



மினசோட்டாத் தமிழ்ப்பள்ளி MNTS Tamil School



MNTS Tamil School Professional Development Document

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Professional Development Overview:

MNTS Tamil School is committed to providing required resources, training, and enablement programs to its teaching and administrative staff. This commitment extends to both paid staff and volunteers. These programs are widely distributed throughout the school year. The training and enablement plan has been devised inline to the professional development objectives and future-facing road map the school has developed. These programs are continuously enhanced to meet changing and individualized learning needs and interests of the students.

Professional Development Objective:

MNTS Tamil School strongly believes that learning is a continuous process. The school is committed to providing relevant resources and training to its staff. Any Parent of MNTS Tamil School can volunteer to be a compensated teacher. Interested Parents can approach the school board with the following information.

1. Formal qualifications related to being a Teacher IF ANY
2. Educational Qualification along with Tamil Language years of study in India, Sri Lanka, Singapore, or Malaysia (Ex.: Kindergarten to 12th standard or Kindergarten to UG college or Kindergarten to PG College etc.)

The qualifications are reviewed by the executive committee, and individuals are assigned to appropriate grade level roles. The professional development and learning initiatives cover various knowledge areas, including language proficiency, Instruction methodology, assessment, curriculum, learning management system and technology infrastructure. Professional development can be administered through various modes, academic graduation, professional training, certification, induction, knowledge sharing, shadowing, and peer collaboration. Similar to formal learnings, informal learning also significantly contributes towards these enablement goals.

Below is a high-level list of professional development initiatives that the school has facilitated. The school's professional development initiatives are always evolving to accommodate the ever-changing learning needs. Some initiatives currently in the pipeline are discussed in detail below.

1. BA Tamilology:

MNTS Tamil School has established a conducive Platform for graduating Tamil BA through TVA (Tamil Virtual Academy – Chennai INDIA). 22 Teachers have leveraged this virtual learning platform and graduated thus far through Tanjore Tamil University. The school



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continues to host campaigns and offer necessary support for additional teachers to graduate. Below is the list of teachers who have graduated through this effort.

1. Sivanandam Mariyappan
2. Karthikayani Sivanandam
3. Shobha Esswaran
4. Rajeshwari Kamaraj
5. Rosalin Benjamin
6. Hanibal Benjamín
7. Sundaramoorthy Adhiyagavel
8. Ravikumar Shanmugam
9. Saravanakumaran Kasilingam
10. Madhu Venkatarajan
11. Prasanna Gajavarathan
12. Lakshmi Subramaniyan
13. Balamugan Ramasamy
14. Rohini Balamurugan
15. Senthikumar Kaliyaperumal
16. Rani Mercy Sebastin
17. Sivakumar Gansean
18. Sanjay Govindasamy
19. Umayal Meenakshisundaram



மினசோட்டாத் தமிழ்ப்பள்ளி MNTS Tamil School



Diploma Certificate

தமிழ்ப் பல்கலைக்கழகம், தஞ்சாவூர்
Tamil University, Thanjavur

பதிவு எண்: [REDACTED] வரிசை எண்: 1701189
Reg.No. SI.No.

தமிழ்ப் பல்கலைக்கழக ஆட்சிக்குழுவின் ஒப்புதலுடன் தமிழ் இணையக் கல்விக்கழகம், சென்னை, டிசம்பர் 2016 இங்கிலிஷ் தமிழியல் பட்டயத்திற்காக நடத்திய தேர்வில் [REDACTED] என்பவர் முதல் வகுப்பில் சிறப்பு நிலையுடன் தேர்ச்சி பெற்றார் என்று தக்க தேர்வாளர்கள் சான்றிதழ் அளவுக்குத் தமிழ்ப் பல்கலைக்கழகம் இலச்சினையுடன் பட்டயம் வழங்குகிறது.

The Syndicate of the Tamil University hereby makes it known that [REDACTED] has been admitted to the Diploma (Tamilology), having been certified by duly appointed examiners to be qualified to receive the same at the examination held in December 2016, conducted by the Tamil Virtual Academy, Chennai, with the approval of the Syndicate of this University, and placed in First class with Distinction.

