

## 2024-2025 Bridge Substitute FAQs for Candidates

### Definition

- Bridge Substitutes are degreed candidates who lack a certification and are being hired to sub in the classroom in which they may ultimately be hired as a teacher upon obtaining certification from the State Board of Educators. These candidates may include:
  - A candidate who is in an alternative certification program (University of Texas at Arlington Alternative Certification Program for Teachers, TX Teachers, ECAP, Iteach, TeachUs, etc.), but has not taken required exams, and does not have an SOE or Intern certificate. **OR**
  - A candidate who has gone the traditional university certification route and has not yet taken the required exams. **OR**
  - A candidate who has gone the traditional route and passed a core content exam but not the content exam for which they are hired to teach. **OR**
  - A candidate who has an out of state certification and is waiting on certificate review by TEA
- “District Select” is a subset of alternative certification program applicants with related fees paid by the district.
- Bridge Substitutes must immediately begin the alternative certification program after acceptance/hire with AISD if they have not already started their program.
- Bridge Substitutes are hired as long-term substitutes and simultaneously receive an offer letter for a full-time teaching position contingent upon completion of the required certification.
- Bridge candidates receive both substitute and full-time teacher offer letters by HR at the initial point of hire. The full time Chapter 21 teaching position offer, contingent on completing the certification requirements, expires March 31, 2025.
  - A Bridge Substitute has been offered a teaching position, signed an employment agreement with the district, and is teaching while they earn their certification. A regular long-term substitute applicant is hired only as a substitute and is not necessarily seeking a full-time teaching position or enrolled in a certification program.
  - Bridge hires who do not complete their certification by March 30, 2025 may have the opportunity to renew their substitute application to have the ability to pick up substitute assignments, including long-term assignments, for the following school year.. Bridge hires who do not convert by March 31, 2025, will keep their “Bridge Substitutes” status for the remainder of

the school year but will not be considered Bridge Substitutes for a second year.

- Until Special Education Bridge Substitutes are certified, they should not be the responsible Special Education representative for IEP meetings, PLAAFs, etc. Contact the Special Education department on how the campus should manage these instructional responsibilities.
- Upon notice from the candidate to HR Recruitment at [HRRecruiting@aisd.net](mailto:HRRecruiting@aisd.net) that they have qualified for their SOE and their Intern or Standard certification has been posted, the Bridge Substitute will transition to their teaching contract offer with the full compensation, benefits and responsibilities of a teacher.

## Pay and Benefits

- **How and when do Bridge Substitutes get paid?**
  - The 24-25 school year pay for Bridge Substitutes is \$225/day.
  - While acting as a sub, Bridge Substitutes will be paid for the days they work within that month on the 20th of the following month.
  - Because Bridge Substitutes are categorized as long-term substitutes, they are not eligible for pay during holiday periods.
  - Bridge Substitutes are paid specifically for time worked in half day or daily increments.
  - If a Bridge Substitute doesn't obtain certification by the end of March 2025, the substitute pay schedule will pay the last check in June. Bridge hires who do not complete their certification by March 31, 2025, may have the opportunity to renew their substitute application to have the ability to pick up substitute assignments, including long-term assignments for the next year. Bridge hires who do not convert by March 31, 2025 will be deemed "Bridge Substitutes" for the remainder of the current school year and for the next school year will receive regular substitute pay based on AISD compensation plan.
  - Bridge Substitutes, once hired, are approved to attend district-level pre-service training and other calendared training days throughout the school year at a rate of \$90/day, as outlined in the compensation manual. Bridge Substitutes are not allowed to be present on campus for any meetings, training, to set up a classroom, etc, until after fully completing the hiring process through Human Resources.
  - Bridge Substitutes working on a campus with an early release day who are attending meetings, professional development, etc. for the entire day will be paid their normal daily rate.

- **What will be the pay and benefits upon conversion to a certified teacher contract?**
  - Bridge Substitutes will be paid a new daily rate for the certified teacher position consistent with the district's pay scale.
  - Remaining days in the current school year work schedule will be paid out at a reduced rate, as the amount will be equally spread out over the summer months.
  - At the beginning of the next school year, the gross pay will be calculated as follows (an example):
    - Daily rate x 187 work days (teacher example) / 12 months
  - Upon conversion to a teacher contract, employees will be eligible to enroll in health care benefits with the district's contribution toward the premium.
  
