

# ***SUBSTITUTE TEACHER HANDBOOK***



School Board of Sarasota County, Florida

This Substitute Handbook is provided as a guide and is not to be considered a contract. The School District reserves the right to make changes to the policies, procedures, and other statements made in this Substitute Handbook. Business conditions, federal and state law, and organizational needs change periodically; such changes may require portions of the Handbook be revised. This is necessary to successfully provide the appropriate employment relationship and to obtain the goals of the organization. Substitutes are encouraged to contact Human Resources with any questions.

**The School Board of Sarasota County, Florida  
1960 Landings Boulevard  
Sarasota, Florida 34231  
(941) 927-9000  
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*as of July 1, 2009*

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Executive Director Human Resources

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Human Resources Director

## *Table of Contents*

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| <b>A Message from the Director Human Resources</b>        | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Mission and Vision of Sarasota County School Board</b> | <b>3</b> |
| <br>  |          |
| <b>I. Workplace Standards and Policies</b>                |          |
| A. Policy Against Discrimination                          | 4        |
| B. Equal Opportunity Employment Policy Statement          | 4        |
| C. Alcohol and Drug Free Workplace                        | 4        |
| D. Tobacco Use in District Facilities                     | 5        |
| E. Emergency School Closings                              | 5        |
| F. Child Abuse Reporting                                  | 5        |
| G. Safety   | 6        |
| H. Visitors in the Workplace                              | 6        |
| I. Employees with Weapons                                 | 6        |
| J. Employee Self-Reporting of Arrests                     | 6        |
| <br>  |          |
| <b>II. Becoming a Substitute Teacher</b>                  |          |
| A. School Board Policy                                    | 7        |
| B. Qualifications to be a Substitute Teacher              | 7        |
| C. Hiring Process   | 7        |
| D. Substitute Endorsement Program                         | 7        |
| E. Reinstatement Procedure                                | 8        |
| F. Code of Ethics   | 8        |
| G. Salary   | 8        |
| H. Benefits   | 10       |
| I. Workers Compensation                                   | 10       |
| J. Performance Management                                 | 12       |
| K. Attendance   | 12       |
| L. Discipline   | 12       |
| M. Responsibility of District Sub Central                 | 13       |
| N. Eligibility to Stay Active in the System               | 13       |

## *Table of Contents*

### **Page Two**

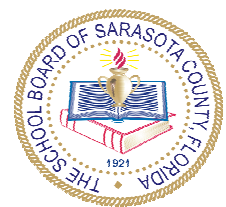
|              |   |           |
|--------------|---|-----------|
| <b>III.</b>  | <b>Professional Responsibilities of Substitute Teachers</b> | <b>14</b> |
| <b>IV.</b>   | <b>On site Responsibilities of Substitute Teachers</b>      | <b>16</b> |
| <b>V.</b>    | <b>Guidelines for Implementing Lessons</b>                  | <b>18</b> |
| <b>VI.</b>   | <b>Classroom Rules</b>                                      | <b>19</b> |
| <b>VII.</b>  | <b>Classroom Management</b>                                 | <b>20</b> |
| <b>VIII.</b> | <b>Avoiding Negligence</b>                                  | <b>21</b> |
| <b>IX.</b>   | <b>Substitute Teacher Classroom Survival Tips</b>           | <b>23</b> |
| <b>X.</b>    | <b>Common Acronyms</b>                                      | <b>24</b> |
| <b>XI.</b>   | <b>Ten Principles of Esteeming Discipline</b>               | <b>25</b> |
| <b>XII.</b>  | <b>School Security</b>                                      | <b>26</b> |
| <b>XIII.</b> | <b>Summer Procedures</b>                                    | <b>29</b> |

**To access the information below (*referred to as Appendix A, Appendix B, etc., in this Handbook*) close or minimize this document to return to the webpage with active links.**

