Revisions to the 2015-2016 ASPIRE Award Calculations

The 2015-2016 ASPIRE Award model was amended after the district decided not to renew its contract with SAS EVAAS. This means that EVAAS for the 2015–2016 school year was not calculated.

To replace EVAAS as an award metric for the 2015–2016 ASPIRE Award Program, Comparative Growth on STAAR will be used. See Comparative Growth Resources article on page 3 for more details.

Similar to value-added analysis, Comparative Growth reports will be available at the teacher level, the department level, and the campus level and will be posted on the ASPIRE portal.

The revised 2015-2016 ASPIRE award model diagrams for teachers and campus-based staff can be found here: https://static.battelleforkids.org/documents/HISD/hisd_ASP16Awards_Teacher_1column.pdf.

The diagram for school leaders can be found here: https://static.battelleforkids.org/documents/HISD/hisd_ASP16Awards_Principals_1column.pdf

2016–2017 TIF4 Award Program

The 2016–2017 Award Model indicators will be the same as those from the 2015–2016 ASPIRE Award Revised Model, but only teachers and school leaders from the 23 campuses funded in part by the TIF4 federal grant will be considered for the award. Due to HISD budget constraints, district funding for the ASPIRE Award program was eliminated. However, the TIF4 grant funds the performance pay for teachers and school leaders through the 2016–2017 school year.

**TIF4 Campuses**

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<th>Blacksheard Elementary School</th>
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The 2016–2017 TIF4 Award Program documents can be found at: http://portal.battelleforkids.org/Aspire/awards/aspire-award/2016-2017-program-resources
Preparing for the Final Payout of the ASPIRE Award Program

The 2015–2016 ASPIRE award will be paid out in February 2017. This will be the last district-wide payout of the ASPIRE Award program.

To prepare for an accurate and timely payout of ASPIRE Awards, a Final Inquiry period will be open to all campus-based employees starting on Wednesday, Nov. 30, 2016.

Final Inquiry Period (11/30/16 – 12/14/16)

Preliminary award notices will be posted on the ASPIRE portal for review beginning at 3 p.m. CST Wednesday, Nov. 30, 2016.

To view your own estimate:
1. Log on to the “My Resources Log-in” through the ASPIRE portal.
2. Click on the “Award” icon, then click on the “My Awards” link to go to your Award page.
3. Click on the award estimate amount link to see your award notice.

Your award estimate notice will show how your award estimate was calculated. Depending on your award grouping, your total award amount will be the sum of a combination of the following awards:

- **Group Performance: Campus-Wide**: Based on Campus STAAR Comparative Growth data and on Campus Growth or Achievement indicators
- **Group Performance: Teachers**: Based on Department STAAR Comparative Growth
- **Individual Performance: Teachers**: Based on Teacher STAAR Comparative Growth data

If you are not eligible for an award, your notice will outline the reason(s) why you are considered ineligible to participate in the 2015–2016 ASPIRE Award program.

**Supporting Documents**: If you would like to better understand the 2015–2016 ASPIRE Awards, click here to download all 2015–2016 ASPIRE Awards charts, diagrams, and documents. You are encouraged to access this information prior to reviewing ASPIRE Award estimates.

**Formal Inquiries**: After reviewing all information, if you still believe your award was calculated in error, you may submit a formal inquiry through the ASPIRE portal during the Final Inquiry Period, starting at 3 p.m. Nov. 30, 2016. The Final Inquiry period is your opportunity to raise concerns about your award calculations. Concerns about attendance issues and PPA status were addressed during the Eligibility Confirmation Period.

The ASPIRE team reviews all inquiries. You may be asked for more information, and principals and other departments may be consulted. Based on the information gathered, a new award amount may be calculated for you, and you will be given status updates. This process is described here. The Formal Inquiry Period ends at 11:59 p.m. Dec. 14, 2016.

