



**PROFESSIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT  
HANDBOOK**

**2015-16**



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## **PART ONE: Introduction**

### **1.1 What is Professional Development?**

*"Purposeful peer interaction, or perhaps I should say positive purposeful peer interaction, works effectively under three conditions: (1) when the larger values of the organization and those of the individuals and groups mesh; (2) when information and knowledge about effective practices are widely and openly shared; and (3) when monitoring mechanisms are in place to detect and address ineffective actions while also identifying and consolidating effective practices" (The Six Secrets of Change, Fullan. p. 45).*

Research has shown teacher quality to be the most important variable when it comes to student achievement. High quality professional development is critical in increasing an educators' content knowledge, skills, attitudes and beliefs so that they can help all students to learn at high levels. The kind of professional development that has been proven to be the most effective at changing educator practice is results-oriented, data driven, meaningful and classroom- embedded.

High quality professional development has the power to improve educators' knowledge of academic content and teaching skills while challenging what educators believe about student learning and how they interact with students. Powerful professional development can lead to the transformation of schools into places in where all adults and students are deeply engaged in learning.

All educators should be lifelong learners. In fact, ongoing education is a requirement for teachers of every school level, from TK through 12th grade. Known as professional development, this education -- usually in the form of workshops, seminars and training courses -- helps teachers stay up to date with new trends and learn fresh strategies, techniques and methods for classroom challenges. It can also provide teachers opportunity to collaborate, learn from others, and share ideas. The overriding belief behind professional development is that increased knowledge helps teachers improve student achievement.

#### **What is the handbook for?**

This handbook is a guide for administrators, principals, staff developers, teachers and professional development providers-in short for anyone who has a stake in ensuring that professional learning has greater impact on improving practice and increasing student learning.

The guidelines in this handbook apply to all TK-12 certificated teachers, and to a certain extent, site administrators, counselors, nurses, speech therapists, and librarians.

Please contact the Professional Development Office if you have any specific questions or concerns.

## **Twin Rivers Unified School District Mission**

To inspire each student to extraordinary achievement every day.

## **Twin Rivers Unified School District Vision**

An unwavering focus on powerful and engaging learning experiences that prepare students for college, career and life success.

## **Twin Rivers Unified School District Core Beliefs**

- All students should graduate college and career ready.
- All students should have a safe, clean and secure environment that is free of bullying and that creates opportunities for learning.
- Student engagement is critical to student success.
- Partnerships with all stakeholders are vital to student success.
- Twin Rivers Unified School District should be fiscally sound and maximize resources for student success.
- Twin Rivers Unified School District should honor diversity and create equity across the district.
- Twin Rivers Unified School District should identify, recruit, retain and develop the best employees.

## **PART TWO: Kinds of Professional Development at Twin Rivers**

There are many kinds of professional development opportunities offered at Twin Rivers Unified School District (TRUSD), and they all address the goal of providing students with highly engaging, data-driven, culturally-relevant instruction. These PD opportunities include workshops, trainings, webinars, and focused team meetings designed to improve teaching practices.

### **2.1 District Workshops/Trainings**

The District offers workshops and trainings year-round. These workshops range from lecture/discussion presentations to highly interactive ‘train the trainer’ sessions. Professional development hours are provided to teachers who attend after school hours workshops unless there is a pay option and teachers opt for payment at the non-instructional rate. Those workshops or trainings that occur during the contracted work day are not eligible for the awarding of PD hours nor pay.

### **2.2 Book Studies**

School sites conduct book studies that involve in-depth examination of a topic that has the potential to impact teaching and address a particular need at a site. These book studies can qualify for PD hours provided that it has Principal approval as well as proper documentation of meetings hours, agendas, and outcomes. Principals need to contact their respective Executive Director and Professional Development Department for prior approval for book studies in which PD hours are being granted. Book Study leaders who qualify to lead book studies for PD credit include: Executive Directors, Site Principals, Co-admin, TOSAs, and other District Personnel (such as Directors and Coordinators). The book study must be conducted outside of the contracted work day.

### **2.3 Curriculum and Assessment Meetings**

The Instructional Services Department organizes two kinds of curriculum and assessment meetings: SAMs (Subject Area Meetings) and SACs (Subject Area Curriculum Meetings). The SAMs/SACs are utilized for assessment data analysis, addressing topics that are related to teaching in classroom settings, as well as for vertical and horizontal curriculum and assessment articulation.