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| <b>A</b> | Next Generation Learning                                |
| <b>B</b> | Equity Handbook   |
| <b>C</b> | School Board Policy 2.8 – <i>Reporting Child Abuse</i>  |
| <b>D</b> | Instructional Code of Ethics                            |
| <b>E</b> | School Board Policy 6.145 – <i>Substitute Teachers</i>  |
| <b>F</b> | Usage of Social Security Numbers                        |
| <b>G</b> | Pay Schedule  |
| <b>H</b> | Payroll Dates   |
| <b>I</b> | Long Term Substitute Performance Evaluation Form        |
| <b>J</b> | Automated Sub Placement System Telephone Instructions   |
| <b>K</b> | Automated Sub Placement System On-Line Instructions     |
| <b>L</b> | Hurricane Information                                   |
| <b>M</b> | Florida Statute 1012.39                                 |
| <b>N</b> | School Opening/Closing Times, Addresses & Telephone #'s |
| <b>O</b> | School Location Maps and Driving Directions             |
| <b>P</b> | 2009/2010 School Calendar                               |
| <b>Q</b> | Sub-Central Staffing                                    |

**I've come to a frightening conclusion that I am the decisive element in the classroom. It's my personal approach that creates the climate. It's my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher I possess a tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool or a torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or humor, hurt or heal. In all situations it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated and a child humanized or dehumanized.**

Dr. Hiam Ginott  
Teacher and Child  
New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972



THE SCHOOL BOARD OF SARASOTA COUNTY, FLORIDA  
1960 LANDINGS BOULEVARD SARASOTA, FLORIDA 34231-3331  
TELEPHONE (941) 927-9000 FAX (941) 927-4020  
HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

July 1, 2009

Dear Substitute Teacher:

On behalf of the Sarasota County School System, I would like to welcome you as one of our Substitute Teachers. Together we are charged with giving our students the best education possible. In order for us to do that, we must have quality in our classrooms at all times. Studies have indicated by the time a student graduates from high school, he/she will have spent a full year with a Substitute Teacher. This, alone, illustrates the value of your contribution to the education of our students.

Our Superintendent has communicated a vision of Next Generation Learning – a vision of education that adapts to today’s reality and tomorrow’s needs. It acknowledges changes in our economy, our workplace and our world. It embraces the next generation with its diverse face, digital upbringing, and independent thinking. It treats every child as an individual, every educator as a professional, and every parent as a customer. It requires total community support, while holding the school district accountable to taxpayers. It represents a new direction, a new hope, a commitment to the success of every child, and a promising future for an effective, efficient organization. (A copy of the brochure detailing this vision is contained for your convenience in Appendix A.)

Our joint commitment to educational excellence can assure our students the quality they deserve. It is my hope you will find this Substitute Teachers Handbook a useful tool.

Sincerely yours,

Michael H. Jones  
Executive Director

## **Mission**

**The School District of Sarasota County prepares students to achieve the highest learning standards by engaging a high quality staff, involved parents, and a supportive community.**



## **Vision**

**The School District of Sarasota County places learning at the center of its activities to enable all learners to lead productive, responsible, and healthful lives.**

## **Chapter I - Workplace Standards and Policies**

### **A. Policy Against Discrimination**

The School Board is committed to providing a work environment free of discrimination and harassment. No employee/applicant/substitute or student must tolerate such discrimination or harassment. Examples of prohibited harassment are listed in the policy manual. No person shall, on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, national origin, marital status, disability if otherwise qualified, or on the basis of the use of a language other than English by Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity, or in any employment conditions or practices conducted by this School District, except as provided by law. Further, School Board employees must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (“ADA”). It is unlawful to discriminate against a qualified individual with a disability who can perform the essential functions of his/her job with reasonable accommodation.

### **B. Equal Opportunity Employment Policy Statement**

The policies and administrative regulations of The School Board of Sarasota County seek to attain ideal conditions of Equal Employment Opportunity. These policies and regulations shall be amended where necessary to ensure full compliance with the letter and the spirit of the law, and apply to everyone in all instructional and non-instructional positions. The policy is to select employees/ applicants as needed on the basis of merit, training, and experience. There shall be no discrimination against any applicant or employee on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national original, age, disability, marital status, or sexual orientation except when it is necessary to meet a bona fide occupational requirement. The School Board of Sarasota County shall take all necessary action to comply with the federal, state, and local laws prohibiting discrimination in employment. We do this to reaffirm our commitment to Equal Employment Opportunity and to refine our implementation of existing policies as they apply to recruitment, hiring, training, promotion, personnel, management practices, and collective bargaining agreements. Please see Appendix B for complete policy and forms.