Given under the seal of the University

Thanjavur - 613 005
Tamilnadu, India

நாள் Dated 18 JUL 2017

பதிவாளர் Registrar

துணைவேந்தர் Vice Chancellor

Higher Diploma Certificate

தமிழ்ப் பல்கலைக்கழகம், தஞ்சாவூர்
Tamil University, Thanjavur

பதிவு எண்: [REDACTED] வரிசை எண்: 1701244
Reg.No. SI.No.

தமிழ்ப் பல்கலைக்கழக ஆட்சிக்குழுவின் ஒப்புதலுடன் தமிழ் இணையக் கல்விக்கழகம், சென்னை, ஜூன் 2017 இங்கிலிஷ் தமிழியல் மேற்பட்டயத்திற்காக நடத்திய தேர்வில் [REDACTED] என்பவர் முதல் வகுப்பில் சிறப்பு நிலையுடன் தேர்ச்சி பெற்றார் என்று தக்க தேர்வாளர்கள் சான்றிதழ் அளவுக்குத் தமிழ்ப் பல்கலைக்கழகம் இலச்சினையுடன் மேற்பட்டயம் வழங்குகிறது.

The Syndicate of the Tamil University hereby makes it known that [REDACTED] has been admitted to the Higher Diploma (Tamilology), having been certified by duly appointed examiners to be qualified to receive the same at the examination held in June 2017, conducted by the Tamil Virtual Academy, Chennai, with the approval of the Syndicate of this University, and placed in First class with Distinction.

Given under the seal of the University

Thanjavur - 613 005
Tamilnadu, India

நாள் Dated 13 FEB 2018

பதிவாளர் Registrar

துணைவேந்தர் Vice Chancellor

2. Instructional Methodology Training:

Dr Anuradha Gopalakrishnan is a language researcher and educator with over fifteen years of experience teaching multiple languages including German, English, and Tamil. Her research interests lie in the intersection of teacher education and multilingual pedagogies. Her recent work has focused on working with heritage language teachers, particularly with those teaching Less commonly taught languages. She completed her PhD in second language education at the University of Minnesota.

With the school's commitment to the continuous improvement of the professional development space, MNTS Tamil school has facilitated a series of workshops to enhance our teacher's understanding of the language learning, instruction, and assessment. These are one-of-a-kind interactive sessions of synchronous training over a span of 6 weeks. 16 New Teachers benefited from these sessions where Instructional Methodologies and assessment topics were presented in length with relevant Tamil examples. The workshop is intuitively designed to cover various topics under 6 different sessions as detailed below.



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#	Date	Session heading	Topic Description
1	12/12/2021	Performance-Based Assessment	● Rationale for performance-based assessment ● Components of IPA ● Aligning grading criteria with learning objective
2	12/19/2021	Assessing Presentational Writing	● Grading criteria for productive skills ● Hands-on grading with Tamil sample texts
3	1/9/2022	Presentational Writing across Proficiency Levels	● Tamil language markers for every proficiency level ● Differences in students' performance across levels
4	1/30/2022	Assessing Interpersonal Mode	● Assessment criteria for Interpersonal Mode ● Hands-on grading with Tamil sample texts
5	2/13/2022	Presentational Speaking across Proficiency Level	● Grading Speaking in Interpersonal texts ● Characteristics and challenges of Presentational Speaking ● Grading Presentational Speaking texts
6	3/12/2022	Assessing Interpretive Mode	● Assessment structure for Interpretive Reading and Listening

the ongoing effort towards this is focused on developing asynchronous learning content for Teachers to review over a span of 3 weeks. This content will be augmented with 6 hours of training conducted by Dr Anuradha targeting 20-25 teachers.



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3. Interpretive Reading Strategy:

On Sep 22, 2022, Dr Anuradha Gopalakrishnan presented a 75 Minute session. This presentation covered Interpretive Reading including Characteristics, Instructional Method, reading strategies and Task Design-Comprehension.

