International Teachers Association Accreditation Program

(ITAAP)

Accreditation Program Guidebook

Raising
the bar for education,
through
teacher accreditation!
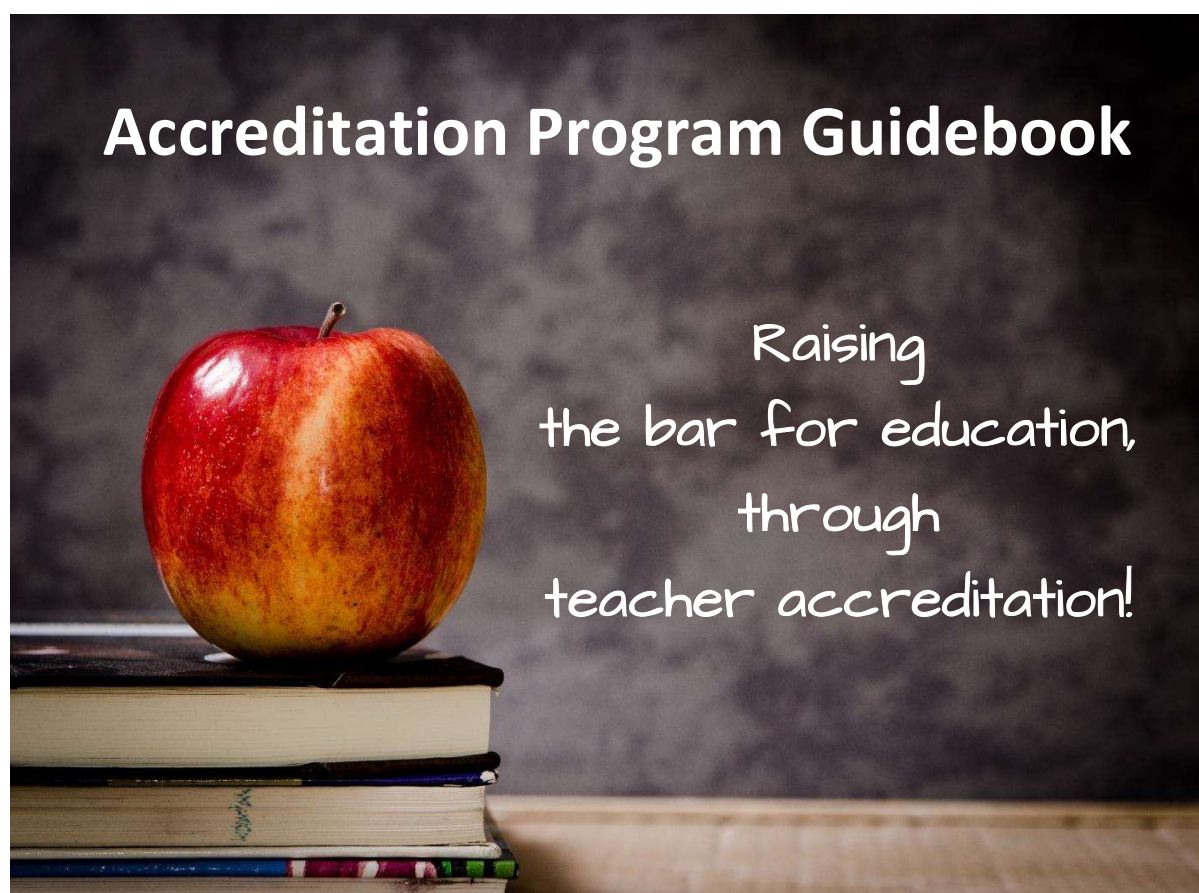
Daniel Lee Ostermiller II
ITA President
ITAAP Chairman

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ITA Accreditation Program

Raising the bar for education, through teacher accreditation!