### **2.4 National Board Certification**

The Twin Rivers Unified School District is highly supportive of teachers aspiring to obtain National Board Certification. A new cohort is organized every year with monthly meetings facilitated by 1-2 National Board Certified Teachers in the District. Although teachers cannot claim PD hours nor pay for these support meetings, once they achieve certification, an annual stipend is provided by the district.

### **2.5 Compensation for External Professional Development**

External professional development opportunities that are funded by the District during non-contracted work days (e.g.: Summer break, Thanksgiving break, Saturdays) are not eligible for pay or PD hours. If an employee attends a professional development opportunity independent of the District, without the District funding any expenses, the employee may be eligible for PD hours. The prior approval process must be adhered.

## **2.6 Compensation for Internal Professional Development**

Professional development opportunities provided by the District during non-contracted duty days, or hours, fall under two categories:

### **Rate of Pay**

- Instructional Rate (which must include direct instruction to students),
- Non-Instructional Rate (which does not include direct instruction to students),
- Summer Pay Rate
- High Priority Pay rate

### **Hours**

- Hours for Salary Advancement
- Hours toward BTSA Induction Requirements

## **PART THREE: Professional Development Partners** **UC Davis, CSUS, RAFT, SCOE**

Because of the proven, high-quality professional development opportunities that certain organizations have offered for years, Twin Rivers Unified School District awards PD hours to certain workshops and trainings that a selected number of institutions offer. These institutions include SCOE (Sacramento County Office of Education), UC (University of California) Davis School of Education, CRESS (UC Davis Center for Cooperative Research and Extension Services for Schools), CSUS (California State University-Sacramento) Education Department, SIRC (Science and the River City) and RAFT (Resource Area Center for Teachers). Teachers are required to provide proof of completion of attendance that includes information about the nature of the workshop attended as well as a verification of the total number of hours of PD attended.

### **3.1 College/University Courses - Credits**

All professional development must directly relate to the employee's current assignment and/or align to the district's mission and core values. College courses (upper level college courses) taken must be related to growth in the employee's current assignment, or to support the employee's development to teach another subject or for educational career advancement. Only those units completed after the Bachelor's degree will be accepted as graduate credit for salary purposes. All units completed after July 1, 2008 beyond the Bachelor's degree, must be college level classes at an accredited college approved by the District. As stated above, the classes must occur outside of your contract day and no part of the cost of the course may be paid by the district, school, or any district sponsored organization (PTA, booster clubs, grants).

All college and university courses (and this may include workshops for which units are awarded) that employee's take to move across the salary schedule are subject to prior approval. Employees must complete a prior approval form (See Appendix B). It is necessary to attach the course descriptions to this form (employees can print or copy the description from a course catalog) and to obtain the teacher's principal's signature. The form must be submitted BEFORE the employee registers for the course/s. Please allow at least 10 working days for the prior approval form to be processed. Confirmation will be sent to the employee via district e-mail once the prior approval form is processed and the original form will be sent to Human Resources for the employee's personnel file. The employee must complete the workshop/courses outside of the regular school day and pay for all costs associated with the workshop. This includes costs such as registration, travel, lodging, substitutes etc. Once the course or workshop is approved and completed, the employee will also need to submit proof of attendance and/or completion with the number of hours completed clearly indicated on the document. This shall be in the form of a transcript or certificate of completion.

Please take note that most units from community college courses are not accepted for salary advancement. However, some classes may be approved, if the employee can explain the necessity of a particular course. As with all college coursework, the employee must seek prior approval (see Appendix A) before registering. Please refer to figure 1 on the next page for a summary of the process.

The following chart describes the units-hours equivalencies that are followed in the district:

### **Units-Hours Equivalencies**

<b>Type of Unit</b>	<b>Equivalent Course Hours</b>
Semester	15
Quarter	10
Continuing Education (CEU)	10

### **3.2 Additional Credential and Graduate Degree Programs**

Twin Rivers Unified School District recognizes the benefit of employees that pursue additional credentials and graduate degrees. In order for the employee to receive salary credit for all courses, the following conditions must be met:

- The program must be administered by an accredited institution of higher education
- Each course must be submitted for prior approval (see Appendix A)
- As stated in 3.1, must be directly related to current assignment

### **3.3 On-line Courses and Workshops**

On-line courses and/or degrees are approved on a case-by-case basis. As with all other college/university coursework, a prior approval form must be submitted for all courses. The course content must align with the employee's current assignment and/or the district's key focus areas. In addition, the institution offering the degree program must be an accredited institution of higher learning.

