

2013–2014 ASPIRE Awards

Program and Eligibility Requirements

August 2013



General Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible to participate in the 2013–2014 ASPIRE Awards, HISD employees must meet all of the following general eligibility requirements:

1. Employees must be supervised and appraised by the principal or other designated appraiser of the campus where they are serving students. Employees not supervised or appraised by the principal or campus appraiser are not eligible—even if 100% of their time is spent on a campus (e.g., food service employees, Plant Operators, custodians).
2. Employees must have a job/record position assigned to a campus, and must have a campus ID as their department ID by September 10, 2013. Employees whose job record/position is assigned to non-campus departments for time reporting are not eligible.
3. Employees must be continuously employed in an eligible position through the last day of school.
4. Employees must work at least 40% of the school time (equivalent to two days per week) at the same campus.
5. Employees must complete the instructional-linkage and assignment-verification process—or have this completed by their principal—through the ASPIRE portal by the submission deadline as published annually. It is recommended that employees review instructional-linkage and assignment-verification information on the ASPIRE portal for accuracy.
6. Employees may “opt out” of ASPIRE Awards during the linkage and verification process. If an employee does not make a selection, the employee will be included in award consideration.
7. Non-administrative employees eligible under other incentive plans are not eligible (e.g. Sr. Academic Tutor).
8. Hourly employees in any capacity—including substitute/associate teachers—are not eligible. Employees holding an hourly or substitute position must be converted to a non-hourly position by September 10, 2013.
9. Employees who take leave of absence during the eligibility period (e.g., temporary disability, but not family medical leave) are not eligible.
10. Employees cannot be absent for more than 10 instructional days during the “instructional school year” (77.50 hours for staff on a 7.75-hour day¹; 80.00 hours for staff on an 8-hour day). This means first-year employees must commence employment no later than September 10, 2013, as any instructional days missed from the start of their campus’ instructional school year to the date employed will be counted as absent. Early release days are treated as other instructional days—the entire day (7.75 hours, or 8.0 hours) is considered instructional. The following types of leave will be held harmless and not count as days absent:
 - Funeral leave(coded as funeral leave, not as “additional funeral leave,” per board policy)
 - Military leave
 - Family medical leave
 - Assault leave

¹Some teachers are located at campuses where extended time is worked. This extended time is paid at the time it was worked. When absences are incurred, teachers’ leave banks are charged for the regular length of the day (7.75 hours), and not for any additional time. Therefore, for all teachers, one day’s absence is 7.75 hours, and 10 days of absences remain at 77.50 hours regardless of the extended hours at the campus.

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- Jury duty
- Holidays
- Religious holidays
- Floating holidays
- Vacation pay
- Compensatory time
- Authorized off-campus duty

Family medical leave, military leave and assault leave must be authorized through Human Resources (HR) at the time of the leave

11. Employees who receive a final summative rating of “Ineffective” or “Needs Improvement” for the 2013–2014 school year, according to the Teacher Appraisal and Development System or the School Leader Appraisal System, are not eligible. This final summative rating includes a Student Performance measure for applicable employees.
12. Employees who were on a Prescriptive Plan of Assistance (PPA) based on the 2013–2014 information as determined by multiple measures including observations, walkthroughs, student performance, etc. and whose performance goals were not met by the end of the 2013–2014 school year are not eligible.
13. Employees who retire or resign in lieu of termination are not eligible.
14. For Principals to be eligible, all teacher positions at the campus must be fully staffed as of the first day of school, August 26, 2013. Principals of campuses who have teaching vacancies as of the first day of school can appeal their eligibility status.

Position Eligibility Requirements and Award Groups

Different positions within HISD qualify for various aspects of ASPIRE Awards. Following are definitions for position groups and eligibility requirements that will be used to group employees for award purposes:

Instructional Position Groups

Employees must be certified teaching staff and fall into either core foundation or elective/ancillary instructional positions as defined below.

Core Foundation Teaching Positions

Employees must be assigned to a campus, plan lessons, provide direct instruction to students, and be responsible for providing content grades—not conduct or participation grades—for ASPIRE core foundation courses for the majority of the day/school year.

ASPIRE Core Foundation Courses

ASPIRE Core Foundation Courses include those courses identified by the Texas Education Agency under the Core Foundation areas of English Language Arts/Reading, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies at the elementary and middle school level and those Core Foundation courses required for graduation credit in the 4x4 Recommended or Distinguished High School Diploma programs and/or those courses that contribute directly to data collected and interpreted as part of the growth measure. Fifty percent of the teaching assignment must be in ASPIRE Core Foundation courses to be considered as core foundation instructional staff for the purposes of the award.

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Group 1. Core Foundation Teachers, Grades 3–11, with EVAAS™ Value-Added Report

To be considered in this group, employees must teach at least one and as many as five core foundation subjects for which a value-added report is generated. Student linkages are required to be provided during the spring linkage process in order for a teacher to be considered in this category. A teacher-level value-added report must be produced in order to be considered in this group.