Teachers are everywhere. We find them in academia, the private sector, government, clubs, organizations and neighborhoods. Instead of teacher, we may call them mentor, coach, guide or friend. None the less, these are people who have passed on wisdom, shown concern and provided care for us in one form or another.

But for a long time, teaching has mostly been about academia. Taking raw data and instructing students on how to manipulate and shape that data, especially in the fields of math, science, physics and English. There are rules on how to do this, and for years teachers have been educating students by simply explaining the rules, not teaching.

At the ITA, we ask a very simple question: "Are you a teacher?" If you simply want to be an academic educator, go to university and get a degree. If you want to be a more than that, start the ITA Accreditation Program to begin your self-guided journey towards becoming a mentor, a coach, a guide, a friend a teacher.

Historically, accreditation programs have focused on large scale financially solvent educational institutions. The accreditation process itself, traditionally focuses on high-level documentation of general processes and procedures having very little to do with ensuring quality for every student in every classroom. The ITA Accreditation Program is designed to focus on the teacher first.

The ITA Accreditation Program focuses on skills and qualities that no other accreditation service values. The ITA Teacher Accreditation Program is driven to challenge teachers to evaluate what is important to them, their students and how to provide the very best education possible.

ITA Accreditation Process

Self-evaluation is the most critical tool for teachers to reflect on their own knowledge, skills, abilities and to assess their own progress and development. Self-evaluation is also the primary tool for the ITA accreditation process however, it is not the sole means of determining teacher accreditation.

Self-evaluation is one component of the more comprehensive ITA assessment process. Other tools include peer review, observation, external assessment, student and parent input, standard academic tests, professional development measures and practical skills projects are used to provide a more objective and accurate view of a teacher's competency.

The steps for completing the ITA Accreditation process are:
1. Read the ITA Accreditation Program
2. Complete the "Teacher – Self-evaluation"
3. Complete the "Teacher – Understanding Students" evaluation
4. Secure any combination of two of the following evaluations
   a. Peer Evaluation
   b. Student Evaluation
   c. Parent Evaluation
5. Pass academic speaking test
6. Pass academic reading comprehension test
7. Pass academic writing test
8. Fulfill observation requirements
   a. Submit a 10-minute video clip of you teaching and interacting with students
   b. Schedule an ITA observation session for one class
9. Commit to professional development requirements
   a. 2-hour professional development commitment for the current year and submission of completion documentation
   b. Weakness Assessment and Action Planning (WAAP)
10. Complete practical skills project

The ITA accreditation process allows teachers to reflect on their own teaching practices and use external sources to identify areas where they may need to improve. This can help teachers to continuously grow and develop their skills, which can ultimately lead to more successful learning outcomes for their students.

The ITA accreditation process also helps teachers to set goals and objectives for their own professional development. By regularly reviewing and assessing their own performance, teachers can identify areas where they would like to improve and can take steps to do so, such as by seeking additional training or professional development opportunities.

Overall, the ITA accreditation process is a tool that can help teachers to continuously improve their skills and practices, leading to better outcomes for their students and a more fulfilling and rewarding career.

The ITA accreditation fee is $49 for the first year of accreditation and $10 each subsequent year. This fee covers costs associated with administering the accreditation process, such as the development and maintenance of the accreditation standards, the evaluation and review of applications, and the ongoing support and professional development provided to accredited individuals.

ITA also encourages your school's team of teachers to gain accreditation together. Having a staff of accredited teachers helps promote a culture of continuous learning and professional development within the school. Sharing your goals, experiences, beliefs, feelings and commitments builds a support network within the school and aids in teachers being able to communicate to one another and ask for help or guidance throughout the accreditation process and academic school year. This fosters a sense of shared purpose and commitment to excellence, which can ultimately benefit both the teachers and the students. Dependent on the size of the group, first-year fees can be discounted up to 20%.

The ITA accreditation is valid for 1 year.

