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Introduction

On April 28, the 2013–2014 ASPIRE Linkage and Verification process begins for campus-based teachers and staff. HISD uses information from this process to calculate teacher EVAAS® and Comparative Growth reports, which are referenced in the Teacher Appraisal and Development System and for ASPIRE awards. Optional open-lab workgroups are being offered throughout the district during this period to assist core foundation teachers in completing the linkage process as accurately and easily as possible. Please see the Optional Open Lab Announcement on the ASPIRE portal for lab dates, times, and locations.

What is Award Verification?

Verification is a process for campus-based staff to review tentative 2013–2014 ASPIRE Award Program eligibility and award grouping (categorization) information. The task during this period is for campus-based staff to review the information and discuss problems or corrections with the principal or campus support team for resolution. Employees should also review their preliminary eligibility—including attendance—for accuracy. This is not the final ASPIRE award eligibility as some rules can only be computed upon completion of the school year.

Importance of Verifying Award Categorization and Eligibility

It is important to review your eligibility during the verification period. Some staff members may be close to exceeding the maximum number of hours allowed in order to be considered as eligible and may make different choices regarding attendance based on the information we are able to provide. Some staff members may have been marked as absent incorrectly, which will require correction. Regardless, you don’t want to be taken by surprise after awards have been calculated for something you may have been able to resolve ahead of time!

The process of categorization determines the group to which all staff members will belong for award purposes. The system computes eligibility based on rules and data. While the application of these rules is straightforward for most staff, some staff members work outside of their job descriptions and may end up with an eligibility status or award group that is incorrect.

If you are a core foundation teacher—but are not categorized as such during the verification and linkage period—you will not be able to provide student-teacher linkages. If you do not provide student-teacher linkages, you cannot be considered as a core foundation teacher for award purposes. Therefore, it is imperative that you review your categorization to ensure that you meet all requirements for your correct categorization when awards are calculated.

What is Student-Teacher Linkage?

Linkage is the process to attribute instructional influence on student academic process for core foundation teachers in grades 1–11 who provide instruction in Reading, Mathematics, Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies. This includes:

- Verifying a roster of students taught throughout the year;
- Indicating the month(s) when students are in and out of the class; and
- Reporting the percentage of instruction a teacher has for a given student in a given subject.
The linkage process allows teachers a hand in the data that is submitted to calculate their EVAAS® and Comparative Growth analyses. Although student data is obtained from the Chancery system, teachers are afforded the opportunity to review this information as well as to report on the percentage of instructional time for which they were responsible.

**Importance of Providing Student-Teacher Linkages**

In order to be considered as a core foundation teacher in grades 1–11 for ASPIRE award purposes, you must submit student-teacher linkages for your core foundation course rosters. This includes special education teachers—even if your students are not STAAR, STAAR EOC, or NRT-tested. If no linkages are provided, you cannot be considered as Group 1, 2, or 3 for award purposes.

All student-teacher linkages submitted during this period are final. This information is used, along with test scores, to calculate teacher-level EVAAS® and Comparative Growth analyses. These analyses cannot be recalculated once data has been submitted to SAS EVAAS® shortly after the Linkage Period has concluded. EVAAS® and Comparative Growth information is used in the Teacher Appraisal and Development System, for other HISD staffing decisions, and in calculating incentive awards. It is extremely important, therefore, to complete, review, and correct student-teacher linkages during the stipulated time period.

Core foundation teachers who do not provide student-teacher linkages will have those student-teacher linkages assigned by the campus support team and/or the principal.

**Who Needs to Provide Student-Teacher Linkages?**

HISD teachers of students in the following grades and subjects will participate in 2014 linkage:

- Grades 1–8 Reading, Language Arts (LA), and Math
- Grades 4–8 Science and Social Studies
- Educators with any students in these courses:
  - Algebra I
  - English I and II
  - Biology
  - U.S. History

*Please note that HISD policy states that linkage must accurately reflect classroom instruction.*

**Key Dates and Activities**

- **April 21–25**  
  **Campus Setup:** Principals and support team members must complete campus setup so that campus-based staff can complete the eligibility and categorization verification and student-teacher linkage (roster verification) process in the timeframe provided.

- **April 28–May 16**  
  **Staff Verification and Student-Teacher Linkage (Roster Verification):** Eligibility and categorization verification for all campus-based staff; student-teacher linkage (roster verification) for all core foundation teachers.

