

**Telluride School District R-1**

**Teacher Academy**

**Guidelines**

*October 2, 2013*

## Initiative Unit Program

The purpose of the Telluride Teacher Academy (TTA) is to both encourage and reward the various professional growth activities in which Telluride teachers engage. Credit may be received for participation and/or leadership in the following areas: workshops, academic coursework, writing, research, or professional leadership activities. TTA credit can only be awarded for activities where no payment of any sort is received.

TTA credit is awarded according to protocols established within the program. Since the value of writing, research, and leadership activities is not easy to measure, it is determined jointly by the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee with the assistance of the TTA Governance Board. The fairness of the TTA guidelines is continually under review by both parties.

### How the Program Works

The TTA program works through an accumulation of points, identified as *Initiative Units*. A teacher receives initiative units for completing approved TTA activities. If five (5) whole initiative units are accumulated by **September 30th** of any year, the teacher will submit documentation of qualifying units and a request for stipend. This stipend will be paid annually for three years or until a lane change is approved. The stipend period is eliminated upon a lane change.

TTA credits will be documented in the My Learning Plan software.

### What is TTA Credit?

A teacher must accumulate 5 initiative units in order to be awarded credit for that year. Credits are calculated as follows:

1 initiative unit= 15 hours (e.g. If a teacher attends a 3 hour workshop, he/she is awarded 3/15 of a unit.)

Initiative units are not always awarded by the number of hours involved in an activity. This is especially true for leadership credit, professional writing, curriculum writing and academic coursework. It is important for a teacher to refer to this document regarding the number of initiative units, or partial initiative units, which will be awarded upon completion of an activity or the process for obtaining the activity's credit total.

### How Does the Payment System Work?

While a teacher remains employed in the district, TTA initiative units are awarded in the following manner:

- \$500 will be awarded once five initiative units have been earned. The \$500 is awarded annually for three years after earning those units.

### Retirement / Leaving the District

When a teacher retires or officially leaves the district, his or her remaining initiative unit balance will

be erased. Old initiative units cannot be claimed if an individual returns to the district, either as a full-time or part-time employee.

### **Obtaining TTA Credit**

There are 5 categories of TTA activity: workshops, academic coursework, professional writing, curriculum writing and leadership.

When applying for TTA credit, teachers are required to fill out the appropriate *TTA Initiative Unit Credit Form* located on the Telluride School District Website. When the form is completed, it will be submitted to the TTA Governance Board.

After approval and completion of the credit, the Human Resource Office will ensure that everything is entered into the system correctly.

For all activities, the following procedure needs to be followed:

1. Before the activity begins, teachers are required to fill out the *TTA Initiative Unit Credit Form* online through the Telluride School District Website.
2. *TTA Initiative Unit Credit Forms* are submitted to the TTA Governance Board. If the TTA Governance Board has questions or concerns regarding the request, he/she will follow-up with the teacher or building principal.
3. When approved, the TTA Governance Board will send the request to the Superintendent for final pre-approval.
4. The teacher will submit the “evidence of completion” and register the completed TTA credit into her/his My Learning Plan account.

Once five initiative units have been earned, the deadline for a stipend is **September 30th**. Forms submitted after this date will be considered for the following academic year. Teachers are able to submit forms for events that occurred during the previous school year, as well as the current school year. Activities occurring prior to **July 1, 2013** are not eligible.

### **Earning Credit:**

**All requests for professional development credit, including any planned graduate academic credit, will be submitted through the TTA Governance Board. The goal of this process is to establish a documentation system for teachers’ professional development.**

### **Workshop Credit:**

TTA Credit may be earned through participation in workshops that have the potential for improving the teacher’s professional effectiveness.

## Procedure:

1. Submit *TTA Initiative Unit Credit Form* for pre-approval before the workshop begins. Exceptions will be considered when this is not possible.
2. Teachers are required to fill out the following information on the *TTA Initiative Unit Credit Form*: - Title of workshop- Name of sponsoring institution- Date of workshop- Number of participation hours- Brief description of workshop- How will the workshop impact your teaching?
3. Attach a PDF of the workshop flyer, including date, time/agenda, and purpose and scan the information and submit it to the TTA Governance Board through email. Your *TTA Initiative Unit Credit Form* cannot be approved until this information is received.
4. The teacher will submit the “evidence of completion” and register the completed TTA credit into her/his My Learning Plan account.
5. TTA credit may not be claimed for attendance at conferences occurring on school days during school hours. (8:00A.M. - 4:00P.M.)
6. If the workshop extends beyond school hours, a teacher may get credit for that time. (e.g., If a teacher attends a workshop from 8:00A.M.-6:00P.M., he/she may get credit for the two hours from 4:00 to 6:00P.M.).
7. If a teacher wishes to use a personal day on the day of the conference, he/she may request full credit for the conference hours. This must be **clearly stated** on the *TTA Initiative Unit Credit Form*, so there is no misunderstanding.

## Academic Credit

**TTA credit may be granted for coursework earning graduate credit only for teachers at MA-50.** In this case, 1 graduate credit will be equal to 1 TTA Initiative Unit.

Teachers are required to fill out a *TTA Initiative Unit Credit Form* for each class. A class that is conscientiously audited is eligible for TTA credit. A "conscientiously" audited class presumes consistent attendance and preparation for class. The number of TTA credits granted will be 1/2 the credits that would have been awarded if the course had been taken for academic credit.