### **C. Alcohol and Drug Free Workplace**

We are a drug free workplace. As such, no employee shall possess, consume or sell alcoholic beverages or manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess, use or be under the influence of, on or off the job or in the workplace, any narcotic, drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana or any other controlled substance, as defined in the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 812) and as further defined by regulations at 21 CFR 12001.11 through 1300.15 or Florida Statutes, Chapter 893. As a condition of employment, each employee will: (a) abide by the terms of this policy and (b) notify the Directors of Human Resources of any criminal drug statute arrest or conviction for a violation occurring on the premises of the School Board, at the workplace, or during the conduct of any official activity related to the School Board within 48 hours.

#### **D. Tobacco Use in District Facilities**

The School Board prohibits the use of any form of tobacco products in any area utilized by students or designated for student activities. Additionally, and in accord with law and other governing regulations, the School Board prohibits the use of tobacco products in any form in facilities, District School Board vehicles, and areas designated for various student programs and activities. Employee must utilize designated smoking areas.

#### **E. Emergency School Closings**

In case of an emergency, the superintendent/designee is authorized to close any school or all schools and to dismiss a school(s) prior to the regular daily dismissal hour. The principal may dismiss the school when the Superintendent or designee cannot be contacted, and an extreme emergency exists endangering the health, safety, or welfare of students. (1) In a declared state of emergency, control of students shall be maintained by school personnel until these students are released from school or in the case of transported students, until they depart from the school bus. (2) The principal shall cooperate with emergency preparedness authorities during a natural or man-made disaster. If a civil disturbance or similar situation occurs, the principal shall cooperate with the law enforcement authorities.

#### **F. Child Abuse Reporting**

Pursuant to Florida Statutes, any person, including, but not limited to school teachers, school officials, and school employees, who knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect, that a child is abused, abandoned, or neglected by a parent, legal custodian, caregiver, or other person responsible for the child's welfare shall immediately report such knowledge or suspicion to the Florida Department of Children and Families' Central Abuse Hotline at (800) 96-ABUSE. The Central Abuse Hotline will accept any reports involving perpetrators who reside outside the state of Florida so long as the victim is residing in the county in Florida where the report is being made. All reports made to the Central Abuse Hotline are classified as confidential and are exempt from the Florida Public Records laws as authorized by State statute.

A person who is required by Florida Statutes to report known or suspected child abuse or neglect and who knowingly and willfully fails to do so, or who knowingly and willfully prevents another person from doing so, is subject to criminal prosecution.

If you are hesitant to judge a situation because of having limited exposure to a student, you may want to consider contacting a school administrator, i.e. Principal or Assistant Principal, for assistance.

If a complaint is made against a School District employee, volunteer, agent, or other employee affiliated with the School District, which, if true, would constitute child abuse, neglect, or abandonment by that person, the complaint shall be immediately forwarded to the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall forward the complaint to the Department of Children and Families for investigation. The person accused of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect shall be suspended from duties involving interaction with children pending investigation of the allegations.

The complete Reporting Child Abuse policy (Board Policy 2.8) and a memo from the Superintendent can be found in Appendix C.

## **G. Safety**

The District has developed and promotes a comprehensive program to ensure the safety of its employees, students, and visitors. The safety program includes guidelines and procedures for responding to emergencies and activities to help reduce the frequency of accidents and injuries. To prevent or minimize injuries to employees, coworkers, and students and to protect and conserve district equipment, employees must comply with the following requirements:

- Observe all safety rules
- Familiarize yourself with District critical incident plans/procedures and emergency preparedness protocols
- Keep work areas clean and orderly at all times
- Immediately report all accidents to their supervisor
- Operate only equipment or machines for which they have training and authorization
- Employees with questions or concerns relating to safety programs and issues should contact their immediate supervisors.

## **H. Visitors in the Workplace**

All visitors are required to enter any District facility through the main entrance and to sign in or to report to the building's main office. Authorized visitors will receive directions or be escorted to their destination. Employees who observe an unauthorized individual on the district premises should immediately direct him or her to the building office or contact the administrator in charge.

## **I. Employees with Weapons**

No employee of the school system shall have a weapon in his or her possession while on school property or at a school activity. Neither guns, whether operable or inoperable, loaded or unloaded, nor facsimile weapons or antique weapons may be brought onto school property including the parking lot or to a school activity. Any weapon confiscated shall be immediately turned over to the principal/building administrator who shall turn the weapon over to the proper authorities. Authorized law enforcement officers, including school resource officers, may have weapons in their possession while on duty.

## **J. Employee Self-Reporting of Arrests**

Under certain circumstances, substitutes are required to report arrests and/or convictions. Procedures regarding when and what to report can be found in the Code of Ethics/Principles of Professional Conduct. (For your convenience, a copy is found in Appendix D.)