- **May 19–23**  
  **Principal Confirmation/Approval:** Review and approval of class rosters, eligibility, and categorization.
Accessing the System

Step 1: Go to http://www.houstonisd.org/ASPIRE and log in under the “My Resources” tab.

My Resources Home

Step 2: On the “My Resources Home” page, in the “LINK” section, click on “Link.”

Verifying Categorization and Eligibility

ASPIRE “Link” Home Page
Your tentative award eligibility and categorization/award group is displayed in the “Tentative Award Information” section in the center of your “Link” page.

Your tentative program eligibility status will be listed with a green check mark or a red “X” with a link to View Eligibility Details. All eligibility has been computed as of April 18, 2014. Final eligibility will be computed upon the completion of the school year. To review details about why you may not be eligible, click View Eligibility Details. A list of all eligibility rules and the evidence that determined ineligibility will be listed next to the rule.

- If you are not eligible because of eligibility rule #10 (staff cannot be absent more than 10 instructional school days) and you think you should be because your absences were “harmless absences” as defined in the program eligibility document, please contact your campus timekeeper to make sure your attendance records were documented and submitted to payroll accurately. If the absences were protected by FML, then please be sure to contact Human Resources. FML absences are only protected if you filed for FML protection through HR.

- Campus ASPIRE awards are based on where campus-based staff members spent the majority of the year. For example, if you transfer from Campus A to Campus B on March 24, 2014, then 100% of your award will be from Campus A. You also must work on a campus a minimum of 40% (e.g. 2 days/week) to be eligible for an award from a campus. If you work less than 40%, then your award from that campus will be listed as 0%.

- Staff categories will match the award groups listed in the 2013–2014 ASPIRE Award Program and Eligibility Requirements document. It is important to understand that staff award groups are determined by additional rules in the document. For example, an employee who serves as a middle-school music teacher (Group 4), but teaches one section of math (Group 1), would be considered Group 4 based on the position in which the employee functions for the majority of the day.
You have the opportunity to “Opt-out” of an ASPIRE award payment. All staff members are opted-in to the program unless they choose to opt-out. If you opted out of the award for the 2012–2013 school year, you will not continue to be opted out for 2013–2014 unless you change your selection again now to “opt out.” To change your selection, click Change next to the green “Opt-In” graphic or the red “Opt-Out” graphic.

You can change your choice as many times as you want until the roster verification period ends. The award payment option status documented on the ASPIRE portal as of midnight May 16, 2014 will be retained for the 2013–2014 program year. You are the only one allowed to change your opt-in/opt-out status—no one else may make this selection for you.

Note: Opting out of the ASPIRE Award Program does not change the requirement to provide student-teacher linkages, and does not opt a teacher out of receiving the appropriate teacher-level reports. In other words, even if you opt out of the award program (choose to not receive any calculated award amount), you are still required to provide student-teacher linkages, and will still receive teacher-level reports that will be used for the Teacher Appraisal System.

Opting out of the award only removes your award—it does not opt you out of the Teacher Appraisal System or linkage!
What to do if Categorization and/or Eligibility is Wrong
If you discover an error with the computation of your eligibility or award group based on the program rules and eligibility, then discuss the issue with your principal during the Linkage and Verification period. Your principal is able to submit an override request for your information, if necessary.

Who is my Support Team?
Support team members include at least your building principal. Your principal then assigns others, as necessary, as support team members. These individuals should be able to assist you with the verification and/or linkage process and request or make changes to your information as necessary. You can find a list of the support team members at your campus here:

Verifying Your Award Information
Once you have reviewed your eligibility and award, check the box stating that you have completed this review. Please note that checking the box does not imply that you agree or consent to the information provided there; it only indicates that you have in fact viewed that information and have discussed any issues found with your principal and/or support team member.

Verification must be completed no later than midnight May 16, 2014.

If you are not a core foundation teacher, you have now completed the verification process. If you are a core foundation teacher for whom linkages are required, you must provide student-teacher linkages in order to continue to be considered as a core foundation teacher for award purposes.
Core Foundation Teachers
HISD teachers of students in the following grades and subjects will participate in 2014 linkage:
- Grades 1–8 Reading, Language Arts (LA), and Math
- Grades 4–8 Science and Social Studies
- Educators with any students in these courses:
  - Algebra I
  - English I and II
  - Biology
  - U.S. History

If you teach any of these grade/subjects, you must provide student-teacher linkages.

Important! If your list of rosters requiring verification is incomplete, you need to contact your principal or a member of the support team to add the missing rosters!