## Procedure:

1. Submit *TTA Initiative Unit Credit Form* for pre-approval before the academic class begins. Exceptions will be considered when this is not possible.
  - Teachers are required to fill out the following information on the *TTA Initiative Unit Credit Form*: - Title of course - Name of academic institution - Dates of coursework - Number of semester/quarter hours allocated for the class - Indicate whether the course is part of a degree program- How will the academic work impact your teaching?
2. The teacher will submit the “evidence of completion” and register the completed TTA credit into her/his My Learning Plan account.

The following formula will be used to determine initiative unit credit:

1 semester hour = 1 credit                      1 quarter hour = 2/3 credit

## Professional Writing

Professional writing is considered to be writing that is published in a professional newsletter, periodical, journal or book. It should reflect the writer's competence and knowledge of a given discipline.

### Procedure:

1. Teachers applying for TTA professional writing credit must discuss their idea with the superintendent prior to the project being initiated. Teachers are required to submit a *TTA Initiative Unit Credit Form* to the superintendent prior to their initial meeting.

2. Once the writing has been discussed and approved by the superintendent, a *TTA Initiative Unit Credit Form* must be completed. Teachers are required to fill out the following information on the form:

- Describe the nature and purpose of the writing - Projected date of completion - Publication in which writing is being submitted - How will the professional writing impact your teaching?

3. When the writing is completed and published, submit a copy to the TTA Governance Board.

4. The teacher will submit the “evidence of completion” and register the completed TTA credit into her/his My Learning Plan account.

5. The following formula will be used to determine initiative unit credit:

- Published article... 1 Initiative Unit
- Published book..... 2-5 Initiative Units
- Published software...2-5 Initiative Units

## Curriculum Writing Credit

TTA Credit may be earned through participation in Curriculum Writing that have the potential for improving the teacher’s professional effectiveness through the development of relevant and rigorous curriculum that aligns with Common Core State Standards and District Goals.

### Procedure:

1. Submit *TTA Initiative Unit Credit Form* for pre-approval before curriculum writing begins. Exceptions will be considered when this is not possible.

2. Teachers are required to fill out the following information on the *TTA Initiative Unit Credit Form*: - Content Area of Curriculum Development- Name of participants- Dates and Times of Curriculum Writing- Number of anticipated participation hours- Brief description of anticipated changes and product (ie. Revisions, new curriculum, etc.)

3. .5 Initiative Unit will be awarded for each 15 hours of curriculum writing, with a maximum of 2 Initiative Units towards any 5 Initiative Units awarded for the \$500 stipend or towards a lane

change.

4. A content area specialist in the area of the curriculum being written must review final products before final approval.
5. At the end of the Curriculum Writing, send a copy of the updated/revised/new curriculum map and scope and sequence to the TTA Governance Board.
6. The teacher will submit the “evidence of completion” and register the completed TTA credit into her/his My Learning Plan account.
7. TTA credit may not be claimed for curriculum writing occurring on school days during school hours. (8:00A.M. - 4:00P.M.)

### **Leadership Credit**

Teachers are recognized by TTA through leadership contributions on a local, state, or national level in his/her discipline.

Leadership initiative units may not be claimed if a teacher is being paid for his/her work. A teacher may request the stipend or the Initiative Unit(s) through TTA.

#### **Procedure:**

1. Submit leadership *TTA Initiative Unit Credit Form* for pre-approval before the activity begins.
2. Teachers are required to fill out the following information on the leadership initiative unit form:
  - Describe the nature of the activity- Name of sponsoring institution- Date of activity- How will the leadership activity impact your teaching?
3. At the end of the project, the teacher will submit the “evidence of completion” and register the completed TTA credit into her/his My Learning Plan account.

### **Common Leadership Activities-Credits will be determined by the TTA Governance Board**

1. Mentor - 1st year teacher... up to 3 Initiative Units
2. Mentor - 2nd year teacher... up to 2 Initiative Units
3. Curriculum Chair / Grade Level Chair... 1.5 Initiative Unit
4. PLC Leader..... 2 Initiative Unit
5. Student Teacher (12 weeks or more)... up to 2 Initiative Unit
6. Presenter at a TTA sponsored event or at a local or state outside workshop or convention... (#hours of the presentation X 2 = portion of credit, i.e. a 3 hour presentation would earn 6 hours towards an Initiative Unit).

7. Committee Participation...Standing committees such as TTA governance, 1338, Technology...1.0 Initiative Unit with 90% attendance at meetings, productive member of the committee as demonstrated through active and engaged participation and work on any product development created by the committee.
8. Committee Participation...Ad hoc District Goal Committee.... .5 Initiative Unit with 90% attendance at meetings, productive member of the committee as demonstrated through active and engaged participation and work on any product development or research determined by the committee.

## How TTA Credit Works Toward Changing Salary Lanes

### Route 1 - external credit you pay for

- You can still pay for and receive portable credit to achieve a lane change
- This route requires prior approval for the TTA Board, requires 10 credits/hours from an approved institution(s), and should be portable if you leave the District.
- This is the "old" way things used to be done. This route still exists.

### Route 2- TTA credit you earn from free in-house offerings

- TTA exists to provide free and relevant professional development.
- You can earn credit in 5 different areas and/or by presenting a TTA course.
- This route requires 10 units to achieve a lane change. ( 1 TTA unit = 15 seat hours). These are NOT portable, as most Districts/states will not honor our in-house credits.
- Please note that a \$500 stipend will be paid annually for each chunk of 5 TTA units earned for three years or until units are "redeemed" for a lane change. This does not happen with Route 1.

### Route 3 - any combo of the above

- You may achieve a lane change by any combination of external and in-house credit that totals 10 approved credits/units.

Please note that, regardless of route, no credit will be honored that was earned during contract hours. This is called "double-dipping" as you are already being paid for those contract hours.