



Arizona Troops to Teachers Program

ANNUAL REPORT MAY 15, 2020 TO MAY 14, 2021

Executive Summary

As the nation emerges from an unprecedented time and begins to resemble some form of how things once were, the need to educate our youth remains consistent no matter the state, political affiliation, or budget line item. We have learned to evolve and adjust to life's challenges, often adapting to ever-changing policies and procedures for the sake of life and society. Education moved at lightning speed, transitioning from in-person learning to various online models of instruction. The transition highlighted the continued need for highly structured teachers with the propensity to adjust to ever-changing requirements.

Arizona had great success establishing Troops to Teachers (TTT) and a SkillBridge Educator Internship program, resulting in 533 state participants, 204 teacher certifications, and 89 full-time educator positions filled throughout the state. The pandemic and TTT program uncertainty throughout this past program year led to diminished TTT engagements, participation, and teacher certifications for the final year. Post pandemic restrictions began to ease for much of Arizona by April 30, 2021; however, the TTT 'Sunset Plan' announcement in October hampered any significant increase in participants for year three compared to year two's overall numbers.

Unfortunately, states will lose a popular program and tool to help fill educator roles in a field that continues to see great need. Overall, Arizona had great success with TTT considering it included program rollout, increasing TTT awareness (marketing), and relationship building. Every effort should be made to continue such a great benefit to those who are currently serving and for those who have already served. In the meantime, Arizona will continue to offer guidance through Arizona Troops to Educators (www.azed.gov/teach).

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Arizona Troops to Teachers Program

Section 2: Introduction:

Grant Award: May 15, 2018, to May 14, 2023

(Modified, TTT Program 'Sunset' May 14, 2021)

Period of Performance: FY2021 - May 15, 2020 to May 14, 2021

STATE STATISTICS

Arizona is the fourth fastest-growing state ⁽¹⁾

Goodyear and Buckeye, Arizona, are among the top 15 cities in the U.S. with the highest growth. ⁽²⁾

Population: ⁽³⁾ 7,378,494

Veteran Population: ⁽⁴⁾ 497,337 or 9.8% of Arizona's adults

Veteran Population by County – see Table 1

by gender: ⁽⁵⁾

50.3% Female
49.7% Male
Median Age: 37.1

by age: ⁽⁵⁾

18 to 34 = 42,453
35 to 54 = 106,120
55 to 64 = 83,319
65 to 74 = 133,080
> 75 = 132,365

by race: ⁽⁵⁾

White 10.24%
Hispanic 4.11%
Black 10.19%
Other 3.04%
2 or More 7.42%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander 8.76%

Arizona Military Populations - Permanently Assigned: ⁽⁵⁾

| | | | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------|----------------------------|---------------|-------------------|-------|
| Army | 4,632 | Army Nat' l Guard | 5,289 | Army Reserve | 3,338 |
| Navy | 405 | Navy Reserve | 1,079 | | |
| Marines | 4,161 | Marine Reserve | 557 | | |
| Air Force | 10,976 | Air Nat' l Guard | 2,559 | Air Force Reserve | 2,530 |
| Coast Guard | 7 | | | | |
| Total Active Duty | 20,181 | Total Reserve Force | 15,394 | | |

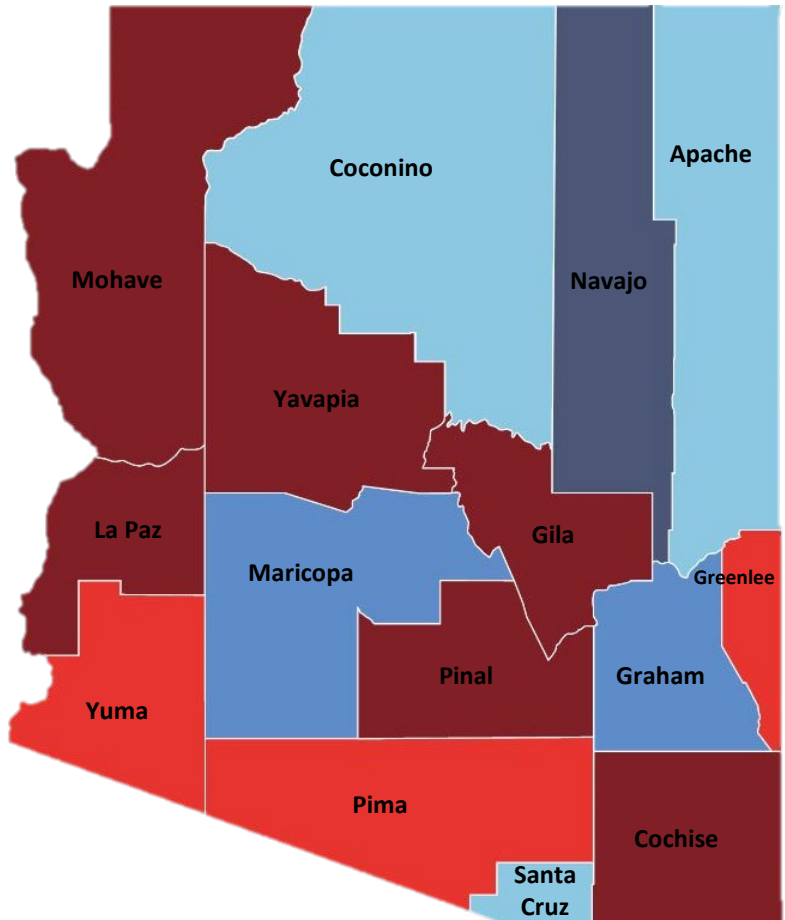
Arizona K-12 Education Information: ⁽⁷⁾⁽⁸⁾⁽¹⁰⁾⁽¹¹⁾⁽¹²⁾

| | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------|---|
| Student Enrollment | > 1.15 million | (Percent Below Poverty by county – see Table 1) |
| No. of K-12 Schools | 2,337 | |
| Educators | | |
| Appropriately Certified | 63,079 | |
| Not Appropriately Certified | 3,669 | |
| Emergency Certified | 1,043 | |
| Annual Attrition Rate | 24% | |
| Vacant Teaching Positions | 1243 | |
| Vacant Support Positions | 1592 | |



Arizona Troops to Teachers Program

Table 1: Student Enrollment & Percent Below Poverty by County



| County | Student Enrollment ⁽⁸⁾ | % of Children Below Poverty ⁽⁹⁾ | % Veterans |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|--|-------------|
| Apache | 10,426 | 26.2% | 6.1% |
| Cochise | 19,204 | 18.3% | 18.9% |
| Coconino | 18,048 | 26.2% | 6.9% |
| Gila | 7,629 | 21.8% | 13.4% |
| Graham | 6,900 | 26.2% | 8.2% |
| Greenlee | 1,890 | 26.2% | 10.9% |
| La Paz | 2,495 | 17.3% | 14.8% |
| Maricopa | 765,415 | 19.0% | 8.5% |
| Mohave | 23,768 | 17.3% | 14.8% |
| Navajo | 17,797 | 26.2% | 9.2% |
| Pima | 148,905 | 24.2% | 11.2% |
| Pinal | 53,147 | 48.9% | 11.6% |
| Santa Cruz | 10,125 | 24.2% | 5.5% |
| Yavapai | 25,369 | 17.3% | 15.0% |
| Yuma | 38,653 | 20.1% | 10.2% |
| Total | 1,150,806 | 24.6% | 9.8% |

Percent Veterans





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Section 3 Grant Specific Goals, 6 Total

Goal 1: Attract and increase the number of eligible current and former members of the armed forces participating in the Troops to Teachers Program.

Arizona had great success considering the tumultuous period of establishing new norms, work routines, and social distancing guidelines this past year. In all 533 participants* selected Arizona as their first choice for the TTT program. Accolades should be given to Luke AFB, and Davis Monthan AFB as each actively promoted the program and offered a consistent platform to present during Transition Assistance Program (TAP) events. It is evident that in-person presentations greatly influence service member TTT sign-ups and every effort should be made to continue some form of the program with easier access to all military installations. Face to face interaction lends itself to stronger connections and increased participation. Striking marketing material to solicit a call to action in absence of in-person presentations furthered participant engagements and program participation.

*Veterans made up approximately 20% of the state's 533 participants due to partnerships created with 'The Arizona Coalition for Military Families (ACMF) and Arizona Department of Economic Security – 'Arizona@Work.' Continued outreach to IHE Vet Centers helped fill any gaps.

Troops to Teachers – YTD Metrics (All years)

| | Engagements 'Contacts' | Participants | Certifications | Employment Assistance (Hired) | SkillBridge Internships | Job Fair | Webpage Traffic | Community Events | Pending Certification |
|--------------|------------------------|--------------|----------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|----------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Year 1 | 620 | 182 | 31 | 14 | n/a | 2 | 1,719 | 2 | 0 |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| Year 2 | 1,995 | 228 | 99 | 33 | 3 | 2 | 7,063 | 5 | 3 |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| Year 3 | 312 | 125 | 55 | 42 | 2 | 0 | 3,475 | 1 | 33 |
| Total | 2,997 | 722 | 185 | 89 | 5 | 4 | 12,257 | 8 | 36 |

| <u>Certificate Type</u> | <u>Totals</u> |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| Alternative/Intern | 13 |
| Educator Prep Prog. | 2 |
| Traditional/SPED | 15 |
| Elementary | 8 |
| Secondary | 11 |
| CTE | 40 |
| Subject Matter Expert | 39 |
| JROTC | 14 |
| STEM | 5 |
| Substitute/Emergency | 60 |



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Goal #2: Reduce barriers that prevent veterans from meeting teacher certification requirements for transitioning into teaching careers.