Reviewing and Modifying Rosters
Class rosters requiring verification are located in the “My Class Rosters” section of the “Link” page. To begin verifying a class roster, click Begin in the “Action” column. This list should include each of your classes. Each class period could have its own class roster.
To accurately account for all students, mobility, and percent of instruction, the system allows you to modify rosters. Prior to the linkage (Roster Verification) period, principals and support team members review and correct class rosters, if needed, to help minimize assignment errors, and remove incorrect class rosters if necessary. If you are missing or have the wrong classes, please contact your principal or support team member immediately.

In the “My Class Rosters” section of your “Link” page, select Begin next to the class you want to review and verify. The “Class Roster” page will display the list of students in section 1 on the class roster page. Review the list of students to determine if there are any changes required.

**Note:** You may find it helpful to change the “class name” of your classes. Some teachers, for example, find it easier to call classes “math period 1,” “math period 2,” etc. To change the class name of your class rosters, click the Actions button, then select Edit. (See below)

If an error exists in your class roster, you have three ways to correct it: Add Students, Copy Students (by using the Actions button), and Delete Students (using the grey “X” to the left of the student name).

**Adding Students**
When students are missing from a class, you can modify the class roster to add students.

1. On the “Class Roster” page, select Add Students in section 1 (“I taught these students”) of the class roster to search for students by name, partial names, grade, or ID.
Note: Select All from the school drop-down to search across the district, or leave the school drop-down pre-selected to your campus to see students from your current campus only.

2. To search for students, enter as much or little information as you wish. To narrow the search, enter additional letters in the first and/or last name, grade level, and/or student ID. For example, if you’re searching for a 5th grade student whose last name starts with “G,” then select “5” from the grade-level pull-down list and enter “G” in the last name field.

   Recommended: Use the District Student ID number.

3. If the student is displayed in the results list, click the Add button beside the student name. If your search returns more than one page of results, then use the page indicators at the bottom of the screen to see more students matching your search criteria. Because there may be multiple students with the same name, please be sure to pay attention to the student’s grade level and student ID in order to select the correct student.

4. Select Return when you are finished.

5. If you still cannot find a student, and you have searched within the entire district, then you can submit a question to the ASPIRE Support Team by clicking Contact Support under a) the Actions button or b) the “Resources” section on your “Link” page. You can also contact your principal or campus support team member for assistance.

**Tip:** If you want to add all students on your campus within a grade level (e.g. a 5th grade science lab teacher who teaches all 5th grade students), then search for all students in a grade and click the Add All button. Make sure the “school” drop-down shows the campus where you would like to find all 5th grade students. If you are adding students to a new roster and teach most students in a grade, you may want to “add all” and then remove a few students rather than adding many students individually.
Deleting Students
If students need to be removed from the class roster, then you can modify the roster to remove them.

1. Select to the left of the student name you wish to remove. Students removed from a roster will appear at the bottom of the page under “Deleted Students.”

A deleted student can be returned to the active roster by selecting the Restore link under the “Deleted Students” list at the bottom of the roster.

Setting Student Start and End Dates

You set student start and end dates to indicate the period of time when instruction was provided.

1. On the “Class Roster” page section 2 (“during these months”), use the drop down menu to indicate the month when a student started in your class. To save time, you can set the same value for all students using the “Set Values for All Students” feature in the green first row.
2. From the “End Month” drop down menu, indicate when a student left your class. In many cases, this will be the end of the school year. However, you should use the Enter by month option if, for example, a student was in your class, moved to another, then returned, or if you were out on FML for several weeks/months, or if you shared instruction of a student or group of students for only part of the school year, etc. See the Entering Percent Instruction by Month section of this guide for more information and detailed instruction on how to use this function.

**Note:** If you primarily teach the same students, you can correctly establish one roster—set class enrollment and indicate percent of instruction—and then copy all the students from that roster with linkage data to another class by clicking the Actions button, then selecting Copy Students. See the Copying Rosters/Students section of this guide for more information and detailed instruction on how to use this function.

### Setting Percent of Instruction
This function indicates the amount of instruction you provided for the given class and subject for the student during the time he/she was enrolled in your class.

1. From the “Class Roster” page, use the drop down menu to indicate the percentage of instruction you provided a student. To save time, you can use set the same value for all students using the “Set Values for All Students” feature in the green first row.