Group 2. Core Foundation Teachers, Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 2

To be considered in this group, employees must qualify as core foundation instructional staff and teach core foundation subjects to students in pre-kindergarten through grade 2 for the majority of the school day. Student linkages for students in grades 1–2 are required to be provided during the spring linkage process in order for a teacher to be considered in this category.

Group 3. Core Foundation Teachers, Grades 3–12, without EVAAS™ Value-Added Report

To be considered in this group, employees must qualify as core foundation teachers. Core foundation courses must be taught the majority of the school day. For a complete list of these courses, please review the master course list with ASPIRE core foundation subjects. This group may include special education teachers who teach core foundation courses where a value-added report cannot be generated, high school teachers of students in grades and subjects for which a value-added report cannot be generated, or teachers of low class sizes. Student linkages for students in grades 3–11 are required to be provided during the spring linkage process in order for a teacher to be considered in this category.

Elective/Ancillary Instructional Positions

Group 4. Elective/Ancillary Teachers

To be considered in this group, employees must teach elective/ancillary classes (e.g., art, music, physical education, etc.) for the majority of the school day/year.

Other Position Groups

In addition to recognizing instructional staff, ASPIRE Awards also acknowledge the contributions of employees who contribute to student growth in other ways throughout the school year:

Group 5. Instructional Support Staff

Instructional support-staff members are degreed, certified or licensed professionals assigned to a campus and provide direct support to the instruction of students. If the instructional support-staff member is assigned to multiple campuses, the percentage of assignment to a single campus cannot be less than 40%. Instructional support staff must have a campus ID as their department ID. Instructional support staff may link students and receive a value-added report, but the production of a value-added report does not place an employee as a core foundation teacher for the purposes of determining ASPIRE Award groups. *For example: counselor, librarian, nurse, speech therapist, speech therapist assistant, evaluation specialist, instructional coordinator, content area specialist, school-improvement facilitator, API, social worker, literacy coach, Magnet or Title I coordinator.*

Group 6. Teaching Assistants

Teaching assistants are staff members who have a job classification of “Teaching Assistant” and provide direct classroom instructional support to instructional staff.

Group 7. Operational Support Staff

Operational support-staff members are campus-based employees who do not meet the requirements for instructional staff, instructional support staff, or teaching assistants. *For example: school secretary, data entry*

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clerk, teacher aide, clerk, attendance specialist, business manager, SIMS clerk, computer network specialist, registrars, Campus Education Technician.

Campus Leadership Groups

ASPIRE Awards recognize campus leadership for their contribution to student progress and achievement based on campus performance. Certification for these positions is required in order to be considered for these categories. The following describe the award group eligibility criteria for leadership positions:

Group 1L. Principals

To be considered in this group, employees must meet all general eligibility requirements and be the “principal of record” according to HR and PeopleSoft.

Group 2L. Assistant Principals/Deans of Instruction/Deans of Students

To be considered in this group, employees must meet all eligibility requirements and be coded as an assistant principal, dean of instruction, or dean of students according to HR and PeopleSoft.

Additional Position Eligibility Requirements

1. For an employee who transfers or is reassigned from one ASPIRE Award-eligible position to another ASPIRE Award-eligible position during the eligibility period, the award will be determined on the basis of the ASPIRE Award-eligible position the employee held the greatest percentage of the school year (based on the 180-day academic calendar). *For example: On September 5, an employee teaches third-grade math. On February 5, the employee transfers to content specialist on the same campus. Both assignments are ASPIRE Award-eligible. However, the award model and eligibility requirements differ. In this case, the greatest percentage of the “school year” was spent as a third grade core foundation teacher. Therefore, the award amount would be determined on the basis of the job, a third grade core foundation teacher.*
2. For an employee who transfers from an ASPIRE Award-eligible position to a non-eligible position during the eligibility period, he/she will not be eligible for an award (see General Eligibility Requirements 1, 2 and 3).
3. ASPIRE Awards for employees who function in multiple award groups (above) will be determined based on the job in which they function for the majority of their work day.
4. Employees must have credentials for the position in which they function to be eligible under that category. *For example: A teacher teaching twelfth-grade math must be certified or on permit to teach twelfth-grade math in order to be eligible as a core foundation teacher.*
5. For employees who meet the criteria of a Group 1 teacher but teach additional grade levels that are not included in the teacher’s value-added report, awards will be based on the value-added report only. *For example: If a teacher teaches second- and third-grade reading, and a value-added report is obtained for third-grade based on the direct measure of student growth, the teacher would be considered for Group 1 awards, and would not be considered for Group 2 awards.*
6. The production of a value-added report does not necessarily place an employee in Group 1 for awards. *For example: If a value-added report is produced to measure the growth of students by a literacy coach for diagnostic and instructional improvement, the literacy coach is not considered as a core foundation teacher; the literacy coach remains in Group 5 for award purposes.*