**Post-Inquiry Period**: Inquiries resolved by Jan. 13, 2017, are processed for the initial payout on Feb. 1, 2017. Payments are made as follows:

1. **Current HISD employees**: By direct deposit on the payout date
2. **Current charter employees**: Via a check made out to each charter campus. The campus subsequently pays each employee.
3. **Former HISD employees who left before the district transition to SAP**: By a check mailed to their address on record as of the payout date
4. **Former HISD employees who left after the district transition to SAP**: By direct deposit on the payout date
5. **Former charter employee**: By a check mailed to the address supplied on the submitted W-9.

All payment amounts are net of taxes, so the amount deposited in your account or on your check will not match the award notice. For individual staff members who have a formal ASPIRE Award Inquiry pending, payment may be delayed until the inquiry has been resolved. Inquiries not resolved in time for initial payout will be disbursed afterwards on a bi-weekly schedule. For more information on the ASPIRE award payout process, please visit the ASPIRE Award Payout FAQ here.

**Former HISD or External Charter Employees**: As the awards cover the previous school year, former employees are entitled to an award if they met all other program and eligibility requirements. Former employees will be able to access the ASPIRE portal to view their ASPIRE eligibility and award estimates. Former employees will need to log on to the ASPIRE portal using their full HISD e-mail address as their username and their ASPIRE portal password. If you need assistance with your...
Comparative Growth Resources

Comparative Growth is not new to the district; it has been calculated using Norm-Referenced Tests (NRT) in HISD from 2011–2012 through 2014–2015 and is still calculated using TELPAS.

In Comparative Growth, students are placed into groups depending on which test language and version they took in the prior year and current year. From each group, all students who scored the same scale score in the prior year form a cohort (minimum of 25 students per cohort). For each cohort meeting the minimum threshold of 25 students, the current year STAAR scale scores are rank-ordered. These ranks are converted to percentiles, and a teacher’s score is the median percentile score of his/her students. Therefore, Comparative Growth measures the progress of a teacher’s students on a given assessment compared to all other students in the district who start at the same test score level.

Comparative Growth scores on STAAR will be used in award calculations for the 2015-2016 ASPIRE award program and the 2016-2017 TIF4 award program. Beginning in the 2016–2017 school year, Comparative Growth on STAAR will be used as a Student Performance metric in TADS.

For more information about Comparative Growth, please see http://portal.battelleforkids.org/Aspire/growth-data or email ASPIREaward@houstonisd.org.

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2015–2016 ASPIRE Award Survey

The 2015–2016 ASPIRE Award Survey will be launched when the ASPIRE Award Notices go live, Nov. 30, 2016. The survey will remain open through Wednesday, Feb. 1, 2017.

All campus-based employees are invited to participate in the survey. Employees can access the survey once they have finished viewing their award notice, or they can click directly on the link that will be e-mailed to them on Nov. 30, 2016.

This annual survey was designed to collect perceptions and input from HISD teachers and staff after ten years of implementation of growth-based performance pay.

Preparing...(Continued from page 2)

log-in information, e-mail ASPIREaward@houstonisd.org.

Former HISD employees must have their current address on file with Human Resources in order to receive a check. If you need to update your address, former HISD employees must email HRAnswerLine@houstonisd.org. Former external charter employees who know they qualified for an award will need to submit a W-9 to get an award check; the address provided on the W-9 will be used as the mailing address for the award check. For more details on instructions for former external charter employees, click here.

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TIF4 Award Program &
Family Medical Leave (FML)

Similar to the ASPIRE award program, the 2016-2017 TIF4 award program has an attendance requirement. Employees may not be absent for more than 10 days. Some absences do not count against TIF4 eligibility: funeral leave, military leave, assault leave, jury duty, religious holidays, vacation pay, compensatory time, authorized off-campus duty, and approved Family Medical Leave (FML) are among the absences that are held harmless against TIF4 eligibility. If there is any uncertainty whether an absence is covered under FML, or if they wish to apply for leave benefits, employees should contact the Houston ISD Absence Management Service Center. HISD’s Human Resources department also is still available to support employees who may have additional questions.

Houston ISD Absence Management Service Center
PO Box 34890
Louisville, KY 40232

Phone: 877-780-4473 (7 a.m. – 7 p.m. Monday-Friday)
Fax: 866-568-6444
Website: https://absence.adp.com