# 2014–2015 Linkage and Verification User Guide for Teachers and Campus-Based Staff Members

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**Introduction**

On April 27, the 2014–2015 ASPIRE Linkage and Verification process begins for teachers and campus-based staff. HISD uses the data gathered during this process to calculate both teacher-level EVAAS® and teacher-level Comparative Growth reports. Teacher-level EVAAS® reports are used for both the Teacher Appraisal and Development System and ASPIRE awards. Teacher-level Comparative Growth reports are used for the Teacher Appraisal and Development System.

**Optional Workgroups**

The ASPIRE team is pleased to offer optional workgroup opportunities at campuses throughout the district again this year. Back by popular demand, face-to-face workgroups are available to help principals, campus-based support teams, and teachers complete this process as accurately and timely as possible. Workgroups are offered during after-school hours and at campuses all around the district to be convenient for campus-based staff and afford everyone the opportunity to get the assistance they need. Please check the district map for a campus near you!

Workgroups are offered during the Campus Setup Period (April 20–24), the Linkage and Verification Period (April 27–May 15), and the Principal Confirmation Period (May 18–22).

For details on workgroups in your area, see the [Optional Workgroups announcement](#) on the portal.

**What is Linkage?**

**Linkage** is a process that attributes instructional influence on student academic process for core foundation teachers in grades 1–12 who provide instruction in the content areas of 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](#) for which the teacher was responsible for a given student in a given subject.

The linkage process provides the opportunity for teachers and campus-based staff to review and verify the data that is submitted to calculate their EVAAS® and Comparative Growth analyses. Although student data is obtained from the Chancery system, teachers review this information for accuracy and completeness and report on the percentage of instructional time for which they were responsible.
Importance of Completing Linkage
To be considered as a core foundation teacher of students in grades 1–12 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. Please note: Teachers of students in grades 9–12 who do not take STAAR EOC exams (i.e., Geometry, English III, etc.) are not required to complete student-teacher linkages, but are required to verify their award grouping.

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 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 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. In addition, core foundation teachers who do not provide student-teacher linkages may be considered as “not eligible” for the ASPIRE award (see Program Eligibility Document, eligibility criteria 5).

What is Verification?
Verification provides the opportunity for teachers and campus-based staff to review tentative 2014–2015 ASPIRE Award Program eligibility and award grouping (categorization) information.

This includes:
- Reviewing preliminary eligibility—including attendance—for accuracy; and
- Discussing potential corrections and questions with the principal or campus support team for resolution.

This is not the final ASPIRE award eligibility as some rules can only be computed upon completion of the school year.

Importance of Completing Verification
It is important to review your eligibility during the Linkage and Verification Period (April 27–May 15). Some staff members may be close to exceeding the maximum number of absence hours allowed 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.

**Key Dates and Activities**

**April 20–24**  
**Campus Setup Period:** Principals and support team members complete campus setup so that campus-based staff can complete the Linkage and Verification Period in the timeframe provided.

**April 27–May 15**  
**Linkage and Verification Period:** Campus-based staff, including all core foundation teachers, complete eligibility/categorization review. Core foundation teachers provide student-teacher linkages.

**May 18–22**  
**Principal Confirmation Period:** Principals and support team members review class rosters, eligibility, and categorization. Principals approve campus information, including student-teacher linkages.

**Which Campus-Based Staff Should Complete Linkage and Verification?**

**Linkage:** HISD teachers of students in the following grades and subjects will participate in the 2015 Linkage process:

- Grades 1–8 Reading, Language Arts (LA), and Math
- Grades 3–8 TELPAS*
- Grades 4–8 Science and Social Studies
- Teachers with any students in these courses:
  - Algebra I
  - English I and II
  - Biology
  - U.S. History

*TELPAS linkage is new this year. Please see the Special Cases document for a description of linkage for this “content area” and additional instructions.

Please note: All core foundation teachers of students in grades 1–12 in classes requiring linkage must have students linked to them to be considered a core foundation teacher. This includes special education teachers and teachers of small classes.

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

**Verification:** All staff members assigned to a campus during the 2014–2015 school year should verify their tentative award information. For a complete description of eligibility rules and award groups, please refer to the Program Eligibility Document on the portal. Please note: Some award groups cannot be determined until after the Linkage and Verification process.

For additional details, see “Expected Linkages” on the “Link” page of the portal.
Accessing the System

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

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

Verifying Eligibility and Categorization

ASPIRE “Link” Home Page

- Your tentative award eligibility and categorization information is displayed in the “Tentative Award Information” section in the center of the page. Your tentative eligibility status will be listed with a green check mark or a red “X.”

All eligibility, including absence hours, have been computed as of April 12, 2015. Final eligibility will be computed upon 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 eligibility criteria.

- If you are not eligible because of eligibility criteria #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 Family & Medical Leave (FML), please contact Human Resources (HR). 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, 2015, 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 match award groups listed in the Program Eligibility Document. It is important to understand that 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 for awards in Group 4 based on the position in which the teacher functioned for the majority of the day.

