

**Name of Grant Program:** Title I Redesign and Restructuring Grant Program – Summer Semester Program in Collaboration with Department (ESE) Supported School Improvement Assistance Centers

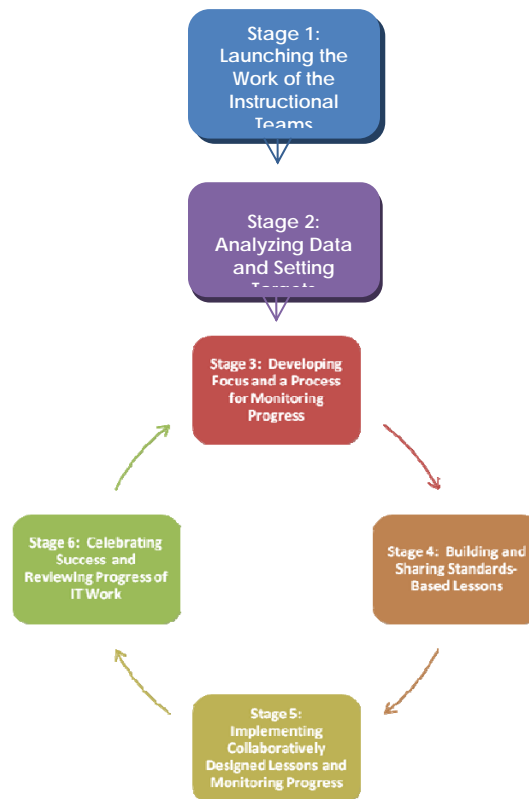
**Fund Code:** 510-F

### Additional Information

## ESTABLISHING AND MAINTAINING PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES - INTRODUCTION

The Professional Learning Community/Instructional Team Guidelines and Responsibilities document (***Establishing and Maintaining Professional Learning Communities***) is intended as a reference tool to frame the work of developing and strengthening instructional teams at the school level. While state regulation (603 CMR 2.03) indicates that schools striving to increase their effectiveness ensure that teachers have time in which to collaborate around instruction and learning, directives end there. The way that collaborative time is structured is left to the discretion of the districts and schools themselves, due to the fact that it is they who must establish and oversee the work of the teams in the manner that best suits their specific needs. No measures of compliance or requirements have been established by the state to ensure that teamwork unfolds in any particular manner. What is key to the state is that team time for teachers exists and is focused on instruction and learning.

Despite the state's commitment to letting instructional teamwork develop in a manner that best serves the schools and districts, leaders at the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education are aware of the fact that all learners benefit from examples and frameworks that help to inform challenging work. Establishing and strengthening effective instructional teams is just that—challenging work. For that reason, the *Guidelines* document was based on prevailing research on professional learning communities and created by the state in conjunction with National Institute for School Leadership representatives to delineate one way—not the only way or the best way, but one way — that the work of structuring instructional teams can be envisioned. This vision unfolds in the six stages diagrammed below.



The Department has enlisted the assistance of a professional Working Group from districts and schools to join the team of collaborators on these *Guidelines* and to ensure that the work is framed in a manner that makes sense to those who have an operational understanding of it. Those who use this document in the field are encouraged to tailor it as they see necessary to meet the specific needs of their schools and students.

It is hoped that the *Guidelines* document is a useful framework for consideration, for use, and for tailoring.

