Principals and Campus-Based Support Team Members

Prior to beginning the Principal Set-Up Period on April 21, it is important to note the following special cases that may be present among your staff members during the verification and linkage process:

Secondary Reading Initiative (SRI) Teachers and Courses
For the 2013–2014 verification and linkage period and ASPIRE Award Program, SRI courses are considered core foundation courses and require student-teacher linkages. For specific course numbers, please see the Program Eligibility Document here.

SRI teachers are considered as core foundation teachers if they teach courses identified as core foundation for the majority of the day/year. Teachers of these courses will receive an EVAAS® report for Reading that includes the students enrolled in these courses (if the minimum thresholds for analysis are met).

Principals and support team members should not delete these courses from the ASPIRE linkage portal. SRI teachers are considered for both the ASPIRE and SRI awards.

SRI teachers should link their students through the ASPIRE portal only; a separate linkage process will not be required for the spring semester. Teachers should claim students on the ASPIRE portal for the appropriate ASPIRE percentages, which should not exceed 50% instruction, as the SRI course should be one of at least two blocks where the students receive reading instruction. Even if the SRI Reading teacher is also teaching the students' other Reading course, he/she should link students in both rosters.

The following guidelines will apply for linkage for SRI teachers:
1. If the SRI teacher on your campus teaches only SRI-identified Reading courses, and another teacher(s) teach other Reading courses, the SRI teacher should link the students for up to 50% instruction, and the other Reading teacher(s) should link the students for up to 80% instruction. Student instruction should not exceed 100%.
2. If the SRI teacher teaches SRI-identified Reading courses to one group of students, and other Reading courses to a different group of students, the teacher should link students in the SRI course for up to 50% instruction, and link students in the other Reading courses for up to 100% instruction.
3. If the SRI teacher on your campus teaches SRI-identified Reading courses and other Reading courses to the same group of students, the SRI teacher should link the students for up to 50% instruction for the SRI course and up to 80% instruction for the other Reading course(s). Student instruction should not exceed 100%. Note: If Reading courses are merged or if students are linked in only one of the Reading rosters, the SRI teacher will not have SRI linkages for the SRI award and will not be considered for SRI awards.
**Reading, Language, and ELA Teachers in Grades 7 and 8**

*Please note these guidelines have not changed.* For the 2013–2014 verification and linkage period and ASPIRE Award Program, the following guidelines will apply for Reading and English Language Arts (Language Arts) teachers in grades 7 and 8:

1. **If the students at your campus are enrolled in Language Arts only, then teachers should link those students for Reading AND Language Arts—each at 100% of instructional time.**
   - Teachers' EVAAS® analyses will be based on Reading STAAR for Reading and Stanford Language for Language Arts.
   - Teachers’ Comparative Growth analyses for Reading will be based on Reading Stanford/Aprenda.
   - Teachers’ EVAAS® Composite Cumulative Gain Index (CGI) will include their Language Arts and Reading gain indices.
   - The ASPIRE award is calculated using the Composite CGI. Principals or support teams should ensure that these teachers have Reading and Language Arts courses with which to link.

**Scenario 1:** A teacher teaches Language Arts **and** Reading TEKS through one ELA course. There is not a separate Reading course.

In this example, the Language Arts course is pre-loaded from Chancery, and the Reading course is set up by the support team. The teacher “links” students for **both** the Reading and Language Arts course.
2. If the students at your campus are enrolled in Language Arts and are receiving additional reading instruction (in the form of a course), then the teacher providing the reading instruction will claim the students for Reading.

The teacher providing Language Arts instruction will claim the students for Language Arts.

- The Reading EVAAS® score will be based on Reading STAAR
- The Language Arts EVAAS® score will be based on Stanford Language.
- The Reading Comparative Growth score will be based on Reading Stanford/Aprenda
- The composite EVAAS® score will be based on the subject or subjects for which the teacher had students linked.

Scenario 2A (see diagram on right): A teacher teaches both Language Arts and Reading TEKS through two different courses.

In this example, both the Reading and the Language Arts classes are pre-loaded from Chancery. The teacher "links" students for both of the classes.

Scenario 2B (see diagram on left): Two different teachers teach students in two separate courses. There is one teacher for Language Arts (English) and a second teacher for Reading.

In this example, Teacher 1’s Reading class is pre-loaded from Chancery, and Teacher 1 links students for the Reading class only. Teacher 2’s Language Arts (English) class is pre-loaded from Chancery, and Teacher 2 “links” students for the Language Arts class only.
Elementary School Librarians
For the purposes of the ASPIRE Award Program, “librarians” are considered as Group 5: Instructional Support Staff. All librarians are automatically defaulted to Group 5. However, we recognize that some elementary school librarians are on an ancillary rotation, and should be considered as Group 4: Elective/Ancillary Teacher.

If an elementary school librarian was overridden to Group 4 in the 2011–2012 school year, and has the same job title and is at the same school as he/she was in the 2012–2013 school year, then an override has been processed to place the librarian in Group 4 for the 2013–2014 school year. No further action is necessary on the part of the principal.

If an override has not been processed for an elementary school librarian, and he/she should be considered as an ancillary teacher, an override request must be submitted.

To consider a librarian as an ancillary teacher, the principal should be prepared to show documentation (i.e., an ancillary schedule, lesson plans, etc.) in the event the district is audited—even if the override was processed from last year’s data.