The most significant barrier for any person seeking to enter the teaching profession is a lack of information. Providing engaging face-to-face presentations, both via 'Zoom' and in-person, from an experienced educator and veteran broke many presumed barriers for entering the education field. Arizona offers many paths to become an educator, and not all certifications require a four-year degree. Providing a service to review and provide feedback about each participant's unique background (MOS/DD214, transcripts, and resume) provides more opportunities for certification.

Additionally, individuals interested but uncertain about a career in education are encouraged to utilize the SkillBridge Internship to gain valuable experience and training in the classroom or support roles. This robust internship provides hands-on, introductory pedagogy, and student interaction as well as an option for support roles like IT, HVAC, Plant Management, etc.

Troops to Teachers & SkillBridge base advertisement card (front & back)

ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY
INTERN IN AZ SCHOOLS
Teach Learn Support

Arizona's TROOPS to TEACHERS has partnered with the SKILLBRIDGE PROGRAM.
Participants can apply 180 days prior to separation. Teacher & Support Staff internships are available.
Contact your base's Education Office for more details.

Today's Youth Need You!
You have led, trained, and experienced life in a global setting. You have inspired others here and afar with your knowledge, virtue, and professionalism. Together all of these characteristics define an exceptional teacher. Consider serving your community once again and become a teacher today! Register at www.azed.gov/troops2teachers.

Teachers Enjoy:

- Extended vacations & holidays
- Increased family time
- Shaping our future
- Consistent schedules
- Retirement, plus other benefits

Troops to Teachers

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This program operates under a grant from the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES). Use of this logo does not imply the endorsement of DANTES or the Department of Defense.



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Goal #3: Provide individualized counseling to assist TTT participants with meeting the educational and certification requirements to transition into a teaching career. (Weblinks are included in this section.)

Having an understanding that each participant has a unique background, education, training, and experience has led Arizona TTT to develop resources and processes to ensure each individual receives the best customer experience when utilizing their TTT benefit.

The [Arizona Troops to Teachers Resource Book](#) is an evolving booklet to answer common transition concerns about education, available teaching certificates, educator resume tips, and additional resources. The ability to take notes throughout the book makes for a useful tool while navigating the certification process. Once hard copies are exhausted interested individuals may also obtain a copy through ADE's Information Repository, www.azed.gov/teach.

Participant goals, education, training, and experience varies significantly from one individual to the next. Merging this data into a concise format with the use of the [Participant Certification Worksheet](#) (*internal use only*) allows for the review of all pertinent information when determining what certification has been met based on state requirements.

Ultimately, it is the goal of Arizona's TTT Coordinator to provide a clear plan and relevant certification applications via the [Participant Certification Recommendation Letter](#). This information laden letter indicates all eligible certifications, documents needed, and DD-214 job experience defined for ADE evaluators unfamiliar with military terminology.

Goal #4: Explore and implement innovative educational models to award academic credits for prior career experience/training or other relevant military training.

To meet the growing need for appropriately certified teachers in the classroom, the Arizona Legislature, Arizona State Board of Education, and the Arizona Department of Education have two additional certifications that broaden the ability for service members to obtain a standard teaching certificate. The Subject Matter Expert (SME) and Alternative Teaching Certificates allow for issuance based on their work experience, on the job training, and coursework. These additional certificates add to similar certificates for Career and Technical Education, which allows for individuals with specific skills to teach in their respective professions.

Goal #5: Address geographic areas with critical teacher shortages, especially in high-need schools (as defined in subsection (a) of such section 1154), in particular, the shortage of science, mathematics, special education, foreign language, or career or technical teachers in elementary schools or secondary schools.