4. OPI (Oral Proficiency Interview) Workshop

The next step is to establish an in-house ACTFL certified assessor for speaking assessment. This initiative aims to develop and administer the National standardized assessments for various proficiency levels by the school. Speaking and writing assessments are always rated by certified assessors for each language. As an initial step, 10 of our teachers received the assessor certification for the Tamil language in speaking proficiency. During Aug-Oct 2022, 10 Teachers attended 6 Weeks OPI Workshop facilitated by ACTFL. The Participants were assessed higher proficiency levels. Certification for writing certification will be pursued subsequently. Below is the list of teachers who have completed the OPI Workshop:

Oral Proficiency Interview Workshop	
Beneficiaries	10 teachers
Cost	\$4250

1. Sivanandam Mariyappan
2. Hanibal Benjamín
3. Saravanakumaran Kasilingam
4. Prasanna Gajavarathan
5. Balamurugan Ramasamy
6. Rohini Balamurugan
7. Sanjay Govindasamy
8. Selvarani Parameswaran
9. Jeyashree Narasimhan
10. Anuradha Gopalakrishnan



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5. OPI (Oral Proficiency Interview) Certification:

These workshop attendees undertake a series of learning courses as a part of continuous education efforts. Also, efforts are underway to support participants throughout the journey of formal Certification. This effort is expected to run from Oct 2022 to Sep 2023 to enable participants to become certified assessors in speaking proficiency. This certification process involves various phases and costs about \$450 per teacher.

Oral Proficiency Interview Certification

Beneficiaries	10 teachers
Cost	\$4500

6. LMS Grading Training:

On Nov 10, 2022, Sivanandam Mariyappan & Jayshree presented a 120 Minute session. This session served as a mandatory Induction course for all teachers providing debriefing on LMS Grading for all LSRW Skills.



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7. Interactions with Tamil Scholars:

For more than a decade MNTS Tamil School has maintained connections with a few Tamil Scholars, professors and experts. The founder and course director of MNTS Tamil School, Mr Sivanandam Mariyappan, has been actively participating in various worldwide forums for Tamil education and syllabus.

Pollachi Nasan Ayya (born September 15, 1952) has been involved in the development of Tamil on the Internet since 1985. In addition to running a Thai Thamizh Palli (Primary Tamil School) since 1999, he has managed the <http://www.thamizham.net> website to host various components of Tamil since 2003. He has curated more than 50,000 Tamil related files from magazines and texts around the world and organized those in the form of image files. Additionally, he has created 32 cards for global readers to easily understand Tamil, translated it into 14 different world languages and made them available on the internet. To enable the students to easily read and understand Thirukkural, he has authored 303 simplified kuRaLs (Couplets). In addition to invite him as a chief guest for the Tamil Carnival event, the Tamil school has organized an interactive session with Mr. Nasan Ayya for the teachers to understand and adopt the tools and learn instructional best practices from him.

8. In person Professional Development session by Kara Parker:

Mrs. Kara Parker is a World Language consultant, curriculum writer, and blogger with Creative Language Class. She is National Board certified and has taught Spanish and ESL for 13 years in private, public, and alternative schools in Louisville, KY. She was also a part of JCPS district cohort's shift toward proficiency. Since 2015, Kara has been presenting professional development at districts and conferences across the United States as well as several countries in Asia. She is enthusiastic about proficiency-based instruction inspired by culture to positively impact students' language learning experiences. Kara is from Indiana, but currently lives in Minneapolis, MN.

On Sept 8th, 2019, MNTS Tamil School has organized hands-on training for the teachers with Ms. Kara Parker. These 3 hours of workshop conducted at Hopkins West Junior High school, has been intuitively designed for the professional development of the teachers. About 45 teachers attended and this session primarily focused on 'Student Psychology' covered various topics including Teaching Methods, Interactive classes, Engaging students, Handling students of different age groups, Cultural differences, Implementing Stations for Proficiency, and vocabulary/grammar in a communicative context.



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9. IPA – Assessment Training with Tamil Focus by Megan Budke:

Mrs. Megan Budke is a Wayzata School District language teacher and Vice President of MCTLC (MN Chapter of ACTFL). She is an Immersion, Indigenous, and World Language Coordinator.

She possesses a strong track record of improving world language programs with impactful curriculum and assessment practices and extensive experience working with and leading a variety of teams, resolving conflicts in a timely, professional manner. On September 9th, 2018, MNTS Tamil school teachers has gone through a day long IPA assessment training with focus on Tamil language facilitated by Mrs. Megan Budke. Based on this training, Tamil teachers implemented IPA assessment by end of the 2018-19 academic year. For the consecutive 3 years following this, a new set of teachers have attended IPA assessment creation and rating training which has been administered by MDE as in-person training. This training has helped the school in creating a strong pool of resources who can help in creating and refining the syllabus and assessments.