ITA Accreditation Awards Board

The ITA Accreditation Awards Board evaluates each teacher against the ITA set of standards to determine if the applicant is in compliance with ITA standards. If so, accreditation will be granted to the applicant. If not, accreditation will not be granted and the board will inform the applicant of the necessary corrections prior to resubmitting their application.

The ITA board assigns a score to every applicant. The scoring is calculated using a 5-star rating process.

5-Star Rating:

★ 5-Star – Demonstrates an exceptional understanding of all ITA standards with no mandatory improvement.

★ 4-Star – Demonstrates a strong understanding of all ITA standards with minimal opportunities for improvement.

★ 3-Star – Demonstrates an acceptable understanding of the majority of ITA standards with several opportunities for improvement.

★ 2-Star – Demonstrates a modest understanding of some ITA standards with multiple opportunities for improvement.

★ 1-Star – Demonstrates a deficient understanding of ITA standards with numerous opportunities for improvement and skills improvement.

If an applicant is not in compliance and receives a 1-star rating, they will not be granted accreditation. The applicant will have 30 days to improve their skill set and understanding of ITA standards before resubmitting their application.

ITA Teacher Accreditation Student Focus

The primary focus of the ITA accreditation program begins with the teacher. The teacher acts a catalyst in every relationship throughout the school organization. The teacher is the primary contact for meaningful interactions with students, parents, administrators, peers and the ITA. The primary relationship focused on by the ITA accreditation program is the teacher-student relationship and the ITA's ability to help teachers better understand and develop tangible skills in building these relationships.

The teacher-student relationship is the most valued for a number of reasons. A positive relationship between a teacher and student can foster a sense of trust and respect, which can create a more positive and engaging learning environment. When students feel comfortable and supported by their teacher, they feel motivated and invested in their learning.

A positive teacher-student relationship helps improve academic performance. Students who feel connected to their teacher attend class regularly, complete assignments, and seek help when needed. This helps to ensure that students are able to keep up with their coursework and achieve academic success.

A positive teacher-student relationship supports the social and emotional development of students. When students feel connected to their teacher, they feel supported and valued, which can help to boost their self-esteem and confidence. Overall, the teacher-student is the most important relationship for the success and well-being of students.

ITA Accreditation

The process of becoming an ITA accredited teacher involves a thorough evaluation and recognition of one's own skills, knowledge, and performance as an educator.

ITA accreditation ensures that teachers have met certain standards of performance, knowledge and competency demonstrating a thorough understanding of the subject matter and the ability to effectively impart that knowledge to their students.

ITA accreditation also affords teachers the opportunity to engage in professional development activities and reflect on their teaching practices. Helping teachers identify areas for improvement to enhance their skills and knowledge, which ultimately leads to better overall teaching performance.

ITA accreditation enhances a teacher's credibility and legitimacy in the profession. It demonstrates a commitment to the teaching profession and a willingness to engage in ongoing professional development. It also ensures teachers will be recognized and rewarded by their school serving as a source of pride and motivation for others.

Becoming an ITA accredited teacher is a valuable investment in your professional growth and development. Many schools and districts prefer to hire and promote teachers who are accredited, as it demonstrates a commitment to the profession and a willingness to go above and beyond in terms of professional development.

ITA Accreditation Benefits

1. Improved teaching skills and knowledge: Involves engaging in professional development activities and reflecting on one's teaching practices.

2. Recognition and reward: Teachers are recognized and rewarded by their school and are a source of pride.

3. Professional growth and advancement: Evaluate your weaknesses and challenge yourself to overcome them, become a better teacher and prepare yourself for leadership roles.

4. Enhanced credibility and legitimacy: Increase your value to your students and school by demonstrating a commitment towards improving your knowledge and skill sets.

5. Employment opportunities: Schools prefer to hire, promote and compensate teachers who are accredited, as it demonstrates a commitment to the profession and a willingness to go above and beyond in terms of professional development.

