# What Counts for TRC Contact Hours?

**Guidelines and Criteria**

Project Directors should develop a comprehensive and coherent program of professional development based on the content focus recommended by the Texas Education Agency and identified in the TRC Request for Application (RFA). Hours spent attending the events selected and implemented by the Project Director should constitute the majority of STM or MTM hours entered into the TRC DataCenter. In addition to the required activities outlined for STMs or MTMs, Project Directors may choose to allow some customized hours that are unique to individual mentors and that can count toward fulfillment of STM or MTM commitments. It is important that these decisions be made at the beginning of the program year, be aligned with the goals and objectives of the Regional Collaborative, and that there is agreement as to the appropriateness of selected activities in meeting the overall plan for that year’s professional development. Project Directors should not allow Mentors to count as TRC hours any professional development that the Mentors were already being required to attend through their school district. For example, if a district is requiring a teacher to attend Advanced Placement (AP) Strategies training, this cannot be counted as TRC hours since no TRC resources can be used to supplant existing professional development requirements.

**What Counts for TRC Contact Hours?**

***The basics:***

* MTMs and STMs need to receive an average of 100 contact hours of professional development during the grant period.
* CMs need to receive an average of 12 documented contact hours of training or support.
* Immersion CMs (those teaching on an immersion campus at the targeted immersion grade or subject) need to receive an average of 24 documented contact hours of training or support.

***Required training for Teacher Mentors:***

* Teacher Mentors (MTMs and STMs) must receive at least 40 hours of professional development in a summer institute prior to the start of the school year (1st summer of the grant).
* During the grant period, Teacher Mentors must receive at least 40 hours of content instruction as specified by the TRC and TEA.

***Ways to receive contact hours:***

* Summer Institute offered by the individual Collaborative.
* Training offered by either the TRC or individual Collaborative.
* Mentoring – Teacher Mentors can earn up to 12 hours for mentoring CMs.
* Online training – Teacher Mentors can earn up to 24 hours for online professional development such as asynchronous coursework or modules such as book study, the NSTA Learning Center, or Project Share. Any online training should be aligned with the focus of the Collaborative program for the year. Participation must be documented.
* Conferences and the TRC Annual Meeting – Teacher Mentors can earn up to 20 hours for attendance at sessions during professional conferences and the TRC Annual Meeting. Participation must be documented.

***Documenting TRC hours:***

* All **workshops or college courses** offered as part of a Regional Collaborative’s event timeline must include an agenda (or syllabus in the case of a college course) and a sign-sheet (or verification of course completion for college courses).
* **Mentoring –** Mentoring events should be specific to the Mentor in the TRC DataCenter. In order to meet benchmark goals for hours delivered to CMs, it is recommended that a separate event for Fall Mentoring and one for Spring Mentoring be created for each Mentor. For example, if Justin Beiber is an STM, there should be two events in the DataCenter if Justin has mentored in both the fall and spring. One could be called *Justin Beiber Fall 2013 Mentoring* and one *Justin Beiber Spring 2014 Mentoring*. In each mentoring event, attendees can include both the Teacher Mentor and the CMs involved. A mentoring log is required for documentation (samples can be found in the Project Director Resources section of the TRC website). The log should include verification by CMs that training occurred. No agendas are required for mentoring. If training is provided to CMs through mentoring that is connected closely to a TRC PDA, this should be noted in the event.
* **Online Courses –** An agenda, syllabus or summary of course requirements and verification of completion of an online course (serves as the sign-in sheet) should be included as required documentation for any online events.
* **Conferences** – Conference attendees should provide their Project Director with a list of actual sessions attended to receive credit for conference attendance. This can serve as the sign-in sheet. The agenda can include a scanned copy of the conference program overview.

**Counting Non-TRC Professional Development**

The common goal of TEA and TRC is to provide Texas schools and teachers with a science and mathematics professional development program that is coherent, comprehensive, and aligned with the TEKS. Each Regional Collaborative should design an instructional program for Teacher Mentors and Cadre Members that supports this goal. While many Teacher Mentors may attend trainings outside of the TRC that are valuable or required by their employer, these external trainings in general **should not** be counted as part of the required TRC hours unless the following requirements are met.