- **Will Bridge Substitutes be paid for teacher work days/early report days?**
  - Bridge Substitutes will be paid to attend teacher work days and/or early report days based on the teacher calendar.
  
- **What benefits are Bridge Substitutes eligible for?**
  - Bridge Substitutes are eligible to pay for medical benefits through Arlington ISD but do not become eligible for the district's contribution until they are converted to a Chapter 21 contract teacher position.
  
- **Are Bridge athletic coaches or fine arts teachers eligible for the stipends?**
  - Yes, district-established stipends are paid in monthly proportion for Bridge Substitutes formally assigned as coaches or fine arts teachers.
  - High School coaches are eligible in alignment with UIL rules (05-08-03 Sections 1033 and 1202 - Employment of Coaches: *School boards may hire individuals to coach who are not teachers and whose regular duties do not qualify them for a contract with the school district, provided: their employment conditions satisfy (a) and (b) cited above; their rate of pay for the school year is determined by the board before they begin coaching; they are informed by the person approving them for hire that they are not eligible to receive a bonus or any part of their coaching salary from any source (including booster clubs) other than the school district; they complete and sign a UIL Professional Acknowledgement Form.*

## Hiring Processes

- **What is the hiring timeline for Bridge Substitutes?**
  - To give candidates adequate time to complete program requirements, Bridge Substitutes can be recommended to hire through September 30, 2024. However, Bridge hires will be considered through the rest of the fall semester on a case by case basis, depending on progress of completion of their program.
  - Bridge Substitutes will be expected to obtain their SOE by March 31, 2025. If they do not obtain the SOE by this date, the position at their current campus can not be guaranteed, however, they may be considered for hire for the 25-26 school year upon obtaining their SOE.
  
- **Do Bridge Substitutes need to take the Gallup Teacher Insight?**
  - Yes
  
- **How soon may a Bridge Substitute start?**
  - Once a Bridge Substitute attends orientation with AISD HR, they may start as early as their documented report date.
  
- **What if the candidate is a current AISD employee?**
  - A current AISD employee must resign from their position in order to be hired as a Bridge Substitute, which will occur once the employee attends orientation as a Bridge Substitute. An individual may not be in two PCNs at the same time.
  - A Bridge Substitute may opt for medical only (premium paid at 100% by the employee) until they are hired under the teaching contract offer. The district's contribution to medical coverage applies following conversion to a regular full-time teacher position.
  - A current AISD employee who transfers to a Bridge Substitute position will keep any locally accrued sick/personal days. These days will not be available for use while in a substitute role but will be reinstated upon request when converted to a full time teacher position.
  
- **Can a Bridge Substitute be hired to teach summer learning?**
  - Unless a Bridge Substitute has earned an intern or standard certificate before summer school and has moved to a certified teaching position, they are unable to be hired to teach during summer learning.

## Responsibilities and Restrictions

- Because Bridge Substitutes are classified as substitutes and are “bridging” the gap between substitute and classroom teacher, assignment of extra duties and responsibilities should consider the balance of time required for the Bridge Substitute to actively pursue their certification.
- Bridge Substitutes are Not Responsible For:
  - Alternative work duties during conference periods, consistent with full-time teaching staff
  - Lesson Planning without support
  - T-TESS training
  - Meeting exchange time requirements
    - Exchange time not required until after converting to Chapter 21 Teacher Contract

## Professional Development and Classroom Instruction

- **What are Bridge Substitute responsibilities regarding lesson design and classroom instruction?**
  - Bridge Substitutes are responsible for the day-to-day instructional tasks of a regular classroom teacher.
  - Bridge Substitutes are not responsible for lesson design without experienced teacher support.
  - Bridge Substitutes are not responsible for SPED specific duties/responsibilities (i.e. IEP meetings, SPED paperwork, etc...)
- **Is there any district training for Bridge Substitutes?**
  - The district may provide training throughout the year directed to Bridge Substitutes, specifically during summer months. That information will be communicated through the Professional Learning department. You can obtain more information via Renee Pope, Coordinator of Professional Learning: [rpope1@aisd.net](mailto:rpope1@aisd.net)
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- **If a Bridge Substitute is hired before New Hire training, can they attend New Hire training?**
  - For Bridge Substitutes hired (attended orientation) before July 26, 2024, the district will provide two weeks of summer district-level training (Weeks of July 29 and August 5, 2024) and be paid by the district. Bridges

Substitutes are highly encouraged to attend new hire training. They will be paid out of district funds directly through payroll without a payment authorization.