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ASPIRE Award Calculation and Payout Rules

ASPIRE Awards will be calculated on the basis of the HISD board-approved model. Certain situations require the adoption of the following award calculation rules in order to apply the award model appropriately:

1. Employees who work less than full time must work at least 40% of the school time (equivalent to two days per week) at the same campus to be eligible to receive a prorated ASPIRE Award. The prorated ASPIRE Award will be based on the full-time equivalent (FTE) of their eligible position, the portion of time spent in the eligible position, and the ASPIRE Award level. *For example: A half-time employee (or 0.5 FTE) who spends all of his or her time at a single campus would be eligible to receive 50% of the award. This same employee who works 50% of his/her time at two campuses (0.25 FTE at each campus) would not be eligible.*
2. Awards for employees whose job record/position is assigned to a campus department for time reporting who are assigned to and work on multiple campuses a minimum of 40% of the time and report directly to the principal (principal is responsible for supervising and evaluating the individual employee) will be calculated and prorated on the basis of the percentage of campus assignments. Examples include evaluation specialists, content specialists, speech therapists and various special education positions. *For example: A campus-assigned, campus-based employee works 50% of his or her time at campus A, 25% at campus B, and 25% at campus C. If the employee is eligible for an ASPIRE Award based on campus data, then the employee would receive 50% of the eligible payout at campus A, and would not receive an award for campus B or C.*
3. Good Standing:
 - Employees must be in good standing at the time of payment. Therefore, an employee under investigation or reassigned pending investigation is not eligible for an ASPIRE Award until he or she is cleared of any allegation. If the investigation is concluded with a confirmation of inappropriate employee behavior, the employee is not eligible to receive an ASPIRE Award.
4. If an employee meets all of the eligibility requirements for an award and then resigns or retires from the district prior to the payout of the awards, the employee is still eligible for the ASPIRE Award. It is incumbent upon the employee to provide the district with correct forwarding information so that the award payment can be processed.
5. For Principals Only:
 - The campus must also be in good standing. If the campus had an approved waiver to the district-testing procedures and if any testing improprieties are reported and confirmed or otherwise substantiated at the campus, the principal will be ineligible to receive an ASPIRE Award.



2013–2014 ASPIRE Award Model Diagram

Teachers & Campus-Based Staff

| | | Indicator | Metric | Group 1 Core Teacher, Grades 3-11 w/ EVAAS™ | Group 2 Core Teacher, PK-2 | Group 3 Core Teacher, Grades 3-12 w/o EVAAS™ | Group 4 Elective/Ancillary Teacher | Group 5 Instructional Support Staff | Group 6 Teaching Assistant | Group 7 Operational Support Staff |
|---|--|--|---|---|--|--|---|--|---|---|
| Individual Performance | | EVAAS™ Teacher Composite Cumulative Gain Index (Teachers whose Composite CGI is less than or equal to -2.00 will not be considered for any group performance award) | CGI ≥ 2 | \$10,000 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| | | | 2 > CGI ≥ 1 | \$5,000 | | | | | | |
| | | Indicator | Metric | | | | | | | |
| Group Performance: Teachers | Department Value-Added | EVAAS™ Department Cumulative Gain Index (STAAR/STAAR-EOC/TAKS within a subject) | Top Quintile | N/A | N/A | \$3,500 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| | Grade/ Subject Student Growth | Comparative Growth Math (Based on campus 2nd grade Stanford/Aprenda) | Top Quintile | N/A | \$1,750 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| | | Comparative Growth Reading (Based on campus 2nd grade Stanford/Aprenda) | | N/A | \$1,750 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| | | Indicator | Metric | | | | | | | |
| Group Performance: Campus-Wide | Campus Value-Added | EVAAS™ Campus Composite Cumulative Gain Index | Top Quintile | \$2,000 | \$2,000 | \$2,000 | \$2,000 | \$750 | \$750 | \$500 |
| | Campus Growth or Achievement | ES/MS Campus Staff: Stanford/Aprenda Math (Percent of all students at/above 50th percentile rank across grades 1–8) | Top Quintile or Top Quintile of Improvement | \$500 | \$500 | \$500 | \$500 | \$300 | \$200 | N/A |
| | | ES/MS Campus Staff: Stanford/Aprenda Reading (Percent of all students at/above 50th percentile rank across grades 1–8) | | \$500 | \$500 | \$500 | \$500 | \$300 | \$200 | N/A |
| | HS Campus Staff: AP/IB Participation & Performance (Students scoring 3+/-4+ divided by grades 10–12 PEIMS enrollment - unduplicated count) | Top Quintile or Top Quintile of Improvement | \$1,000 | N/A | \$1,000 | \$1,000 | \$600 | \$400 | N/A | |
| Maximum Award Amount | | | | \$13,000 | \$6,500 | \$6,500 | \$3,000 | \$1,350 | \$1,150 | \$500 |