

Including Support Teachers in Local Designation Systems

LOGISTICS GUIDANCE BY STAGE OF IMPLEMENTATION

OVERVIEW

TIA participating districts may include support teachers in their local designation system if they provide instruction to students in an eligible teaching assignment or course. Districts must specify on their system application if support teachers are included. This document provides logistical guidance in timeline format, from evaluating the district's current support models to implementing a local designation system with support teachers included. Districts may refer to our [TIA Special Education FAQ](#) for more robust guidance specific to special education support teachers.

DOCUMENT DEFINITIONS

- **Eligible teaching assignment:** an assignment based on campus, subject taught, or grade taught.
- **Teacher category:** One or more eligible teaching assignments evaluated with the same teacher observation rubric, student growth measure, and optional components and weighting as defined in a district's local designation system.
- **Support teacher:** A teacher who provides regular instruction to students aligned to course standards for an eligible teaching assignment but is not the primary teacher of record or full-time co-teacher.
 - Support teachers may include interventionists, special education teachers, and dyslexia teachers.
 - Support teachers may provide instruction in a standard classroom setting or through pull-out support.
 - Support teachers may or may not be formally rostered to students.
 - This definition excludes paraprofessionals and educational aides.
- **Support Model:** Local structures and processes for assigning support teachers to students and/or classrooms. Support models may include:
 - Special education inclusion supports tied to student IEP requirements
 - Support teacher provides support to one or more students in a general education setting
 - Support teacher may be assigned to specific students and/or classrooms
 - Support teacher provides instruction to students based on targeted needs
 - May be assigned to a single classroom or rotate between classrooms
 - Pull-out supports
 - Support teacher works with individual students or groups of students in a separate environment to supplement classroom instruction.
 - Intervention classes or sections
 - Students are rostered to a support teacher for a specific section or time of day to supplement instruction in a regular course. This does not apply to remedial courses.

GUIDANCE BY STAGE OF IMPLEMENTATION

System Planning

When considering including or adding support teachers into the local designation system, begin by identifying current support models across the district. Some districts may have standardized support models that are overseen at the district level, while others may allocate support staff to each campus and allow campus-level discretion. TIA leads are encouraged to engage with their district Special Education administrators, RtI/MTSS administrators, and campus administrators. Districts may consider the following questions as they engage with stakeholders to determine if they are ready to include support teachers:

- What support teachers do we currently employ?
- How do we report their Course Codes/Service IDs in PEIMS?
- How do they provide instruction to students?
- Are support teachers currently used as “extra hands” or substitutes? If so, what change management may be required at the campus level to protect their instructional time?
- Do campus administrators have capacity to support the district with determining individual teacher eligibility and collecting performance data?
- How will we measure the effectiveness of support teachers? What student growth measures will we use? How will we calculate final student growth scores?
- Are campus administrators trained on best practices for evaluating special education and support teachers?
- How will we approach student-teacher linkages and track data for teachers who are not rostered to students?
- Who will monitor data collection and validity at the campus level?
- For special education support teachers, review our [TIA Special Education FAQ](#)

Initial System Application or Expansion/Modification Application

Weighting tab

- Eligible teaching assignments must be listed on the weighting tab
- Districts must specify on the weighting tab which, if any, support teachers will be included for each eligible teacher category.
- Districts should be specific if different types of support teachers will be included in each category.
 - For example, “K-5 reading, 3-5 dyslexia teachers, and K-5 reading interventionists”
 - These categories may be independent categories or combined depending on the student growth data used and weighting. Refer to the definition of Teacher Category.
- Note: Teachers of record for modified/resource courses are not considered support teachers. These teachers will have a unique CourseCode/Service ID and should be identified as an eligible teaching assignment within a category. For example, “Grades 6-8 Resource Math”.

Eligible Course Codes/Service IDs

- Eligible teaching assignments are verified using Course Codes/Service IDs. Support teachers may or may not be easily identified on the Eligible Course Codes/Service ID tab.



- In some districts, support teachers such as special education or interventionists have a general districtwide Course Codes/Service ID, or a local Course Code/Service ID. Include this as an eligible Course Code/Service ID on your district system application and select which teaching categories apply. In the district’s future data submissions, teachers with this Course Code/Service ID *who are not providing support instruction in an eligible assignment* can be excluded from the data submission.

Data Collection

Districts should implement clear policies and business rules to determine which support teachers are eligible and how they will be evaluated for designation. Document and communicate these policies to teachers and campus administrators early in the school year before data collection begins.

Local Decisions before Implementation

- Minimum number of students required
- Instructional time required for students to factor into the final student growth score
- Method for tracking and verifying student-teacher linkages
- Teacher eligibility guidance if students or assigned classes change throughout the school year

Best Practices

- Communicate with support teachers to ensure they understand how they will be evaluated for TIA purposes
- Document procedures to ensure support teachers can regularly work with their students and impact student growth.
- Work with campus administrators to promote a culture where support teacher instruction is highly valued. Avoid using support teachers to fill substitute vacancies or other duties as assigned unless absolutely necessary.
- Communicate and collaborate with campus administrators throughout the school year. Administrators should know which teachers are eligible and their role in monitoring student growth data and completing evaluations.
 - Which course or student groups will be used for each teacher’s walk-throughs and formal evaluation
 - For T-TESS districts, [access resources](#) and train campus administrators on best practices and considerations for evaluating SPED and other support teachers.
- By mid-year, document which support teachers will likely be included in the data submission, and which course/assignment/teacher category will be used for data collection.
- Follow regular TWEDS reporting guidance. Districts may choose to roster students to support teachers if they are consistent throughout the year, but this is not required.
- At EOY, allow support teachers and campus administrators to confirm the final student roster that will be used to calculate student growth.

Data Submission

Eligible Teacher List

Eligible support teachers who are not teachers of record may not appear on the eligible teacher list provided by TEA each spring. Districts must track them locally and ensure they are included in the data submission.

Data Submission File

DISTRICT INFORMATION TAB

If eligible support teachers were not on the eligible teacher list, but are included in the data submission, account for them in the District Information tab.

DATA ENTRY TAB

- If support teachers are not identified by a unique Eligible Course Code/Service ID, enter the Course Code/Service ID for the eligible course(s) they supported.
- Ensure support teachers are identified on the weighting tab in alignment with the district's accepted system application.
- Teachers may only have one eligible teacher category listed in the data submission. Support teachers with data collected in multiple eligible assignments must either be evaluated using assignments in the same category or be placed in their own category. Districts may create new categories at data submission if there are unique scenarios for support teachers requiring data from multiple categories.