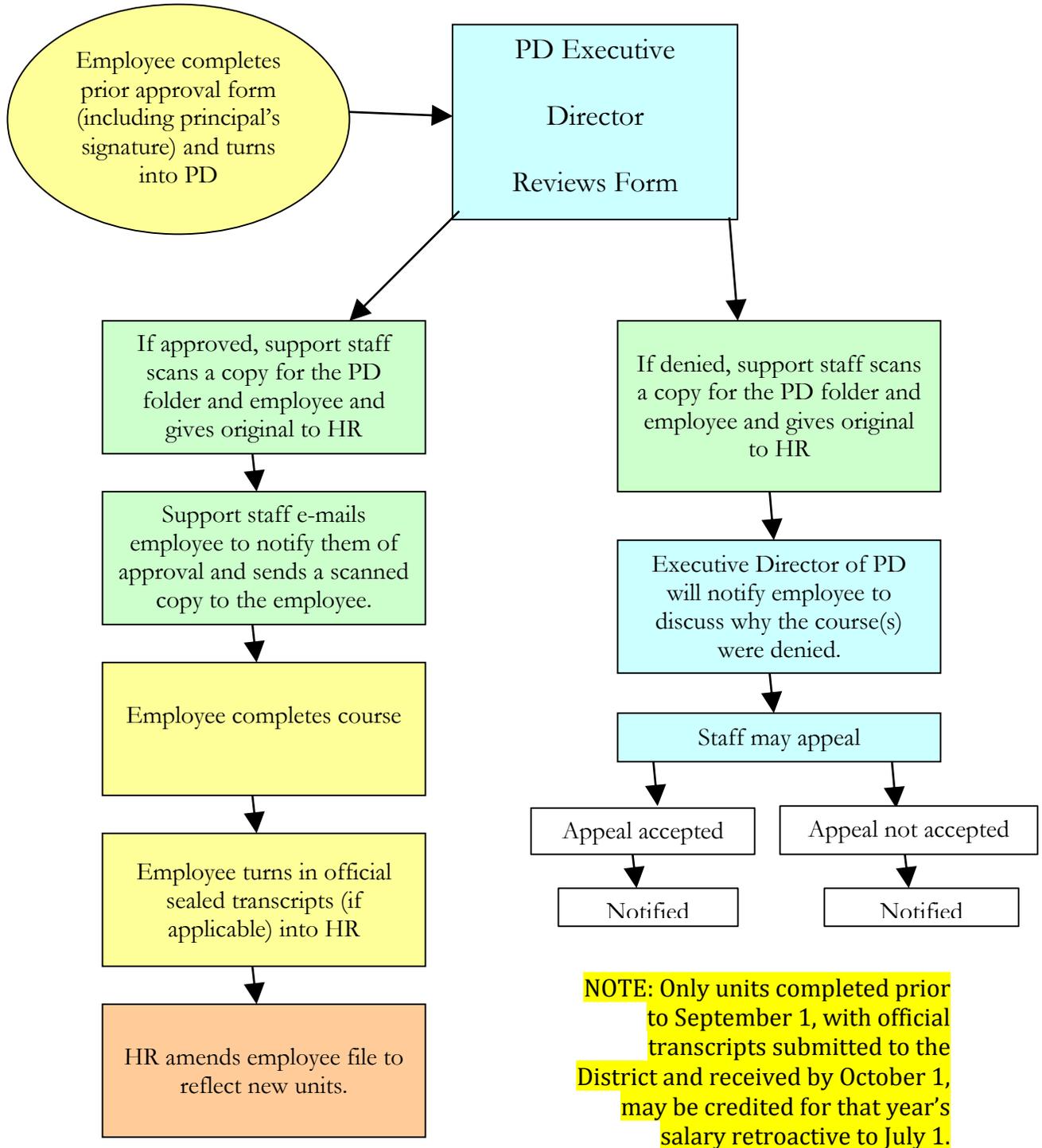
CTAP workshops (see: <http://www.myctap.org/index.php/professional-development/live-online-workshops>) are automatically approved by the district (no prior approval form is required); however they must be taken outside the regular workday. In addition, only a total of 15 hours of CTAP workshop hours will be accepted in one calendar year. Official, original certificates of completion must be submitted to the professional development department as soon as the courses are completed.