Tutors
After-school tutors, STAAR tutors, hourly tutors, Apollo Fellows, or other types of instructors who are not responsible for the school day instruction of a core foundation subject should not be linked to the students they tutor. Student linkages should be completed only for those teachers who are assigned to teaching students the courses designated as “core foundation ASPIRE courses,” and for those teachers identified as the “teacher of record.”

HISD recognizes the value tutors can and do have on a campus. However, the purpose of the linkage process is to link the appropriate students to the appropriate core foundation teachers of record responsible for the instruction of courses that have been identified as core foundation. Please see the ASPIRE core course list here.

The current ASPIRE Award Program does not consider tutors as core foundation teachers. These employees should be verified based on the position in which they spend the majority of the day.

Hourly Teachers
Hourly teachers and long-term substitutes should not be linked to students. While HISD recognizes the value hourly/part-time teachers have on campus, the purpose of the linkage and verification process is to link the appropriate students to the appropriate core foundation teachers of record. Please note that hourly teachers and long-term substitutes will not be eligible for an ASPIRE award as they do not meet general eligibility requirements. In addition, they are not the “teacher of record.” As such, they cannot be considered as core foundation teachers.

Percentage of Time
It is extremely important to note that the percentage of time that a teacher is assigned to a student does not indicate the percentage of the award the teacher will receive. Whether a teacher links the students at 100% time or at 20% time, the potential award amount is equivalent. The percentage of time a teacher is assigned to a student is used to weigh the effect that a student has on the teacher’s EVAAS® score. Therefore, a student’s score that is linked at 20% time will not be weighted as heavily toward an EVAAS® score as a student’s score that is linked at 100% time.
**Elementary School Lab Teachers**

Elementary school lab teachers of core foundation courses can and should be linked to students if all of the following conditions apply.

**If the lab teacher:**

1. Is responsible for at least 20% of the curriculum instruction (e.g., one class period a week);
2. Provides content grades (e.g. a percentage score to be used in the overall letter grade; not a conduct grade such as an E/S/P/U) for the course to the homeroom teacher and/or on the report card; and
3. Plans and conducts lessons with students.

If all of these conditions apply, then the lab teacher should link all students for which he/she is responsible—at the appropriate percentage. A lab teacher with student linkages will be considered as a core foundation teacher (Group 1). A lab teacher with no student linkages will be considered as Group 4: Elective/Ancillary teacher.

Please consider your lab teacher(s) carefully. Do they contribute to the instruction and grading of students in a core course, or is their instruction and grading more appropriately categorized as ancillary? If the lab teacher links students for 20% time, then the other teacher linking the students should link those students at 80% time. A student can never be claimed at more than 100% time for a subject from all teachers claiming that student.

*Please note: Tutors are not to be considered as lab teachers!*

**Special Education Core Foundation Teachers**

It is critical that Special Education core foundation teachers in grades 1–11 link the students for whom they are responsible for teaching “ASPIRE core foundation courses.” Special Education core foundation courses have been expanded to include a wide variety of core courses. Please see the ASPIRE core course list [here](#).

- A Special Education core foundation teacher who has linked students will be placed in Group 3 if he/she teaches core foundation subjects to Special Education students in grades 3–12 where an EVAAS® report cannot be generated.
- A Special Education core foundation teacher who has linked students will be placed in Group 2 if he/she teaches core foundation subjects to Special Education students in grades PK-2.
- A Special Education core foundation teacher who has linked students will be placed in Group 1 if he/she teaches core foundation subjects to Special Education students in grades 3–11 where an EVAAS® report has been generated.
- A Special Education teacher of students in grades 1–11 who has not linked students will be placed in Group 4 or Group 5. Regardless of the reason, if a Special Education teacher does not link students, the Special Education teacher cannot be considered as a core foundation teacher (award Group 1, 2 or 3).

Student linkage to the appropriate core courses is imperative in determining appropriate award grouping.

*Please see the section entitled “co-teachers” for special education core foundation teachers who participate in shared teaching.*
Co-Teachers
Co-teachers (certified Special Education teachers teaching in an inclusion setting) and Special Education inclusion teachers, or teachers who function as co-teachers but do not have the job title of “co-teacher,” include teachers who work with regular education teachers to teach the same students for the same content area.

In these cases, the teachers who “share students” for the same content area should both link all students for whom they are responsible at the appropriate percentages. For examples, please see the section entitled “Team/Collaborating Teachers.”

Team/Collaborating Teachers
Team teachers, collaborating teachers, or other shared teaching arrangements include teachers who work together to teach the same students for the same content area. In these cases, the teachers who “share students” for the same content area should both link all students for whom they are responsible at the appropriate percentages.

For example, if two teachers are teaching the same students in math, and each is responsible for half of the teaching, then both teachers should link the same students at 50% time each. This equates to 100% time for each student, with half of the instruction being “credited” to Teacher A and half of the instruction being “credited” to Teacher B.

It is important to note that if two teachers verify for exactly the same students at exactly the same percentage time, then they will receive exactly the same teacher report. However, if two teachers verify similar students at a similar percentage of time, then they will not receive the same report.

For this reason, teachers who share students should collaborate to complete their student linkage and verification for the best results.

Questions
About Verification and Linkage
General support for all staff members is available online through the ASPIRE Support System under the “My Resources” tab. If you still have questions, contact the ASPIRE Support Team at 1-866-543-7555.

About the 2013–2014 ASPIRE Award Program
Staff are encouraged to review award program materials on the ASPIRE portal under the Recognize tab here.

Thank you for your efforts in accomplishing this important process!