## Chapter II – Being a Substitute Teacher

### A. School Board Policy 6.145

School Board Policy 6.145 addresses Substitute Teachers and Temporary and Substitute Classified and Support Employees. (A copy of this policy is included as Appendix E.)

### B. Qualifications to be a Substitute Teacher

- At least 18 years old
- Possess a **Bachelor's Degree or higher**
- Achieve a **minimum 2.5 grade point average** in college coursework

### C. Hiring Process

Prospective Substitute Teachers need to:

- Submit a complete Substitute Instructional Application – including all supporting documents to Human Resources on the first floor of the Maroon awning building, 1960 Landings Boulevard, Sarasota, Florida 34231
- Complete the District's on-line Substitute Endorsement Training or provide proof of certification and teaching experience within the preceding five years (See item D below for additional information.)
- Provide or request the appropriate **teaching certificate**. Complete additional paperwork: the Annual Registration Form, W-4 for tax withholding, I-9, Acceptance of Copyright Guidelines, Payroll Deduction Authorization for Drug Screen cost, Retirement Clarification form, Social Security Exemption form, Oath of Loyalty, Code of Ethics, Right to Know About Toxic Substances form, Substitute Disclaimer. You will also be asked to provide your Social Security card. **Please note** the Sarasota County Public Schools use your social security number for the following purposes: identification and verification, benefits processing, data collection, tax reporting, and criminal background checks. Appendix F contains a memo from the Executive Director of Human Resources and Labor Relations detailing usage of social security numbers.
- Submit a **Physician's Statement of Health**
- Have your fingerprints taken for the **Background Screening**
- Take the **Pre-Employment Drug Screen**
- Be photographed to get your **ID badge**
- **Receive your Substitute Handbook**
- Register for **mandatory** orientation

### D. Substitute Endorsement Program

To comply with Florida Statutes, the Board requires Substitute Teachers to complete the District's on-line Substitute Endorsement Program. Prospective Substitutes may be exempted from this course if they possess a professional teaching certificate and provide proof of having taught in a U.S. public or private school within the preceding five years. (Examples of documentation include: employment contract, evaluation, or verification of employment.)

### **E. Reinstatement Procedure**

Approval to work as a substitute teacher is granted on an annual basis. Each year, an Annual Registration form will be distributed to substitutes in good standing from the previous year. When the Registration form is received by Sub-Central, the substitute will be entered into the database as an active substitute.

You must sub at least one day (7.5 hours) during the school year in order to qualify to sub the following year. If you do not sub one time, you must complete the entire application process again.

### **F. Code of Ethics**

Because our business involves children, the community holds us to a higher standard than many other professions. As a result, a Professional Code of Ethics governs all employees and substitutes of the School Board of Sarasota County. Separate Codes of Ethics govern classified and instructional staffs, but the spirit and intent of each is the same: to maintain the worth and dignity of people. You received a copy of the Code of Ethics as part of your hiring packet. Please ensure you are familiar with its contents, as violations can lead to disciplinary action – up to and including release. An additional copy has been included in Appendix D for your convenience.

### **G. Salary**

Substitute teachers for Sarasota County are paid based upon their level of educational.

The rate of pay for Substitute Teachers is approved annually by the School Board and published on the Human Resources Department website in the Temporary/Substitute Salary Schedule. A copy of this schedule is found in Appendix G.

The table on the following page summarizes how Substitute pay is calculated. Questions should be directed to the Human Resources Department at (941) 927-9000, extension 31226 or to the Payroll Department at (941) 927-9000, extension 31330.

| <b>Type of Assignment</b>                                  | <b>Pay Rate</b>   | <b>Calculation</b>                                |
|--|---|---|
| Instructional < 21 consecutive days                        | Substitute – Endorsed Teacher at the appropriate education level                | <3.75 hours = half day<br>>3.75 hours = whole day |
| Instructional > 21 consecutive days in the same assignment | Substitute Teacher Daily Rate (Long Term)                                       | <3.75 hours = half day<br>>3.75 hours = whole day |
| Classified (classroom aide, receptionist, etc.)            | Corresponding classified Substitute rate  | Hourly rate X number of hours worked              |
| Classified Parapro-fessional Aide                          | Hourly rate of Substitute – Endorsed Teacher at the appropriate education level | Hourly rate X number of hours worked              |
| Classified ESE Aide  | Hourly rate of Substitute – Endorsed Teacher at the appropriate education level | Hourly rate X number of hours worked              |
| After School Child Care Aide                               | After School Child Care Aide  | Hourly rate X number of hours worked              |

### 1. Call-in Pay

In the rare event a school cancels an assignment, fails to notify the substitute, and the Substitute reports for duty as scheduled, the Substitute will receive two (2) hours of call-in pay.