### **3.4 Community College and Independent Study Courses**

Most community college courses are not accepted. However, some classes may be approved, if the employee can explain the necessity of a particular course. As with all college coursework, the employee must seek prior approval (see Appendix A) before registering.

For the most part, independent study courses are not approved. Employees must submit a prior approval form (see Appendix A) and attach their special reasoning for the request for an exception. The Professional Development Advisory Committee will convene to consider the exception at their next quarterly meeting.

**Figure 1: Prior Approval of College/University Units Process**



## **PART FOUR: Professional Development Hours, Units, and Growth**

### **4.1 Approval Process (See graphic on page 10)**

Once an employee has received prior approval and completed the coursework, they must submit an original (sealed) transcript to the Human Resources (HR) department. In order to move on the salary schedule, courses must be completed by September 1 of the current school year. Transcripts must be received by HR by October 1. Only units completed prior to September 1, with official transcripts submitted to the District and received by October 1, may be credited for that year's salary retroactive to July 1.

### **4.2 Appeal Process**

If an employee's courses are denied by the professional development department during the prior approval process, they may appeal the decision by submitting a letter to the Professional Development Advisory Committee.

To appeal, the employee must follow this process:

- Submit a letter to the Professional Development Advisory Committee stating the reasons why the course(s) should be approved. Include information about how the coursework is relevant to the employee's current assignment.
- Include a copy of the denied prior approval form and documentation of the course content

The committee will consider the appeal at the next scheduled quarterly meeting. The employee can expect a decision from the committee within 5 working days after the committee meeting.

### **4.3 My Learning Plan Account**

My Learning Plan (MLP) is the database that the district uses to track and advertise professional development in the district. Employees must contact the professional development department in order to obtain a username and password for the system. Your username will be your FULL Twin Rivers e-mail address (i.e. [Jane.Doe@TwinRiversusd.org](mailto:Jane.Doe@TwinRiversusd.org)). The default password is 'changeme' (one word); users will be prompted to personalize their password the first time they log into the system. (see Appendix D)

Any professional development activity listed in MLP does not require prior approval. All courses align to the district's mission and goals and most instructors are district employees. Employees must register for district-sponsored courses in MLP, which will reserve a space in the course. Once the employee completes the course, the program administrator will enter the data in the system. This will record the event in the employee's portfolio. The MLP portfolio is a record of courses/hours accumulated by the employee. College/university courses and outside workshops/conferences are not recorded in MLP. If you feel as if the information recorded in MLP is not accurate, please contact the Program Specialist of Professional Development.

### **4.4 Enrolling in District-Organized PDs**

Majority of the professional development offered within the district is posted in My Learning Plan ([www.mylearningplan.com](http://www.mylearningplan.com)). All certificated employees should contact the Professional Development Program Specialist to set up an account in the system to register for courses.

There is no need to submit a prior approval form for professional development activities offered within Twin Rivers. For every 15 hours of professional development that the employee attends outside of the regular school day, the employee can earn 1 internal semester unit of credit that will count towards advancement on the salary schedule. Please refer to the Appendix for specific step-by-step directions.

#### **4.5 Professional Development and Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA)**

Participating BTSA teachers can apply professional development hours for CSUS credits through SCOE, which they can then use for crossover purposes. They cannot use the same hours to advance on the salary scale or claim payment. It is the responsibility of the participating teacher to document their hours through the BTSA program. CANNOT EARN CREDIT FOR PDs attended during contractual work days.

#### **4.6 Professional Development and Credentialing**

Teachers who have been hired without a credential in the area they teach, or any credential (e.g.: an Intern) will send all paperwork documenting the credential they have earned directly to Human Resources for analysis and salary scale placement. Please do not send the paperwork through the Professional Development Department.

Teachers must be cleared through the prior approval process for an *additional* credential (after already holding a credential). This documentation should be sent to the Professional Development Department for additional units to be approved for salary scale movement. Please call the Professional Development department for any questions.