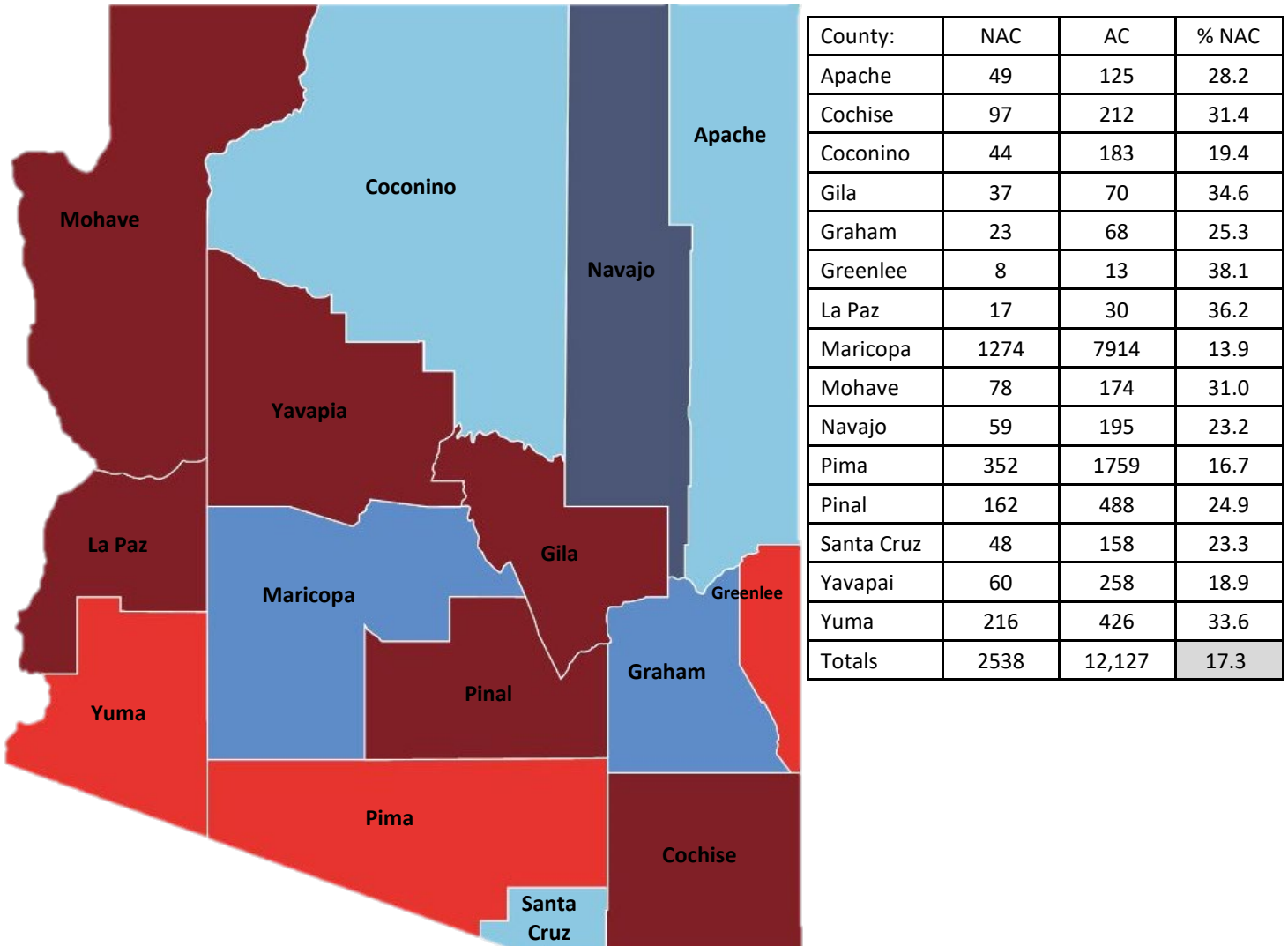
Arizona has a diverse population with educator shortages like those in other states; however, Arizona has chosen to be proactive by incorporating the TTT program into the Recruitment and Retention Team within the Arizona Department of Education (ADE). Arizona continues to work with LEAs, education organizations, and Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) to expand alternative educator certification opportunities. Working together to meet the need for educators in each geographic area can be addressed after reviewing counties with a high percentage of Not Appropriately Certified teachers (NAC), (see Table



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2). Currently, there several Local Education Agencies, and IHE's approved to offer classroom-based certification programs with programs beginning in the Fall of 2021.