ITA Accreditation Goals

ITA considered several goals when designing a teacher accreditation program, including:

1. Identifying areas for improvement: Identify specific areas where teachers can improve their practice, such as in the use of instructional strategies or classroom management techniques.

2. Recognizing excellence in teaching: Recognize and reward excellence in teaching by acknowledging teachers who are particularly effective at engaging and motivating their students or who have made significant contributions to their school or district.

3. Supporting professional development: Supporting professional development of teachers by providing feedback and recommendations for improvement and offering resources and support for growth.

4. Improving student learning: Ultimately, the primary goal of the ITA accreditation program is to improve student learning by ensuring that teachers have the skills and knowledge necessary to be effective in their roles.

How ITA Accredits

There are multiple ways to accredit a teacher.

1. Self-evaluation: Allows individuals to reflect on their own knowledge, skills, abilities and to assess their own progress and development. Teachers identify areas where they need improvement and recognize their strengths and accomplishments. It aids teachers in setting goals and objectives for their own professional development.

2. Observation: Observing to determine how teachers plan and deliver lessons, how they engage and motivate students and how they manage the classroom.

3. Student feedback: Includes surveying students about their experiences in the teacher's classroom and asking for specific examples of the teacher's strengths and areas for improvement.

4. Professional development: Top performing teachers are often committed to continuous learning and improvement. They may participate in professional development opportunities to stay current on best practices and to develop new skills.

5. Colleague feedback: Seeking feedback from other teachers and leaders in the school to build a more complete picture of a teacher's effectiveness.

6. Parent feedback: Parents can provide valuable insights into how a teacher is engaging and supporting their child's learning.

7. Practical skills assessment: Assessing a teacher's ability to imagine, organize, create and document a project that engages multiple skill sets can demonstrate a teacher ability to lead and follow through.

It is important to ensure the accreditation program is fair, unbiased, and focused on supporting the teacher's professional development and growth. It should be ongoing with regular opportunities for teachers to reflect on their practices and seek feedback and support.

ITA Accreditation Skills

There are skills that ITA accredited teachers have to demonstrate as part of the accreditation program. There are also skills that teachers should correct as part of the ITA accreditation program.

ITA Demonstrative Skills:

1. Leadership: Guide, motivate and inspire students, as well as other teachers and staff members.
2. Ownership: Identify opportunities for improvement and make change happen through organization, management and solution implementation to better enable the school in providing the best possible education.
3. Vision: Demonstrate a clear vision for their classroom and for their students' education, and is able to communicate this vision effectively to others.
4. Understanding: Communicate consistently and effectively with students, parents, and other teachers, and is able to build positive relationships with all stakeholders.
5. Empowerment: Empower students to take an active role in their own learning and to take responsibility for their own education.
6. High expectations: Setting high expectations for their students and helps them to achieve their full potential.
7. Professionalism: Committed to continuous learning and professional development, and models that for their students.
8. Collaboration: Ability to work effectively as part of a team, and is able to collaborate with other teachers and staff members to improve student learning.
9. Adaptability: Ability to adapt to new situations, ideas, and challenges and is able to lead their students in a constantly changing educational environment.
10. Fairness and Equity: Ability to treat all students fairly and equitably, regardless of their background, and to create a classroom that is inclusive and welcoming to all students.

11. Problem-solving: Identify and analyze problems, and then develop and implement effective solutions.
12. Analytical thinking: Break down complex information or situations into smaller parts in order to better understand them.
13. Creative thinking: Come up with new and innovative ideas, and to think outside the box.
14. Communication: Clearly and effectively convey information and ideas, both verbally and in writing.
15. Active listening: Fully and attentively listen to others in order to understand their perspectives.
16. Emotional intelligence: Understand and manage one's own emotions, as well as the emotions of others.
17. Flexibility: Being open to new ideas and perspectives, and being able to adapt to change.
18. Patience: Being able to stay calm and composed in challenging situations, not rushing to judgement and provide support and guidance as needed.
19. Curiosity: Having a desire to learn and discover new things, and not be satisfied with surface level understanding.
20. Self-reflection: Ability to reflect and evaluate one's own actions, thoughts and behaviors to identify areas for growth and improvement.
21. Knowledgeable: Deep understanding of their subject matter and the ability to explain concepts in a way that is clear and easy for students to understand.
22. Engaging: Capture and maintain the attention of their students and makes learning enjoyable and interactive.
23. Organized: Plan and deliver lessons in a clear and organized manner, making it easier for students to follow along and learn.
24. Supportive: Support all students, peers, staff and willing to go the extra mile to help them succeed.