## **PART FIVE: Resources**

### **5.1 Negotiated Guidelines**

14.4 Additional Units of Credit/Professional Growth: Only those units completed after the Bachelor's degree will be accepted as graduate credit for salary purposes. All units completed after July 1, 2008 beyond the Bachelor's degree, must be college level classes at an accredited college approved by the District. Credit may be granted for District-sponsored or District-approved courses which are completed outside the school day for which the Member is not compensated by the District. Credit for such courses will be given on the basis of fifteen (15) hours of course time being equivalent to one (1) semester unit of college credit. All courses must be reviewed in advance by the site administrator and pre-approved by the Executive Director of Professional Development. Only units completed prior to September 1, with written verification in a form acceptable to the District received by October 1, may be credited for that year's salary retroactive to July 1.

14.4.1 With regard to courses taken prior to July 1, 2008 that were not previously pre-approved by the four predecessor districts (Del Paso Heights School District, Grant Joint Union High School District, North Sacramento School District, or Rio Linda Union School District ("the predecessor districts")) for whom a Member worked, the approval rules in effect at the predecessor districts will determine whether credits are given for those courses. In addition, credit will only be given for courses that were completed after July 1, 2005, and courses that were previously submitted to and denied by the predecessor districts are not eligible to be resubmitted for credit. Only courses taken while a Member worked at one of the predecessor districts are eligible for credit.

14.4.2 Units that were completed by January 1, 2009, with written verification in a form acceptable to the District received by February 1, 2009, will be credited to the Member's salary schedule effective February 1, 2009.

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **WORKSHOPS/CONFERENCES**

To whom do the guidelines in this handbook apply?

The guidelines in this handbook apply to TK-12 certificated teachers, counselors, nurses, speech therapists and librarians.

What kinds of professional development activities qualify for hours towards salary advancement?

Any professional development workshop offered or sponsored by Twin Rivers Unified School District (My Learning Plan) and completed outside the regular school day will qualify for hours towards salary advancement. College and university courses are often eligible (including some online courses), but are subject to prior approval. Outside workshops and conferences may also be eligible but are also subject to prior approval. These courses/workshops must relate to the employee's current assignment and/or align to the district's goals and initiatives.

How do I obtain a My Learning Plan account?

Please contact the Program Specialist of Professional Development to obtain a My Learning Plan (MLP) account. There is additional information about the system in the MLP section of this handbook.

How many hours to I get for attending a class or workshop?

The employee will only get credit for the hours spent in the course (seat time). This excludes meals and breaks. Time spent working on projects outside of the course, including homework, or fieldwork, is not accepted.

If I attend professional development workshops, how many hours must I complete to equal one internal (TRUSD) semester unit?

Fifteen (15) hours of professional development equals one internal semester unit of credit.

If I am interested in moving on the salary schedule next school year, when do I need to submit my hours/units to HR?

In order to move on the salary schedule, courses must be completed by September 1 of the current school year. Transcripts and vouchers must be submitted to HR by October 1 in order to move on the salary schedule.

If I am paid to attend a professional development workshop outside of the regular school day, can I submit the hours for advancement on the salary schedule as well?

No. If compensation is available for attending professional development events, the employee must choose between compensation and a voucher for hours towards salary advancement.

If I attend a workshop/conference during the regular school day, can I submit those hours towards advancement on the salary schedule?

No. Only courses completed outside of the regular school day will count towards hours for salary advancement.

If I attend a workshop/conference OUTSIDE of the regular school day, can I submit hours towards advancement on the salary schedule?

Yes, as long as the district, school or any district-sponsored organization (i.e. PTA, booster clubs, grants) did not pay for any portion of the workshop/conference. This includes costs such as registration, travel, lodging, substitutes etc. The employee will need to submit a prior approval form (see Appendix A) for the activity. The employee will also need to submit proof of attendance with the number of hours completed clearly indicated on this document. A voucher will be issued and submitted to HR so that credit can be posted to the employee's personnel file.

Can I take online workshops?

Some online workshops have been approved. Preferably, the course would include some real-time interaction with the instructor or other students. CTAP workshops are automatically approved by the district (no prior approval form is required); however they must be taken outside the regular workday. In addition, only a total of 15 hours of CTAP workshop hours will be accepted in one calendar year. Certificates of completion must be submitted to the professional development department so that a voucher can be issued to human resources for the employee's file.

Can I claim professional development hours to advance on the salary schedule and receive credit toward my BTSA requirements?