2. Review your selections for accuracy, and select Submit to save your linkage.

**Note:** You should be able to read each line like, “I taught this student from Month A to Month B for this % of instruction.”

### What Percentage Should I Claim?
If you were the only teacher for that subject for the student/class, the percentage of instruction for which you were responsible should be 100%. This means that all of the students’ instruction in that given subject is attributable to you.

If a student was receiving instruction from more than one teacher for a particular subject, then all teachers who were providing instruction should claim the student for a percentage of time. A few examples of this are as follows:

- Co-teaching situations: Both teachers will indicate shared instruction that represents the instruction provided by each. For example, if the students were taught one out of five days a week by a math specialist, then s/he may indicate 20% instructional time, and the primary math teacher would claim the student for 80% time, or four out of five days.
• Double-blocking situations: At times, students are “double-blocked” for a particular core foundation subject. In these situations, if more than one teacher is responsible for teaching the content area, both teachers should claim the student. If the student is with both Teacher A and Teacher B five days a week, each teacher is responsible for an equivalent amount of instruction. In these situations, the teachers should claim the student for 50% time each, which totals to 100% instruction in the given subject for that student.

• Double-blocking plus co-teaching: There may be students who are double-blocked for a subject (therefore 50% instruction from Teacher A and 50% instruction from Teacher B), but where Teacher B works with a co-teacher (Teacher C). In this situation, Teacher A might claim the student at 50% time, while Teacher B and Teacher C might claim the student at 30% and 20% time, respectively.

However, in all of these scenarios, it is important to remember that percentage of instruction claimed must reflect campus practice, and that percentage assignments ultimately are a campus-based decision. If you need help in deciding how much instruction you should be claiming, it is important that you discuss this with your principal or a member of your support team.

**Entering Percent of Instruction by Month**

This function allows data to be reflected more accurately where there may be multiple entries and exits from the classroom. The Enter by month mode can be used for one or more students on the roster but does not have to be used for every student or by every teacher.

**When Should Enter by Month Mode be Used?**

Enter by month mode is not necessarily for everyone. Here are a few examples of when to use this feature:

1. One or more of your students left part way through the school year and then came back. You were not responsible for their instruction for a period of time in the “middle” of the class/year.

2. You left part way through the school year and then came back. You were not responsible for student instruction for a period of time in the “middle” of the class/year.

3. You were responsible for all students at 100% time except for the months of February and March, when your students received additional instruction from a specialist.

**How do I Enter by Month?**

1. From the Class Roster page, select Enter by months.
Sections 2 and 3 combine showing nine months of instruction. Select the appropriate values from the drop down menu to indicate the percentage of instruction you provided that student during each month. If the student was not in your classroom for the majority of the month, select “0%” for that month. Data entered by month can only be edited by month.

2. If you need to make changes to most or all students (for example, your students received additional instruction from a specialist for 2 months), you can set the same value for all students using the “Set Values for All Students” feature in the green first row and then make any student specific changes.

3. You can toggle back and forth between Enter by month and Enter by year modes. To toggle back to Enter by year mode, select Enter by year.

4. Review your selections for accuracy, and select Submit at the bottom of the class roster to save your linkage changes and submit for principal approval.
Examples of Entering By Month

Please note that the following are just a few examples—everyone’s situation is unique.

Example 1: The teacher provides 100% of instruction for Katherine when she is in this classroom. Using Enter by month mode, select 0% for the winter months when Katherine was not in this classroom.

Example 2: The teacher provides 50% of instruction for Shelly when she is in this classroom. Select 0% for the winter months when Shelly was not in this classroom. In this case, another teacher must be providing the other 50% of instruction in this subject area.

Example 3: The teacher provides 100% of instruction for Julie for the entire school year. Use Enter by year to make revisions to Julie’s data.

Selecting Enter by year will display sections 2 and 3 separately where Julie’s data can be changed. You will need to toggle back to Enter by month mode to change Katherine or Shelly’s data.
Submitting Rosters

1. Review “Class Roster” page for accuracy.

   **Note:** If you have a large list of students, you may need to scroll down to see the bottom of the screen.

2. Click the Submit button at the bottom of the page to save your changes. The Statement of Accuracy & Completeness dialog box will appear. Click the OK button. The class roster status will be updated to “Submitted” and will automatically be set for principal review and approval. If you still have information to verify on your roster but need to stop working on it now, click Submit to save your work. You may later return to continue your verification and make further updates as needed by clicking Edit to go back into the roster.