***EXAMPLE****:* It is the end of the year and one of your TRC Mentors, Sally Superstar, still needs 12 hours of TRC training. Her district is sending her and several other teachers to PLC training. She wants to know if she can count these hours as part of her TRC requirements. *ANSWER:* No. If the PLC training was not part of her original TRC Professional Development plan, is not funded by the TRC, and is not offered by the TRC, it cannot count as TRC hours.

TRC funds must be used to *supplement*, not *supplant*, existing teacher training requirements. **Supplanting** has likely occurred if:

* TRC funds are used to provide services that are required to be made available under other federal, state or local laws.
* TRC funds are used to provide services that were provided with nonfederal funds in the prior year. Presumptions of supplanting are refutable if projects can demonstrate that services would not have been provided with nonfederal funding had TRC funds not been available.
* TRC funds are used to provide services to TRC teachers where the same services are provided using local funds for non-TRC teachers. For example, if local school districts fund AVID training for teachers, TRC funding cannot supplant local funding specifically for TRC teachers.

****Accounting for TRC Contact Hours****

The following two criteria should be used to determine whether participation in non-TRC sponsored professional development can be counted toward required TRC contact hours:

1. ***Is the professional development aligned with the specific goals and objectives for teachers as outlined in your Project’s Regional Collaborative application?***

While the TRC structure supports a degree of customization for individual Teacher Mentors, such customization should be part of an overall professional development plan for the teacher rather than addressed on an ad hoc or after-the-fact basis. Teacher Mentors should not expect to count training they are required to attend by their district if that training is not integrating TRC supported professional development. For example, teachers may be required to attend AP Strategies training by their district but counting this as TRC hours would not be appropriate unless a) the attending teacher subsequently provided turnaround training for other Teacher Mentors as part of the overall TRC program, or b) specific PD related to AP teacher preparation was addressed as a goal in the application and such training was outlined in the timeline.

Teachers who attend professional development outside of that described in the application’s original instructional plan or beyond what your teacher participants normally receive as a part of the Collaborative must subsequently turn the training around to other TRC teachers for this to count as legitimate TRC hours. For example, if TRC teachers attend Project Wild facilitator training on their own, the training may only count as part of the teacher’s TRC professional development hours if they then train other TRC teachers on Project Wild.

1. ***Have TRC funds been utilized to support the professional development?***

The second criterion for counting TRC contact hours for a workshop relates to leveraging of funding. TRC funds must be leveraged for training to be reported as TRC contact hours. This will apply to counting TEA modules as TRC contact hours given that ESCs have already received state funding to provide professional development for these modules. The various modules that are supported by TEA, including TEKS Overview training, MSTAR Mathematics Academies, and End-of-Course Success Academies, can play an integral role in the overall TRC program of long-term, sustained professional development for math and/or science teachers provided that TRC teachers receive additional training and/or materials that go beyond what the standard training would provide to non-TRC teachers.

If TRC teachers count attendance for a TEA module (e.g., MSTAR Academies, or EOC trainings), TRC funding must be leveraged to provide “added value” to the basic module. For instance, TEA funding does not cover the cost of the NCTM Curriculum Focal Points book upon which MSTAR training is based. If a TRC project uses TRC funding to purchase additional books for TRC teachers who attend the training and they are used as an integral part of the training, then they can count these hours as part of their TRC project.

****Teacher Mentor Personal Professional Development Plans****

Teacher Mentors and school districts often ask Project Directors if non-TRC training may count as TRC hours. To avoid this controversy, each Regional Collaborative is strongly encouraged to require teachers at the beginning of the grant period to outline a plan for completing the 100 required contact hours of professional development. Significant components of this plan should include the required professional development specified for all Teacher Mentors. If Teacher Mentors are allowed to choose from a predefined list of additional professional development experiences to round out their program, they should be provided this information at the beginning of the grant and establish a personal professional development plan that commits them to specific PD on specific dates. Requiring each Teacher Mentor to submit a personal professional development plan builds their own professionalism, avoids last minute requests from teachers to include random PD as part of their TRC hours, and assists the Project Director with grant management.