The Payroll Department recommends substitute teachers maintain a detailed personal record/log of the days/hours worked. Questions about salary payments should be directed to the Payroll Department at (941) 927-9000 extension 31330 immediately after receipt of the payment in question.

1. Direct deposit to any financial institution is available. Enrollment forms are available in the Human Resources and Payroll offices. Direct deposit implementation begins with the first available pay run following receipt of a completed enrollment form. Substitutes enrolled in direct deposit will receive a pay stub documenting their gross and net pay, along with tax withholding and other deductions. If a Substitute wishes to change financial institutions or to cancel direct deposit, he/she is required to give advance (2 weeks) written notice to the Payroll Office.
2. Checks or pay stubs for substitutes are mailed from the District Payroll Department as outlined in the Payroll Date Schedule (Appendix H) to the address of record.
3. **Current Contact Information**  
It is the substitute's responsibility to obtain a Change of Address Form from any school office or the Human Resources Department and to return it in a timely fashion to ensure checks are mailed to the proper address.

## H. Benefits

Substitute teachers contribute to Bencor, a Social Security Alternative Plan, which is an Internal Revenue Code 401(a) account. This Internal Revenue Code 401(a) account is considered a pension plan; therefore, you should consult a qualified tax advisor if you also participate in or make contributions to any other retirement plan, annuity, or Individual Retirement Account (“IRA”). The School Board does not contribute to the Internal Revenue Code 401(a) account. There are no other benefits for substitutes. If an assignment extends beyond six consecutive months, the employee enters the Florida Retirement System and Social Security System.

### I. Workers Compensation

If you suffer a work related injury/illness, The School Board of Sarasota County, Florida is committed to returning you to the same state of function you enjoyed previous to the injury/illness and to bringing you back to work as quickly as possible. Listed below are your rights and responsibilities.

#### As an employee, you have a right to:

- Receive timely and appropriate medical care for injuries sustained during the course of, or arising out of, your employment.
- Receive timely and understandable information concerning your treatment including available alternatives and their potential effectiveness.
- Receive your treatment with dignity, courtesy, respect, privacy, and with all of the confidentiality specified within the workers’ compensation laws.
- Select or change the Primary Care Physician (PCP) or Specialist Physician utilizing established procedures.
- Request a second medical opinion about your treatment.

#### As an employee, you are responsible to:

- Immediately report any injury received on the job to your supervisor or manager.
- Contact, or have your supervisor contact, the case manager prior to seeking medical care for an occupational injury that does not require emergency treatment.
- Obtain all medical care from Network providers unless authorized by your Medical Care Coordinator (MCC).
- Follow your provider’s instructions regarding your treatment.
- Keep all scheduled appointments.
- Return to active employment when released by your physician.
- Appeal any disputed medical or administrative decision using the defined grievance procedures.

### **Intake System**

In the case of injury or illness requiring services that are not an emergency (back pain, sprained ankle, etc.), the employee must notify his/her Supervisor who, in turn, will call OPTA COMP at 1-888-763-1450 to receive authorization prior to obtaining care.

All medical care, with the exception of emergencies, must be routed through the case manager.

#### Emergency Care

- If it is a true emergency, have someone call 911 or take you to the nearest emergency room.
- A supervisor will call OPTA COMP at 1-888-763-1450.
- Any additional medical care that is needed will be coordinated through them.

### **After Care Hours**

Medical care is available 24 hours a day, seven (7) days a week (including holidays). If for some reason the employee should go to the Emergency Room or Urgent Care facility in the Network, the employer must call the case manager on the next business day to report such visits.

### **Traveling Employee**

Except in emergency situation, employees who are injured outside of the Network area must call OPTA COMP at 1-888-763-1450 prior to treatment. Unless prior authorization is received for non-emergency care outside of the Network, the employee could be held responsible for payment.