   **Note:** If you click “Cancel,” you will return to your roster with the changes you made. However, your changes have not been saved. You can continue to make additional changes and save them at that point, or you can close the roster and lose your changes.

3. Repeat this step for each of your class rosters. You can review and, if necessary, update class rosters until the principal has reviewed and approved it or the Roster Verification period ends, whichever comes first.

Copying and Replacing Rosters

This function allows you to copy students from one class that you taught to another class you taught to create a combined list of students.

**When Do I Copy/Replace Rosters?**

This function can be used by teachers who teach the same group of students for the same months at the same percentage of instruction for more than one core content class. For example, if you teach Reading, Language Arts, and Social Studies to the same students, you can complete one of your rosters, then copy that roster to the other two content areas.

This can save you time and effort, and result in more accurate linkage for all of your content areas.
You can also use this function if you teach several sections of the same course/content area. For example, a teacher with 5 periods of Math may find it easier to combine all students into a single roster, rather than viewing the periods separately. This is especially helpful if students have moved from Period 1 to Period 3 to Period 5, for example.

You should not combine rosters if you are an SRI Teacher. For more information on SRI Teachers and the linkage process, please see the Special Note for SRI Teachers section of this document.

**How Do I Copy Rosters?**

There are two ways to copy students.

From the Class Roster page, click the Actions button and then select Copy Students.

Or, from the Link page which lists all of your rosters, click Copy Students.

Next, select Copy Student Roster by selecting the Continue button.
All of the students in the roster you are copying will be put into another roster, as well as any other students who are already in the receiving roster. For example, the roster you are copying from contains students A, B, C. The roster you are copying to contains students C, D, E, F. Once complete, the roster you are copying to will contain students A, B, C, D, E, F. Student C will not be duplicated, and Student F will not be “lost” or deleted.

Next, select which copy method you would like use by selecting one of the Continue buttons.

**Recommended:** If you select “Include membership and % instruction,” the months and percentage of instruction in the class roster will be transferred with the students.

If you select “Default to entire term and 0% instruction,” the months and percentage of instruction in the class roster will not be transferred and default values (From: Aug/Sept to May/June, _____ % Instruction is 0%) will be used instead. *Pre-loaded Chancery data indicating when the student was actually enrolled at your campus/in your class will not be transferred. This is not the recommended selection.*
Select the class(es) to which you want to copy the roster, then click Continue.

**How Do I Replace Rosters?**
This function allows a teacher to replicate the class roster of one of his/her classes to some or all of his/her selected classes.

From the Class Roster page, click the **Actions** button and then select **Copy Students**.
Or, from the Link page which lists all of your rosters, click Copy Students.

Next, select Replace Student Roster by selecting the Continue button.

All of the students in the roster you are copying will replace any students who are already in the receiving roster. For example, the roster you are starting with contains Students A, B, C. The roster you are replacing contains Students C, D, and E. Once complete, the roster you replaced will contain Students A, B, C. Student C will not be duplicated, and Students D and E will be deleted.

Next, select which copy method you would like use by selecting one of the Continue buttons.
**Recommended**: If you select “Include membership and % instruction,” the months and percentage of instruction in the class roster will be transferred with the students.

If you select “Default to entire term and 0% instruction,” the months and percentage of instruction in the class roster will **not** be transferred and default values (From: Aug/Sept to May/June, _____ % Instruction is 0%) will be used instead. *Pre-loaded Chancery data indicating when the student was actually enrolled at your campus/in your class will not be transferred.* This is not the recommended selection.

Select which class(es) to which you want to copy the roster, then click Continue.

**Helpful Hint**: If you are a self-contained teacher, you may want to complete linkage in one roster, and then Replace Student Rosters to all the other rosters. If you taught slightly different students in the other subjects, you can edit the individual subject rosters to indicate additional students taught.

**Special Note for SRI Teachers!**
For the 2013–2014 Linkage and Verification Period and ASPIRE Award Program, SRI courses are considered **core foundation courses** and **require** student-teacher linkages. For specific course numbers, please see the Secondary Reading Initiative (SRI) Program Eligibility Document located on the ASPIRE portal.

SRI teachers are considered as core foundation teachers for ASPIRE award purposes if they teach courses (SRI and/or others) identified as core foundation for the majority of the day/year. Teachers of SRI 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 **must** link the specific SRI courses (i.e., RDG1636) in order to have an SRI award calculated. If a teacher needs to have an SRI Reading course added, it is *imperative* that the correct course number is selected when adding classes.