No. The same professional development hours submitted for BTSA requirements cannot be submitted for advancement on the salary scale or claim payment, and course credit.

## **COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY COURSES**

What types of college courses count for advancement on the salary schedule?

College courses must be related to growth in your current assignment, or to support your development to teach another subject based on the need of the school. The classes must occur outside of your contract day and no part of the cost of the course may be paid by the district, school, or any district sponsored organization (PTA, booster clubs, grants). All courses must be approved by the employee's principal and the professional development department before the course begins (See Appendix A for TRUSD's prior approval form).

Can I get credit for community college classes?

Most community college courses are not accepted. However, some classes may be approved, if the employee can explain the necessity of a particular course to their current assignment. As with all college coursework, the employee must seek prior approval (see Appendix A) before registering.

Where do I send my prior approval form?

You can send your prior approval form through the interoffice mail attn.: Professional Development Department/Prior Approvals. Otherwise you can email it to [ruth.victorio@twinriversusd.org](mailto:ruth.victorio@twinriversusd.org). Please remember to get your principal's signature and to attach the course description for each course that you are taking.

How long will the prior approval process take?

Please allow a minimum of 10 working days for your prior approval form to be processed. You will be sent an email confirmation with your prior approval form attached.

If my coursework is denied, can I submit an appeal for approval?

Yes. You may appeal a denied prior approval form by submitting a letter to the Professional Development Advisory Committee. This committee meets quarterly to review professional development issues.

How does the district calculate CEUs, semester units, and quarter units?

The district calculates college and university credit in semester units. If you earn quarter units for a course, multiply it by 2/3 (.666) to calculate its value in semester units. Continuing Education Units (CEUs) are usually the equivalent of 10 hours.

Can I take online courses?

Online course are approved on a case-by-case basis. Preferably, the course would include some real-time interaction with the instructor and other students in the class. As with all other college/university coursework, a prior approval form must be submitted prior to the beginning of the course. The course content must align with the employee's current assignment and/or the district's key focus areas.

Can I take independent study courses?

No. For the most part independent study courses are not approved. This would include courses where credits are earned for lesson preparation etc.

If the district paid for some or all of the conference/workshop that I attended, can I still purchase units from the conference and use them towards salary advancement?

Yes, you can still purchase units from conferences/workshops and count them towards salary advancement if the district paid for some or all of your conference/workshop expenses. These units would be subject to prior approval (see Appendix A).

I forgot to submit a prior approval form and I have already completed a course. Do I still need to submit the form?

Yes. Human Resources cannot accept or record transcripts for a course without a prior approval form on file. When you do not submit a prior approval form BEFORE the course begins, you risk that it will not get approved. This means that you may have wasted money on a course that will not count towards advancement on the salary schedule.

## Appendix A

### Prior Approval of College/University Units Process

Prior Approval of College/University Units Form

[http://www.twinriversusd.org/depts/files/431/Prior Approval Course Form.pdf](http://www.twinriversusd.org/depts/files/431/Prior%20Approval%20Course%20Form.pdf)

All university and college courses that a certificated employee wishes to attend for the purpose of advancing on the TRUSD salary schedule must be submitted for prior approval using the Prior Approval of University or College Courses form.

Complete the form, please note the procedures and deadlines that must be included on the form, and fax it to Ruth Victorio @ 566-3596. If you have any questions, please contact Ruth Victorio at (916) 566-1600 ext. 50194 or by email [ruth.victorio@twinriversusd.org](mailto:ruth.victorio@twinriversusd.org)

You may also access the form from the District's website at "Online Forms."

## **Appendix B**

### **PD Voucher Form**

The PD Voucher Form [http://www.twinriversusd.org/depts/files/21/PD\\_VOUCHER.pdf](http://www.twinriversusd.org/depts/files/21/PD_VOUCHER.pdf)

Complete the PD Voucher form on the last day of the Professional Development activity. If you have any questions please contact Mary Gerwer at (916) 566-1756 ext. 50845 or by email [mary.gerwer@twinriversusd.org](mailto:mary.gerwer@twinriversusd.org)

You may also access the form from the District's website at "Online Forms."

## **Appendix C**

### **Outside Twin Rivers Workshop/Conference Approval**

Please see Travel Conference Approval Form <http://www.twinriversusd.org/forms/>

When attending workshops/conferences outside of the Twin Rivers Unified School District the Travel Conference Approval Form must be completed prior to registering for the event.