### **Medical Care Coordinator (MCC)**

The Medical Care Coordinator (MCC) is a network physician who is responsible for managing the medical care of an injured worker. This includes determining other health care providers and facilities to which the injured employee will be referred for evaluation and treatment. The MCC acts as the “gatekeeper.”

**Initial Service** – OPTA COMP promotes access to care through Network Providers. The case manager will direct the injured worker to a Primary Care Provider through a choice of physicians.

**Referrals** – The Medical Care Coordinator will, consistent with acceptable professional standards for rendering quality medical care, make referrals of injured or ill employees only to other Network Physicians, providers, hospitals, or facilities. OPTA COMP will provide the Medical Coordinator with a list of all such participating providers and will periodically update such lists. In those instances where required medical treatment and attendance are not available with the provider network, the MCC may refer outside of the network.

**Specialists** – Specialist physicians and other providers may be required for appropriate care. These physicians and providers must be in the Network and must be authorized to provide care prior to beginning treatment.

**Change of Provider** – Provider changes will occur in only limited situations. The Medical Care Coordinator may grant the injured employee one change of provider. That provider must also be in the network and must practice the same specialty as the original physician. If the injured worker requests a second change of provider, that request will be handled as a grievance.

### **Grievance Process**

The injured worker always has the right, upon completion of the full grievance procedure or while the grievance is in process, to file a request for assistance with the Department of Labor and Employment Security, Division of Worker’s Compensation, Employee Assistance Office at 1-800-342-1741.

## **J. Performance Management**

The District has implemented a performance management system for long-term Substitute Teachers, i.e. any Substitute who works in a position for more than 21 days. A copy of the evaluation form is found in Appendix I.

## **K. Attendance**

Substitute attendance and timeliness is critical to our staff and the success of our students. **Once a Substitute Teacher accepts an assignment in Sub-Finder, either by phone or via the Internet, the District expects the Substitute to honor his/her entire commitment.**

The Sub Finder system will continue to call in search of a substitute who is willing to accept an assignment up to 2 hours after the start time of the assignment. If you accept an assignment after the start time, call the school and advise them you have accepted the assignment and are on your way.

**It is unprofessional, as well as unacceptable, to:**

- **Not show up at a school**
- **Leave early without the approval of the school administrator or**
- **Cancel an assignment for another** – even if the second assignment is of longer duration or a favorite school – with less than 72 hours notice to allow the school to find a replacement Sub

As previously discussed, the school administrator may request you to cover a class during the “planning” period assigned to the teacher you are replacing. However, if you have not been requested to cover another class and if the planning period is the last period of the day, you may not simply leave for the day – unless approved by a school administrator, i.e., principal or assistant principal.

Our automated sub placement system makes it easy to document patterns of attendance abuse. Substitutes who are found to exhibit this pattern of behavior will be released from working in the District.

## **L. Discipline**

On occasion, school administrators request a Substitute not be permitted to return to their campus. Such a decision is made when, for example, the Substitute is not a good “fit” with the student population. This is not considered disciplinary and does not impact your assignments elsewhere. Likewise, such a decision is made when the administrator receives negative comments about the Substitute’s performance or behavior from staff members, parents, students, etc. These instances may very well be disciplinary in nature.

School-based administrators are held accountable for the performance of their schools. Accordingly, when such a request is received, Human Resources honors the administrator’s request, and, typically, there is no investigation. Your profile in Sub-Finder is changed, and you are no longer able to see/hear vacancies for the school. You will be sent a letter advising you of the action. Such a restriction will only be removed at the request of the originating school administrator.

An isolated request to remove a Substitute from a school is not reason for alarm. However, should multiple schools make this request, and a pattern of behavior appears to develop, you will be released from subbing in the District entirely.

On the other hand, if there is an allegation of inappropriate behavior of a serious nature from a school administrator, Human Resources will restrict the Substitute entirely pending the outcome of an investigation. If the investigation proves unfounded, you will be immediately returned to work. If, however, there is merit to the complaint, it will result in discipline up to and including release as a sub in the District. Additionally, if you hold a Professional Teaching Certificate, investigatory and disciplinary results will be forwarded to the State Office of Professional Practices.

#### **M. Responsibility of District Sub-Central**

Beginning August 2004, the District automated its substitute placement. School administrators enter vacancies into the automated systems, and substitutes will have the opportunity to review and to select these vacancies either by telephone or the Internet.

For your convenience, the instructions can be found in Appendix J (telephone) and Appendix K (Internet).