SRI teachers should link their students through the ASPIRE portal **only**; a separate linkage process will **not be required** for the spring semester. Please see the [Special Cases document](#) for additional details.

SRI teachers **should not** combine rosters for the SRI-specific courses. These rosters **must** be completed under their specific course number in order to be used for SRI awards.

If you have questions about this process, please contact your principal or a member of your support team.

**Reviewing Alerts**

At the bottom of your “Link” page, you will see the “Teacher Alerts and Notifications” section.

These alerts will help you identify issues that may occur when students on your rosters are over claimed, underclaimed, or claimed when they were not at your campus. An alert is also generated when you have empty rosters.

Alerts may be refreshed at any time by clicking [Refresh Alerts](#).

**How Do I Correct Alerts?**

Click on the Alerts link at the right to display a list of alerts in that category.

**Note:** If there are “0 Alerts,” you cannot click the Alert link. You may only click an alert link when there are 1 or more alerts to be corrected.
1. Click View/Edit to display the Link detail page. This page will show you details for that student including each teacher who has claimed that student and for what percent of instruction for each month of the school year. An example is shown here:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Aug/Sept</th>
<th>Oct</th>
<th>Nov</th>
<th>Dec</th>
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<th>Feb</th>
<th>Mar</th>
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<tr>
<td>Integrated English Language Arts 7-8</td>
<td>Wright, Constance</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

An example is shown here:

2. You may need to make corrections on your own roster, or discuss the percentage of instruction claimed with another teacher who may need to make corrections.

3. You may want to check the alerts several times during Roster Verification as details will change when other teachers complete the verification of their own rosters.

4. The check boxes at the bottom are disabled (for viewing only). They will display a check mark if one has been set by the principal or support team member indicating that a student was not receiving instruction from your campus for the majority of the month(s) checked.

5. Click on the roster name to go directly into your roster. From the roster you can make changes to the information for the student that is causing the alert.

What if I Can’t Correct an Alert?
If you need assistance in correcting an alert, please contact your principal or a support team member.

Special Note About Submitted Linkages

Now Available! Teachers, support team members, and principals can see the changes that were made to their rosters and by whom these changes were made!
After you have submitted your roster(s) for approval, your principal or a support team member may find it necessary to make changes to your roster prior to approval. If changes are made to your roster, you will receive an automatically-generated email informing you of a change and the roster affected. This will allow you to review the changes that have been made to your roster, and to discuss them with your principal or support staff before linkages are sent to SAS® for analysis.

After student-teacher linkages are sent to SAS® for analysis, no further changes can be made to your rosters. Your principal and support staff have until May 23, 2014 to clear any outstanding alerts and approve all rosters on your campus.

If you believe there is a problem with any changes made to your roster by your principal or support team member, please discuss this with them by May 23, 2014 (the last day of the principal confirmation period).

You will also receive an automatically generated email informing you when your roster has been approved.

Support Resources

Username & Password Support
Username and password assistance will be provided by the HISD Help Desk at (713) 892-7378 or the “Forgot Password?” feature on the site. HISD Help Desk staff will only provide username and password support, and will not answer any questions related to the ASPIRE Verification and Linkage system or process. Charter school campus-based staff who do not know or remember their username will need to email ASPIREAward@houstonisd.org for assistance.

Optional Open Lab Sessions Available District-Wide!
The HISD Research & Accountability department is pleased to offer several options for assistance during the School Setup Period (April 21–25), the Teacher Linkage Period (April 28–May 16), and the Principal Confirmation Period (May 19–23).

These opportunities for assistance are optional for those campus-based staff who would like assistance in completing the campus setup, teacher linkage, and/or principal confirmation process. For details on open lab workgroups in your area, please see the Open Lab Announcement on the ASPIRE portal.

Online Support
Teachers, principals, and support team members can submit an electronic help ticket if they need assistance during this process. Click Submit Support Ticket on your "My Resources Home."
Support tickets will be responded to on a first-come, first-served basis. General support for all instructional and support staff will be available through the support system on the portal. Users submit questions online, and a “case” or support ticket is created. If you submit a question online, you will have to log back into the portal to review responses.

**Questions about the 2013–2014 ASPIRE Award Program**

Staff members are encouraged to review the 2013–2014 award program materials on the ASPIRE portal [here](#). If you still have questions, please email ASPIREAward@houstonisd.org.

Thank you for your efforts and support of this important process!