ITA Correctable Qualities:

1. Unorganized: Disorganized and unprepared can create a chaotic and stressful learning environment for students.
2. Disengaged: Disinterested or disengaged in their own teaching can struggle to hold the attention of their students and may not be as effective at helping them learn.
3. Unsupportive: Unsupportive or critical of their students, peers and staff and creates a negative and demoralizing learning environment.
4. Inflexible: Unwilling to adapt to the needs and learning styles of their students may struggle to engage and support all learners.
5. Unprofessional: Lacking professionalism, such as being consistently late or unprepared, can create a chaotic and disrespectful learning environment.

ITA Accreditation and Student Development

To become ITA accredited, a teacher must understand student development issues for a number of reasons. Understanding student development allows a teacher to create an optimal learning environment for their students. By understanding the various stages of student development, teachers can better tailor their teaching methods to the needs and abilities of their students.

For example, an ITA accredited teacher understands that students in the early childhood years are particularly receptive to new experiences and learning, so they create a classroom environment that is rich in experiential and hands-on learning opportunities. This helps support the development of the student's brains and helps them learn and retain new information more effectively.

An ITA accredited teacher understands and supports the social and emotional development of their students. By recognizing the importance of student's social and emotional development and creating a classroom culture that is supportive and nurturing in which students feel safe and secure. Overall, fostering a positive and engaging learning environment for all students.

Understanding student development is critical for ITA accredited teachers to create an optimal learning environment for their students and to support their overall development. By recognizing the unique needs and abilities of their students at different stages of development, teachers create a classroom that is supportive, nurturing, and engaging, helping all students reach their full potential.

There are several important facts about student development that ITA accredited teachers are aware of and work to address in their classrooms:

1. Students develop at different rates: It is important to remember that students do not all develop at the same rate. Some students may be more advanced in certain areas, while others may be slower to develop. As an ITA accredited teacher, it's important to recognize and accommodate for these differences.

2. Students are active learners: Students learn best through hands-on, experiential activities. ITA accredited teachers know that providing opportunities for students to engage in activities that allow them to explore, manipulate, and create will help them learn and retain new information.

3. Student's brains are still developing: Student's brains are still developing and are particularly receptive to new experiences and learning during the early years. As an ITA accredited teacher, you can help support student's brain development by providing a rich and stimulating learning environment.

4. Student's social and emotional development is important: Student's social and emotional development is just as important as their cognitive development. ITA accredited teachers encourage their students to express their feelings, teaching them how to problem-solve, and help them develop positive relationships with their peers helping them grow and develop emotionally.

5. Students learn through play: Play is an important part of student's development and learning. An ITA accredited teacher understands that providing students with a variety of play materials and opportunities for play-based learning helps support their overall development.

ITA accredited teachers are aware of the challenges some students face in their education. Some common educational challenges faced by students include:

1. Learning difficulties: Some students may have learning difficulties, such as dyslexia, ADHD, or processing disorders, which can make it challenging for them to learn and retain new information.

2. Disengagement: Some students may struggle to stay engaged in their learning, which can make it difficult for them to make progress and achieve academic success.

3. Social and emotional challenges: Some students may also face social and emotional challenges, such as difficulty making friends, managing their emotions, or dealing with stress, which can impact their ability to learn and succeed in school.

