvement, student achievement, and/or graduation rates?
- How will the ISD/ESA/ESD and school district monitor the impact of professional learning during implementation?
- How does the professional learning align with the goals of either the ISD/ESA/ESD or the school district?

In-House Professional Learning Requests

- How does the in-house professional learning align with the goals for either the ISD/ESA/ESD or the school district's Continuous Improvement Plan?
- If registration fees are included in the budget request for identified schools, submit an itemized breakdown of what those registration fees cover.
- Agendas and sign-in/sign-out documentation are required.
- Food is not allowable for in-house professional learning.

NEW

Multi-Year Subscriptions

Q: Can the ISD/ESA/ESD make a multi-year commitment to subscriptions and service agreements?

A: Subscriptions for educational services are allowable if:

- there are savings over a year-to-year contract,
- the length of the contract does not exceed the identification cycle (not more than three years OR however long the CSI school has left in the current cycle),
 - the service contract length may not exceed the timeframe the district/school is eligible for services (September 30, 2026),
- the subscription is pro-rated for the current grant year.
- Date ranges are required for all subscription requests.

Unallowable Activities

Q: Can RAG Funds be used for Student Field Trips?

A: No. Effective with the 2024-25 RAG application, student field trips will not be an allowable expenditure.

NEW

Q: Can RAG Funds be used for Student Gas Cards?

A: No. Effective with the 2024-25 RAG application, student gas (only) cards will not be an allowable expenditure for student transportation.

The Budget

Please note:

The ISD/ESA/ESD budget line-item descriptions in the NexSys application are unlimited in character, while the district-level budget line items have a 250-character limit.

Itemized Budget Descriptions

The Detailed budget description must include the following:

- number of staff, position titles, and FTEs,
- number/costs of subs requested,
- number of days/hours,
- date(s) or date range of activities,
- location,
- hourly/daily pay rate(s), and
- match the requested dollar amount.

Unallowable (Placeholder) Requests

OES defines a placeholder request as submitting a general budget line item for unplanned dollar amounts with no estimated/itemized description.

- Incomplete budget line items cannot be approved; therefore, placeholder requests are unallowable in the budget.
- Unallowable phrases such as, for example, could include, etc., not limited to, TBD. Allowable phrase: academic supplies & materials to support approved activities.
- Best Practice: Unallocated funds remain as an available balance until the ISD has a plan for expenditures, submit an amendment with itemized descriptions, and draw down as reimbursements.

Non-Approvable Budget Description

FC	Description	FTE	P/S	S/M	Total
221	Professional learning sessions for CSI-designated schools, which could include data training, intervention strategies, school speakers, and literacy training, 30 hours. Sessions are being finalized. Costs TBD.	0.0 / 0	\$57,200		\$57,200
221	Sub teachers for professional learning sessions for CSI-designated schools. Sessions are being finalized. Sub Costs TBD.		\$32,000		\$32,000
331	Parent Involvement educational supplies and materials, such as Paper, pens, etc.			\$500	\$500

Approvable Budget Description

FC	Description	FTE	P/S	S/M	Total
221	Title of Topic, professional learning, XYZ School, activity Date, location or virtual, registration fees; 12 staff x \$600 = \$7200	0.0 / 0	\$7,200.00		7,200.00
221	Title of Topic, books & materials, XYZ School, 12 books and workbooks x \$40 = \$480.			\$480.00	\$480.00
221	Title of Topic, substitute teachers, XYZ School, 12 subs x 2 days x \$100/day = \$2400.	0.0 / 0	\$2,400.00		\$2,400.00
221	Title of Topic, travel expenses, XYZ School, location, 12 staff, itemized/estimated overnight accommodations, airfare, meals and mileage. Hotel: 12 staff x 2 nights each @ \$75 per night = \$1,800. R/T Airfare: \$450 x 12 staff = \$5,400, meals & mileage = 12 staff x \$65 per day (or per diem) x 2 days = \$1,560. www.XYZ.springconference.org		\$8,760.00		\$8,760.00

Function Codes for Positions and Professional Learning (PD)

- FC 111, 112, 113, 118, 119 (Basic Programs) or 411 Payments to Other Schools – The position focuses on providing instruction in the classroom. Instruction is considered teachers/staff providing classroom instruction.
- FC 221 – The PD focuses on instruction in the classroom, curriculum development, classroom instruction techniques, child development and understanding, and in-service training for instructional staff. Includes PD expenses
- FC 226 – The position focuses on supervision and/or direction of instructional staff, such as the RAG manager, Implementation Facilitator positions, ISD clerical support, or other positions that do not provide or assist classroom instruction.
- FC 283 – The PD focuses on non-instructional staff, such as ISD staff, central office staff, all professional coaches, and ISD-level facilitators working with instructional staff, not providing classroom instruction.