IPA Assessment Training

Beneficiaries	25 teachers
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CERTIFICATE OF CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDITS

This certificate recognizes attendance at the professional development session

MNTS Tamil School – Rating Student Performance



Presenter: Megan Budke, World Language Consultant

September 9, 2018

9am-3pm

6 hours of Continuing Education Credits

CEU Categories: Accommodation, Modification, and Adaptation of Curriculum, Materials and Instruction

PARTICIPANT NAME

Megan Budke

PRESENTER SIGNATURE

PARTICIPANT SIGNATURE



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10. Interrater Reliability Training - MDE:

Minnesota department of Education (MDE) facilitated the “Interrater Reliability Training” on March 19th, 2022, through zoom online meeting. Mindy Lindgren, OPI & AAPPL Rater since 2012, AAPPL Development Item Writer, Middle School Spanish Teacher in Ashland-Oregon facilitated this training. Ayumi Stockman, Minnesota Department of Education was administering this training. This training designed with the objective of building reliable raters had covered the topics under 3 topics; 1. Understanding Norming, 2. Reviewing the rating criteria and 3. Rating language samples.

Interrater Reliability Training

Beneficiaries	4 teachers
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11. MDE –Training on Assessment:

Mrs. Ursula Lentz is the World Language and English Learner Specialist associated. She joined CARLA's Assessment Team in 1996 to develop a reading assessment for German and offered pivotal contribution in building, the Intermediate-Low and Intermediate-Mid/High MLPA (Minnesota Language Proficiency Assessments), the

MDE Training on Assessment

Beneficiaries	7 teachers
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Virtual Assessment Center, the Developing Speaking and Writing Tasks for Second Language Assessment: A Miniguide for Assessment Development.

She has extensive experience teaching at all levels at Minneapolis Community and Technical College, Lutheran High School, University of Minnesota, Germanic American Institute, community education for middle school students for Mahtomedi schools, elementary exploratory classes at John Ireland School, Hopkins and St. Jude of the Lake, Mahtomedi, MN. Ursula's assessment experience outside of CARLA includes item writing for ESL Assessments for SLTI (Second Language Testing Inc.).

On March 4th, 2017, MNTS Tamil School organized “Development of assessments for languages” training session facilitated by Mrs. Ursula Lentz and covered following agenda items in detail.

- Explore the ACTFL proficiency guidelines.
- Understand proficiency levels required for world language seals & certificates.
- Leverage a test framework to start developing the assessments.

12. Integrated Performance Assessment training by MDE & MCTLs:

MDE and MCTLc have jointly hosted a few IPA (Integrated Performance Assessment) training sessions. These training courses are designed to be executed on 4 Saturdays spanning over a couple of months with a total of 20 contact hours per participant. About 40 teachers benefited from this training between 2016 and 2018. MDE (Minnesota Department of Education) has been able to again fund the assessment training.

IPA Training by MDE/MCTLc	
Beneficiaries	40 teachers
Cost	\$150 / Participant

13. Bilingual Assessment Creation for all proficiency levels in Tamil – MDE & ACTFL:

MDE (Minnesota Department of Education) has been able to again fund the assessment and related workshop, as an effort towards building the assessments and preparing for 2019 assessment administration. Ursula Lentz, the World Language and English Learner Specialist spearheaded this effort. This effort has been taken up for various heritage languages like Hmong, Somali and Tamil at the same time frame. All these language communities worked closely with MDE to convert the Bilingual assessment tasks given in English into their languages. Above training on assessment has created the foundation for the MNTS

Assessment creation – All levels	
Beneficiaries	7 teachers



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Tamil School teachers to help build Bilingual assessments for Tamil on all 4 language skills. This is the first ever attempt in all the United States for the Tamil language.

MDE staff has done a few rounds of reviews and refinements of the English version for all levels. During July/August 2018, MNTS Tamil School teachers have spent significant effort in converting the assessments and the tasks from English into Tamil. This is not a mere translation but has to be tinkered at for it to be consistently understood by the learners. MNTS teachers worked with ACTFL and MDE for the assessment creation (covering all 4 skills first time in US) for Tamil. Below is the list of teachers who have participated in the workshop and contributed immensely to creating the assessments.