- Some alternative certification programs may allow candidates to use training days for program completion hours. The Professional Learning department will have a pre-approved list of in-district professional learning that will count towards state-required certification hours.
  
- **Are Bridge Substitutes required to attend campus trainings, PLCs, etc?**
  - The campus principal may require a Bridge Substitute to attend for faculty meetings before or after the school day, participate in PLC's, and academic coaching during the school day.
  - The campus principal may require a Bridge Substitute to attend targeted professional development according to grade level and/or content area (or scheduled PLCs) before or after the school day as part of their assignment.
  - Bridge Substitutes should attend campus and teacher prep days, and they will be paid through district payroll; payment authorizations do not need to be turned in. However, if they do not attend any prep or scheduled work days, payroll needs to be notified.
  - If a Bridge Substitute attends half or full day professional development related to entry-level teacher assimilation on a non-scheduled work day, they will be paid via a payment authorization. Professional development immediately before or after a school day, but less than a half day, is not eligible for incremental payment.
  
- **Bridge Substitutes required to earn exchange time?**
  - Exchange time requirements are dependent on when a Bridge Substitute converts to the teacher Chapter 21 contract:
    - If moving from bridge to "teacher" status prior to November 5, they will need 12 hours of District Exchange Time and 6 hours of Campus Exchange Time.
    - If moving from bridge to "teacher" status after November 5 and prior to March 31, they will need 12 hours of exchange time.
    - If moving from bridge to "teacher" status does not occur before March 31, no exchange time is required.
  
- **Will the district provide mentors for Bridge Substitutes?**

- The district may assign mentors who will support the campus with Bridge Substitutes. More information will be provided by the Professional Learning department via Renee Pope, Coordinator of Professional Learning: [rpope1@aisd.net](mailto:rpope1@aisd.net)

## Absences

- **What happens if a Bridge Substitute needs to be absent?**
  - The Bridge Substitute will submit an absence in Frontline/Teams. Another substitute will be able to pick up any jobs submitted. Absences are unpaid time for a Bridge Substitute.
- **What happens if a Bridge Substitute needs to go on leave?**
  - They would receive the same benefits of other long-term substitutes, determined in part by how long they have worked with the district and/or the amount of hours worked in the previous year. Please contact HR Benefits for support at [hrbenefits@aisd.net](mailto:hrbenefits@aisd.net).

## Access

- **What campus access are Bridge Substitutes given?**
  - Bridge Substitutes will have access to TEAMS gradebook, Canvas, and all apps connected to TEAMS Frontline. For additional access, please submit a help ticket.
  - Bridge Substitutes will have badges activated for their respective campuses.

## District Select (Alternative Certification Program Applicants)

- **How is “District Select” different from the Bridge program?**
  - “District Select” is a subset of an alternative certification program. District Select candidates are considered to be Bridge Substitutes, if hired.
  - “District Select” candidates have program fees paid by Arlington ISD in exchange for certain commitments.
  - “District Select” candidates have not begun an alternative certification program and will be entering the program upon selection.
  - Candidates must apply to be selected for “District Select” through [careers@aisd.net](mailto:careers@aisd.net), enroll with an approved alternative certification program

(UTA or Texas Teachers) after approval , and agree to serve at least 3 years with AISD following certification. For more information, see the District Select link on HR Recruitment and Substitute Requests webpage.

- “District Select” candidates are considered from the June Teacher Job Fair until September 30, 2024.
- **How does a candidate become a part of the “District Select” program?**
  - Bridge Substitute candidates interested in the “District Select” program must apply with the district for the program via the website @ <https://www.aisd.net/district/departments/human-resources/recruitment-and-substitute-services/aisd-bridge-substitute-and-district-select-program/>. If accepted, the candidate would sign the District Select agreement and enroll in the selected alternative certification program.