Prior Written Approvals

- Under any given Federal award, the reasonableness and allocability of certain items of costs may be difficult to determine. In order to avoid subsequent disallowance or dispute based on unreasonableness or non-allocability, the non-Federal entity may seek the prior written approval of the cognizant agency for indirect costs or the Federal awarding agency in advance of the incurrence of special or unusual costs.
- Prior written approval should include the timeframe or scope of the agreement.
- The absence of prior written approval on any element of cost will not, in itself, affect the reasonableness or allocability of that element unless prior approval is specifically required for allowability as described under certain circumstances.
2 CFR 200.407

Split–Funded Activities

The MDE definition of split-funded activities is braiding or blending more than one funding stream.

- Split-funded activities must indicate this in the budget line-item description.
- Positions that are split funded, must also split-fund their benefits and supplies, including cell phones.

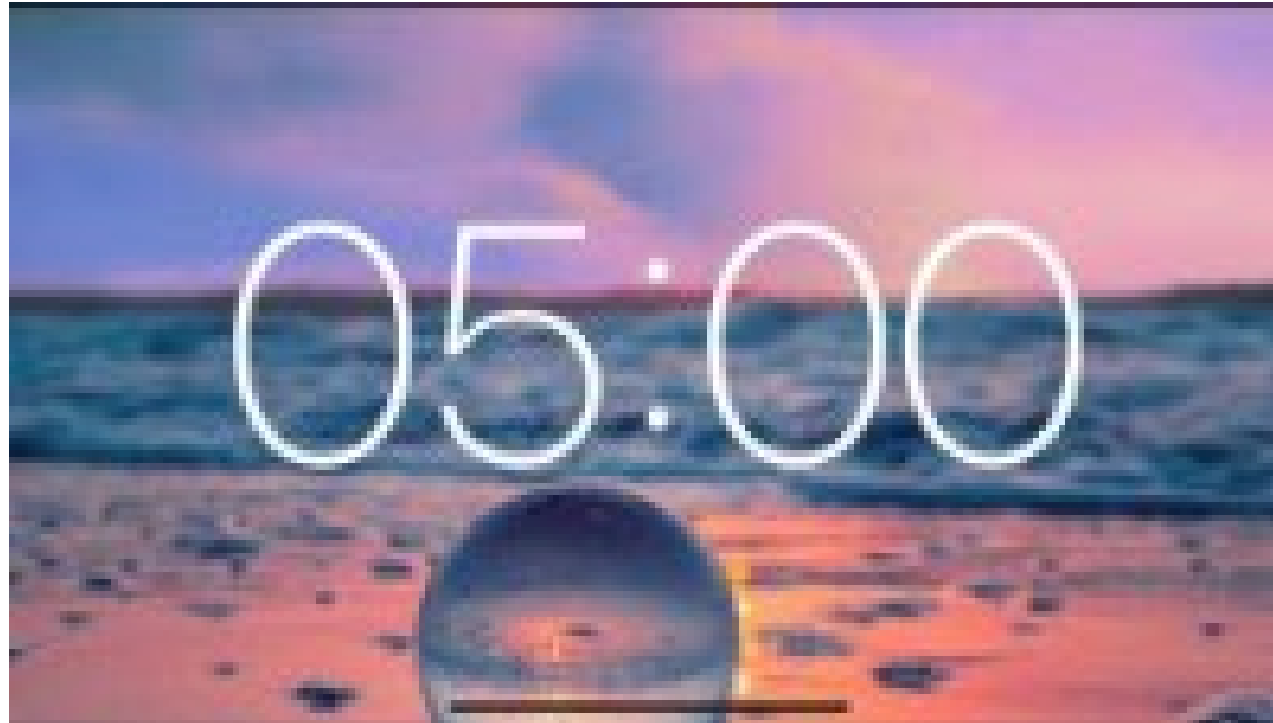
School District-Level Budgets

- The ISD/RESA/ESD will be required to submit district-level budgets in the NexSys platform.
- Budget line items are associated with specific school districts.
- Applies to budgets submitted under function code 411 - Payments to Other Michigan Schools.
- Requires Level 5 authorization to access the link and other features in the NexSys application.

Function Code 411 – Payments to Other Public Schools Within the State of Michigan

- Sub-Grantee/Flow-Through Distributions.
- The district is the entity that incurs the expenditure, not the ISD/ESA/ESD.
- Services and equipment contracted by the district/school and the district/school invoices for reimbursement.
- District/school level positions. Employees on school district payroll.
- Required to Itemize district-level budget line items in NexSys.
- Object Code 7000/8000 Other Expenses.

RAG Accounting Code Overview (5-minute break)



Questions?

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