If you miss the deadline to acknowledge your eligibility and categorization:
- No one else may acknowledge your individual information for you;
- Acknowledging your eligibility and categorization does not guarantee you will receive an award; and
- Not acknowledging does not prevent you from receiving an award.
Opting Out of the ASPIRE Award Program

All teachers and campus-based staff have the opportunity to “opt out” of the ASPIRE Award Program.

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, 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.

- All staff members are opted in to the program unless they choose to opt out.
- If you opted out of an award for the 2013–2014 school year, you will not continue to be opted out for 2014–2015 unless you change your selection again to “opt out.”
- To change your selection, click Change next to the green “opt in” graphic or the red “opt out” graphic.
- You may change your choice as many times as you wish until the Linkage and Verification Period ends. Your award payment status—documented on the ASPIRE portal as of 11:59 p.m. May 15—will be used for the 2014–2015 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.
**What to Do if Categorization and/or Eligibility is Incorrect**

If you discover an error with the computation of your award or eligibility group **based on the program rules and eligibility**, then discuss the issue with your principal or a support team member during the Linkage and Verification Period. If necessary, your principal and support team members have the option of submitting an override request for your information.

Additionally, if your information is not corrected during the linkage period, you can and should submit a support ticket during the **Eligibility Confirmation Period**. The Eligibility Confirmation Period will be held in the first semester of the 2015–2016 school year, after final eligibility calculations can be completed.

**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 linkage and/or verification process and request or make changes to your information as necessary.

Find a list of the support team members at your campus on the portal here:

![Support Team Members](image)

**Verifying Award Information**

Once you have reviewed your eligibility and award categorization, 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 with your principal and/or support team member.

**Verification must be completed no later than 11:59 p.m. May 15, 2015.**

**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 the 2015 Linkage process:

- Grades 1–8 Reading, Language Arts (LA), and Math
- Grades 3–8 TELPAS*
- Grades 4–8 Science and Social Studies
- Teachers 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.

*TELPAS linkage is new this year. Please see the [Special Cases](#) document for a description of linkage for this “content area” and additional instructions.

Please note: All core foundation teachers of students in grades 1–12 in classes requiring linkage **must** have students linked to them to be considered a core foundation teacher. This includes special education teachers and teachers of small classes.

**Important!** If your list of rosters requiring verification is incomplete, contact your principal or a support team member to add the missing rosters!
**Reviewing and Modifying Rosters**

Class rosters requiring review and percentage instruction assignment are located in the “My Class Rosters” section of the “Link” page. To begin reviewing a class roster, click “Actions” and then Begin. This list should include each of your classes. Each class period *could* have its own class roster.

![Class Roster Image]

To accurately account for all students, mobility, and percent of instruction, the system allows you to modify rosters. Prior to the teacher linkage period, principals and support team members review and correct class rosters, if needed, to help minimize assignment errors and to 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). You must be in a roster to change the name.
If an error exists in your class roster, you can Add Students or Delete Students.

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.

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 to select the correct student.

4. Select Return when you are finished.
5. If you have searched the entire district and still cannot find a student, then you can submit a question to the ASPIRE Support Team by clicking Contact Support under the:
   A. Actions button in the roster; or
   B. Submit Support Ticket link in the “Resources” section on your “Link” page.

   You can also contact your principal or campus support team member for assistance.

**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.

**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
Student start and end dates indicate the period of time when instruction was provided.

1. On the “Class Roster” page, in 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.

Warning: Students’ start and stop months are pre-loaded from the Chancery Student Information System, based on their start month and stop month at your campus and in your roster. That information can be changed by selecting new start and stop months for a student. However, if you inadvertently change the start and stop month for a student who was not in your classroom for the entire year when you chose “Set Values for All Students,” and another teacher claims the same student for the appropriate months, the student will be over-claimed for those months. This will cause an alert, which will require you to change the start and stop months for that student, as appropriate.
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 a group of the same students in multiple content areas, 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 of a different content area by clicking the Actions button, then selecting Copy Students. See the Copying and Replacing Rosters 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 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 subject is attributable to you.

Do not account for student attendance in the percentage of instruction for which you are claiming. If you were the only Reading teacher for the student, you should claim 100% of instruction for the student—even if the student only attended 50% of the days. If you would like additional information on student attendance and value-added calculations, please see EVAAS® Frequently Asked Questions (page 4) on the portal.

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 include:

- **Co-teaching situations:** Both teachers will indicate a percentage of instruction that represents how much instruction was 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 Ms. Jones and Mr. Sanchez five days a week, each teacher may be responsible for an equivalent amount of instruction. In these situations, the teachers could 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 Ms. Jones and 50% instruction from Mr. Sanchez), but where Mr. Sanchez works with a co-teacher (Ms. Carter). In this situation, Ms. Jones might claim the student at 50% time, while Mr. Sanchez and Ms. Carter might claim the student at 30% and 20% time, respectively.