4. Lack of access to resources: Some students from disadvantaged backgrounds may face challenges due to a lack of access to resources, such as books, technology, or supportive learning environments.

5. Limited English proficiency: Students who are learning English as a second language may face challenges due to language barriers.

By understanding the specific challenges that a student is facing, ITA accredited teachers can work to provide targeted support and resources to help them overcome these challenges and achieve academic success.

ITA Accreditation Factors

There are many factors to consider when determining how a teacher is performing. Some key factors to consider include:

1. Student learning: one of the most important indicators of a teacher's effectiveness is the extent to which their students are learning and making progress. This can be assessed through a variety of means, such as formal assessments, observations of student work, and student feedback.

2. Instructional practices: Use a variety of instructional strategies and techniques to engage and support student learning and be able to adapt their approaches to meet the needs of diverse learners.

3. Classroom management: Create a positive, supportive learning environment in their classrooms, and effectively manage behavior and maintain order.

4. Professionalism: Exhibit professional behaviors, such as being prepared for class, being punctual, and maintaining appropriate boundaries with students.

5. Communication: Effectively communicate with students, parents, peers, share information, see problems through to completion and provide feedback in a clear and constructive manner.

It is important to recognize that no teacher is perfect, and that all teachers have areas where they can improve. However, by considering these factors and gathering feedback from multiple sources, it is possible to get a sense of a teacher's effectiveness and to identify areas for improvement.

ITA Accreditation Tools

It is important for ITA accredited teachers to reflect on their practices and to be proactive in seeking out opportunities for growth and development. A self-assessment document like this can be a helpful tool for teachers to identify their strengths and areas for improvement, and to plan for professional development that will support their growth and development as educators.

There are many tools that an ITA accredited teacher can use to enhance their teaching and support student learning. Some examples include:

1. Technology: Use technology in their classrooms to support student learning, such as by using educational software, online resources, or interactive whiteboards.
2. Teaching aids: Teaching aids such as manipulatives, models, or visual aids can be helpful for helping students to understand concepts and ideas.
3. Assessments: Use a variety of assessments, such as quizzes, tests, and projects, to evaluate student learning and identify areas for improvement.
4. Differentiated instruction: Use strategies such as flexible grouping and tiered assignments to meet the needs of diverse learners and support all students in their learning.
5. Collaborative learning: Use collaborative learning strategies, such as group projects or peer feedback, to support student learning and encourage teamwork and problem-solving.
6. Classroom management strategies: Use a variety of strategies to manage their classrooms effectively, such as setting clear expectations, using positive reinforcement, and addressing misbehavior in a fair and consistent manner.

ITA Accreditation Feedback

Almost anyone involved in the education supply chain can provide valuable feedback to ITA accredited teachers about their experiences with the educational system. Some types of feedback that ITA accredited teachers should ask to receive or share include:

1. Positive feedback: Share positive feedback about the ITA accredited teacher's strengths and things that are going well in the classroom. Ask others to include specific examples of the teacher's engaging lessons, use of effective teaching strategies, or support for students' needs.

2. Concerns or areas for improvement: Share concerns or areas for improvement that have been observed in the classroom. This might include things like difficulty understanding the material, difficulty staying focused, or challenges with classroom management.

3. Suggestions for support: Offer suggestions for ways that the ITA accredited teacher can better support student learning, such as providing additional resources or accommodations, or offering extra help outside of class.

4. Questions or requests for information: Anyone who may have questions about a student's progress or a teacher's expectations and can use feedback as an opportunity to request additional information or clarification.

It is important to include all stakeholders in the feedback process, both inside and outside of the school as it is the parents and teachers that primarily shape a student's future. It can be helpful to ask for, or offer suggestions for ways to improve in the classroom and at home, to help create and maintain a positive and constructive classroom.

Feedback should also remain fair and unbiased to ensure it is used to support colleague's professional development and growth, rather than as a means of criticizing or judging others performance.