Table 2 By County – Appropriately Certified (AC) vs. Not Appropriately Certified (NAC)



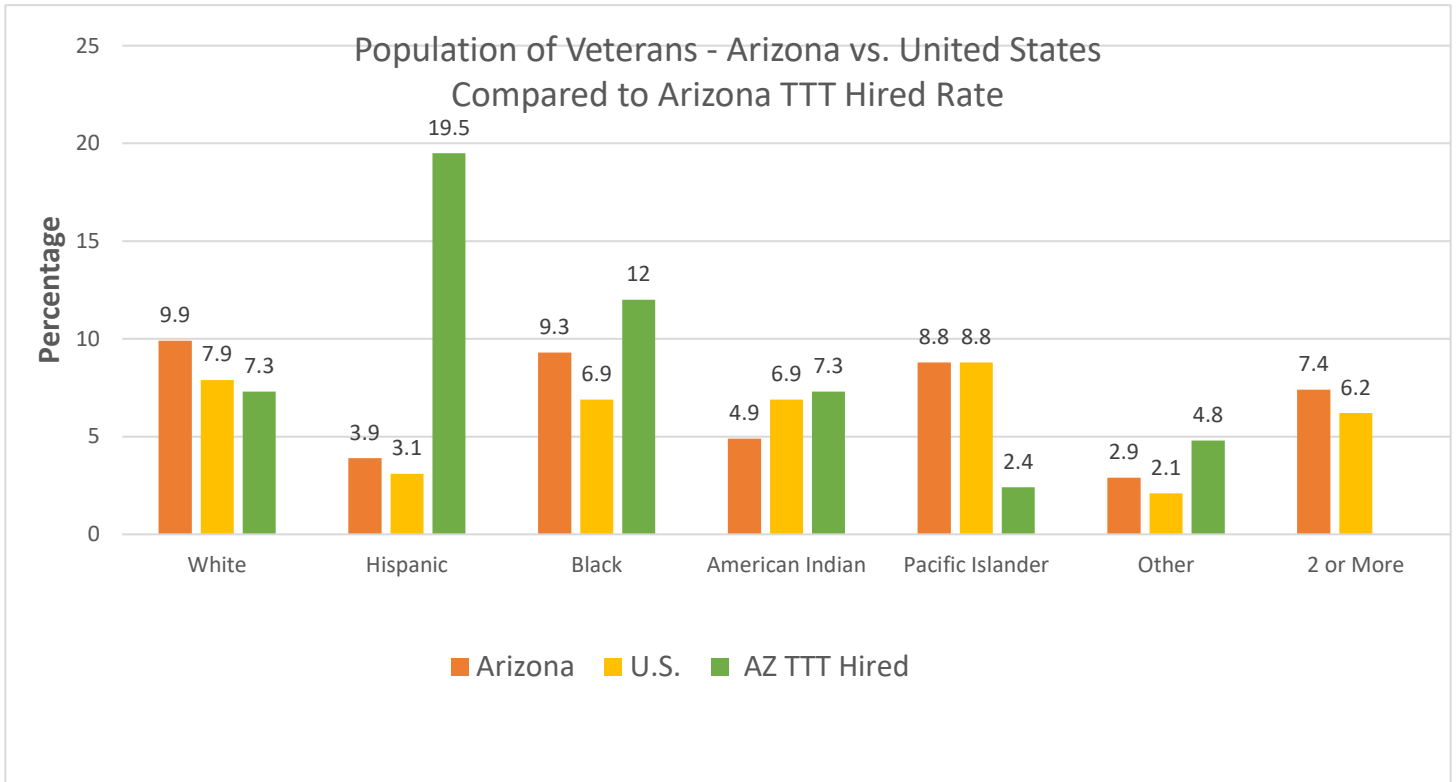


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Goal #6: Increase the number of veterans employed as teachers.

Fourteen school districts have set up direct connections with the TTT State Coordinator, creating a fast-track process to identify and promote TTT participants for hiring officials to consider. Arizona's employment success mirrors Arizona demographics and the need for diversity in the classroom (Graph 1). Partnerships with AZ@work and the recent promotion through 50strong, a Pat Tillman Foundation initiative, will lead to more employment opportunities in the future. The need for educators typically falls within a ten-month window (June to March). Individuals who substitute may not be adequately accounted for due to Arizona being a self-reporting state.

Graph 1





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References

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9. <https://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/8857-children-in-families-that-receive-public-assistance?loc=1&loct=2#detailed/2/2-53/false/871,870,573,869,36,133,35,16/any/17739,17740>
10. <https://azreportcards.azed.gov/state-reports>
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12. https://www.azfamily.com/news/arizona_schools/arizona-teacher-shortage-not-getting-better-survey-shows/article_124b0cba-340c-11ea-a4da-fbaad3e76059.html
13. <https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oessrcst.htm>
14. Less Annoying CRM database, May 15, 2019, to May 14, 2020. (Arizona's tracking program)

Links to Arizona TTT Forms:

[Arizona Troops to Teachers Resource Book](#)

[TTT Participant Certification Worksheet](#) (internal use only)

[TTT Participant Certification Recommendation Letter](#)