All of these scenarios are guidelines, not suggestions or recommendations. 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 months mode can be used for as little as one and as many as all 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 months 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.

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

3. Repeat this step for each of your class rosters. You can review and, if necessary, update class rosters up until the Teacher Linkage Period ends.

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.
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.

How Do I Copy Rosters?
There are two ways to copy students.

From the Class Roster page, click the Actions button and 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.

To copy the current months and percentage of instruction settings with the student, click the button inside the “Include membership and % instruction” box.

Include membership and % instruction: The months and percentage of instruction in the class roster will be transferred with the students. This selection is recommended.

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. 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 you to replicate the class roster of one of your classes to some or all of your 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.

To copy the current months and percentage of instruction settings with the student, click the button inside the “Include membership and % instruction” box.
Include membership and % instruction: The months and percentage of instruction in the class roster will be transferred with the students. This selection is recommended.

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. 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.
How Do I Merge Rosters?
If rosters are the same subject, staff can merge them.

If you have multiple class rosters in the same subject area (Reading 10, Reading 101 ESL, Reading 101 Advanced, for example) and wish to merge them into a single roster, you may do so using the Merge Classes function. This will give you one single roster that contains all of your students for that content area. This is particularly useful for teachers who have many rosters that represent the same class, or many rosters that represent the same course. This can help you to eliminate duplicated students and to reduce the number of overclaimed student alerts.

From the “My Class Rosters” page, click the Actions button and then select Merge Classes.

A pop-up will display classes in the same subject area. Select the Continue button next to the group to merge.
Select the classes to merge—two or more from the list of classes in that subject. Next, provide details for the resulting class. Then, click **Merge Classes**.

The resulting class will appear in the Active Class list, and the source classes will be deleted.

### 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, under-claimed, or claimed when they were not at your campus. An alert is also generated when you have empty rosters.
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:

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 the Teacher Linkage period 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?
You can only make changes to your own rosters. If you find that the change that needs to be made is in another teacher’s roster, you should discuss that change with the other teacher. If this is unsuccessful, and you need assistance in correcting an alert, please contact your principal or a support team member. Please note that the ASPIRE team cannot assist with changes to your rosters or another teacher’s rosters; this must be done at the campus level, either by the teachers or support team members.

Special Note about Submitted Linkages

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 EVAAS® for analysis.

After student-teacher linkages are sent to EVAAS® for analysis, no further changes can be made to your rosters. Your principal and support staff have until May 22, 2015 to clear any outstanding alerts and approve all rosters on your campus.

Note: When changes are made to teacher linkages or rosters, the date of change and the staff member who made the changes are documented within the underlying data on the ASPIRE portal. Teachers will also be informed by email if any changes are made to their rosters after they have submitted the rosters for approval.

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 22, 2015 (the last day of the Principal Review and Approval Period).

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

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!
To view the history of changes made to a class, choose “View Class History” from the Actions button on a roster.

Support Resources

Optional Workgroups
The ASPIRE team is pleased to offer optional workgroup opportunities at campuses throughout the district again this year. Back by popular demand, face-to-face workgroups are available to help principals, campus-based support teams, and teachers complete this process as accurately and timely as possible. Workgroups are offered during after-school hours and at campuses all around the district to be convenient for campus-based staff and afford everyone the opportunity to get the assistance they need. Please check the district map for a campus near you! Workgroups are offered during the Campus Setup Period (April 20–24), the Linkage and Verification Period (April 27–May 15), and the Principal Confirmation Period (May 18–22). For details on workgroups in your area, see the Optional Workgroups announcement on the portal.

Campus Support Team Members
Your campus support team members are available to help with:

- Locating the Acknowledge button
- Locating the Begin button
- Locating the Submit button
- Adding/finding a student
- Deleting/restoring students

HISD Help Desk: Username and Password Support
The HISD Help Desk is available for username and password assistance at (713) 892-7378. Help Desk staff will only provide username and password support, and are not in the position to answer questions related to the ASPIRE Linkage and Verification system or process. You may also use the “Forgot Password?” feature on the portal.

Charter school employees who do not know or remember their username should email ASPIREAward@houstonisd.org for assistance.
BFK Help Desk: Navigating ASPIRE Portal and BFK•Link® Support
Battelle for Kids’ Help Desk is available at (866) 543-7555 Monday through Friday from 7 a.m.– 5 p.m. to help with:

- Accessing the ASPIRE portal
- Logging into the ASPIRE portal with username and password
- Locating/navigating the BFK•Link® system
- Locating campus support team members as listed on the “Link” home page
- Locating missing students
- Adding missing students to the ASPIRE portal (note that the Help Desk cannot add missing students to rosters – only to the portal itself)

Questions should be specific to the Linkage and Verification process only—not to EVAAS® value-added reports or the ASPIRE Award Program.

Questions about the 2014–2015 ASPIRE Award Program
Staff members are encouraged to review the 2014–2015 award program materials on the ASPIRE portal here. If you still have questions, please email ASPIREAward@houstonisd.org. Thank you!