1. Rajeshwari Kamaraj
2. Shobha Eswaran
3. Karthikayani Sivanandam
4. Kavitha Saravanan
5. Umayal Meenakshisundaram
6. Abirami Nagappan
7. Prasanna Gajavarathan

14. Creating of national standard for Tamil – MNTS Tamil Teachers:

MNTS Tamil school teachers invest their time and knowledge in continuously improving Tamil language education opportunities and enabling as many students as possible from all over the US to attain maximum possible language credits. After 4.5 years between 2018 and 2022, combined 5000+ hours of effort by ATTA (American Tamil Teachers Association), the first ever standards for learning Tamil as second/foreign language have been developed and eventually got approved by July 2022. Tamil has become the 17'th language to have an approved national standard by ACTFL (American Council for Teaching Foreign Language). National Tamil Standards has been published now in ACTFL website and anyone can get their own eBook at ACTFL website

<https://my.actfl.org/portal/ItemDetail?iProductCode=WRSE-TAM-E>.

Standards are only guidelines, and this 100-page document details out proficiency levels for Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing, along with 3 modes of communication as interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational. The scenarios were explained using 5 C's Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons and Communities based on can-do statements by NCSSFL (National Council of State Supervisors for Languages) <https://ncssfl.org/linguafolio2020/2017-can-do-statements/>. All 50 US states have bilingual seal legislation now, assessments for the world languages are based on ACTFL Proficiency levels ranging from Intermediate Low/Mid/High and Advanced Low. Preparing the students for bilingual assessment takes years on LSRW skills and the national standards for Tamil



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provide a road map and guidelines for each Tamil teacher, parent, student, and Tamil school in the US.

Also this first ever foreign/second language learning standards for Tamil is readily mapped to CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages)

https://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/reports/Assigning_CEFR_Ratings_To_ACTFL_Assessments.pdf. This will provide guidelines to learn Tamil as a second language across North America, Europe and beyond.

American Tamil Teachers Association has been formed with many Tamil teachers across different parts of the United States. ATTA has many teachers from MNTS Tamil School teachers who played various roles as content contributors, reviewers, and leaders. By participating in this effort, the MNTS Tamil teachers have contributed immensely for this milestone and gained significant knowledge and experience around the Tamil language education, assessments, and standards.



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TAMIL - 17'th language to
have an approved
National Standard in US
by ACTFL

GET YOUR OWN COPY for \$26:

<https://my.actfl.org/portal/ItemDetail?iProductCode=WRSE-TAM-E>



TAMIL

World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages

WORLD-READINESS STANDARDS FOR LEARNING TAMIL

A Project of the American Tamil Teachers Association (ATTA)

COMMITTEE FOR NATIONAL TAMIL STANDARDS

Sivanandam Mariyappan – MN - Siva@attaonline.org

Sundar Shunmugam – KS - sundar@attaonline.org

Usha Raguraman – IL - usha@attaonline.org

Prasanna Gajavaradhan – MN - prasanna@attaonline.org

Thanikachalam Ponnusamy – IL - thanikachalam@attaonline.org

Babu Vadivel – IL - babu@attaonline.org

Professor Jaya Vijayasekar – CT - jaya@attaonline.org

Dr. Anuradha Gopalakrishnan – MN - anuradha@attaonline.org





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15. Digitalized assessment Creation for Tamil:

Currently, MNTS Tamil school is collaborating with Minnesota department of Education (MDE) for creating assessments for the Bilingual certifications in a format which can be easily integrated into the Extempore tool which MDE leverages for administering the assessments. This ongoing effort is expected to be completed by the end of March 2024, making it available for the summer assessments sessions. 4 of our MNTS Tamil School teachers are engaged in this exercise over a span of about 8 weeks. Below is the list of teachers who have contributed immensely to creating this digitalized assessment.

Digitalized Assessment creation

Beneficiaries	5 teachers
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1. Sivanandam Marriayappam
2. Hanibal Benjamín
3. Saravanakumaran Kasilingam
4. Prasanna Gajavarathan
5. Balamurugan Ramasamy

16. Writing Proficiency Test:

The school is also exploring options to partner with American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) to administer Writing Proficiency Training for the teacher community.