You may also access the form from the District's website at "Online Forms."

## Appendix D

### How to Enroll via My Learning Plan

Follow these directions to log in:

1. Log on at [www.mylearningplan.com](http://www.mylearningplan.com)
2. Use your FULL twinrivers email address (e.g. [mary.gerwer@twinriversusd.org](mailto:mary.gerwer@twinriversusd.org)) and as the default password “changeme” (no space).
3. On the banner to the left, click “Account Options”. You will see the User Profile and Change Password options.
4. Change your password immediately.
5. Update your profile by selecting your school and grade level/subject area.

Additionally, you can go to the District Catalog link to enroll in any workshop.

You will click on the activity triangle and then on District Catalog



## Appendix E

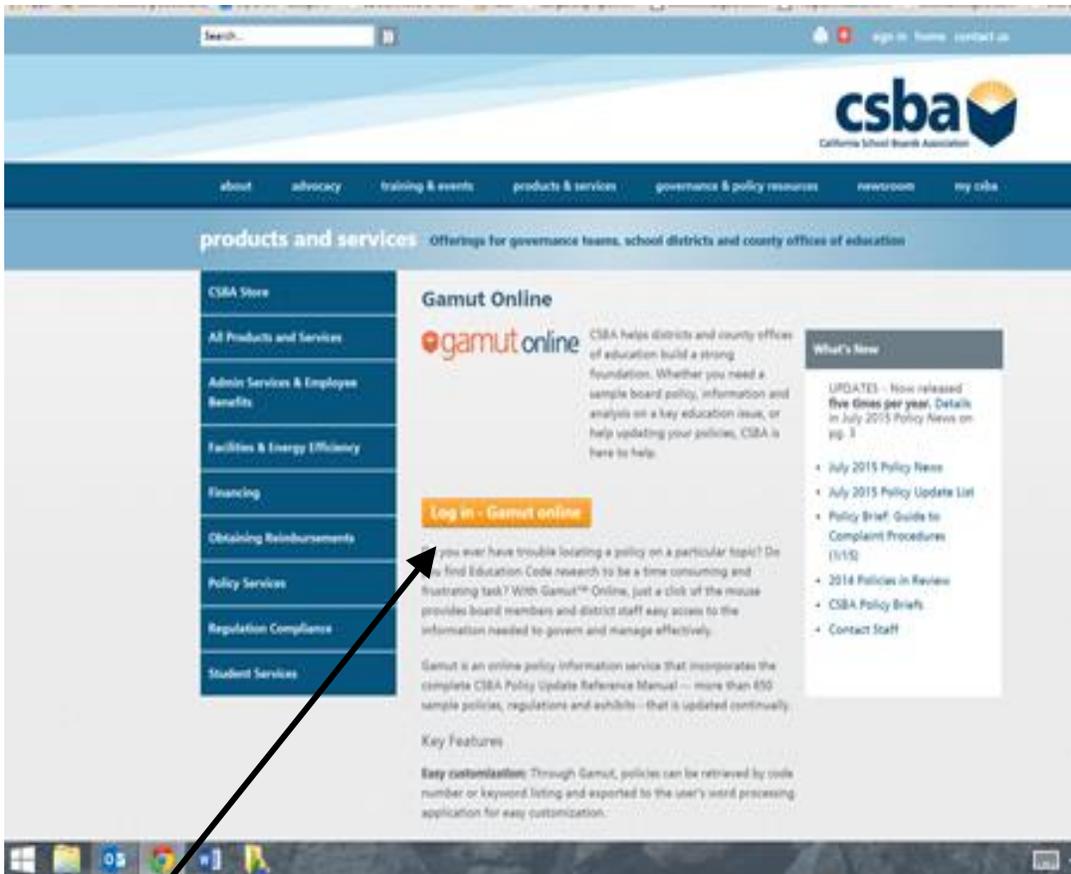
### Board Policy Professional Development

Access Twin Rivers Unified School District Board Policies at

<https://www.csba.org/ProductsAndServices/AllServices/Gamut.aspx>

User Name: public

Password: twinrivers



click here to login and access board policies,

Or by going to the Twin Rivers USD website at <http://www.twinriversusd.org/>, under Trustees, then under Policies.