The Sub-Central staff is responsible for system maintenance and assistance.

#### **N. Eligibility to Stay Active in Sub Finder**

Substitutes must work a minimum of one full day in the school year to remain active in the system. Substitutes who do not work a minimum of one day in the school year will not be eligible to substitute the following school year and will be purged from the system. The substitute must reapply, incur associated costs and complete all related paperwork a second time.

**Substitute teachers should not accept offers of assignments from school-based personnel. All assignments must be made through the automated sub placement system.**

## Chapter III – Professional Responsibilities of Substitute Teachers

Substitutes must read and adhere to the Education Standard Commission's Code of Ethics of the Education Profession in Florida. The substitute will:

1. Maintain a professional appearance at all times. A well-groomed instructor gives the students a sense of security and an example of neatness and composure. Dress appropriately for the job assignment.
2. Observe the same hours and perform all duties of the teacher they are replacing.
3. Teach students to the best of their ability under the supervision of the local school administration.
4. Follow the regular teacher's lesson plans. When this is not possible, the areas not covered and the reason must be included in an informal written report to the classroom teacher.
5. Have the authority to enforce all rules necessary for the proper management of their classes and the appropriate behavior of their students utilizing suitable action as outlined by the Code of Conduct and the local school administration. **\*Important Note: There is absolutely no protection afforded an employee found to have committed an intentional act resulting in injury to a student. Refrain from any physical contact with students -- except in obvious emergency situations.**
6. Keep such records with respect to attendance and other matters as prescribed by the local school administration.
7. Consider all records confidential. **\*Important Note: Failure to adhere could result in dismissal and/or possible legal action.**
8. Adhere to District Copyright Guidelines. All employees of the Sarasota County School District are expected to adhere to the Copyright Guidelines adopted by the Sarasota County School Board, particularly those pertaining to the inappropriate use of videos in the classroom. These guidelines are available for viewing at the district website: [www.sarasota.k12.fl.us/purchasing](http://www.sarasota.k12.fl.us/purchasing) within the Library Media section.
9. Be aware of their legal responsibility to take all reasonable action in quelling any situation which might arise on the school premises endangering student health, safety, or education. This legal responsibility exists whether incidents arise in the classroom or elsewhere on campus. However, be reminded there is absolutely no protection afforded an employee found to have committed an intentional act resulting in injury to a student.
10. Supervise their classes at all times. If it becomes necessary to leave the room, supervision arrangements must be made with the office or a neighboring teacher.
11. Avoid discussing conditions in one school while serving another.

12. Make no adverse comments pertaining to students, parents, teachers, or administrators, particularly in the lounge and never in the presence of students.
13. Permit no students to make critical or uncomplimentary comments about another student, parent, administrator, or teacher. Courtesy and consideration of others are basic to good educational practices.
14. Maintain a proper degree of formality (no first names) between teachers in professional matters, especially in the presence of students. Students are never to address a substitute teacher by his or her first name.
15. Notify the office immediately regarding the nature and seriousness of an accident if a student is injured. Never send an extremely ill student to the office alone. Ask another student to accompany him/her to the office.
16. Report to the office promptly any personal injuries sustained in the school building or on campus. An accident requiring the services of a physician must be reported to the district office to initiate insurance and Workmen's Compensation claims.
17. Release no students from his/her supervision unless the student has been approved for release by the school office.
18. Notify the district office and Sub Central of address or telephone changes or if they are no longer available to substitute teach.
19. Substitutes must be willing to be flexible when a school has a situation and must place the substitute in a different position other than the position he/she initially accepted.
20. Renewal of a Substitute Certificate is \$20.00 and must be paid in the form of a check or money order.
21. Substitutes are expected to remain on site until the end of the day, even if they have planning periods at the end of the day.
22. No browsing of the Internet during teaching assignments is allowed.

Any situations or questions not specifically covered within this Substitute Handbook should be addressed to the District's Human Resources Department or the school administration, as appropriate.

## Chapter IV -- On-Site Responsibilities of Substitute Teachers

The substitute teacher shall perform the major functions of the teacher summarized below, coordinate with the administrator in charge of substitute teachers and perform all duties in a professional manner.

The substitute will:

1. Report to school on time, sign in, and report to the administrator responsible for substitutes to obtain access to the classroom.
2. Check the regular teacher's mailbox for pertinent information.
3. Review the regular teacher's lesson plans, teaching materials, general building routines and procedures, and disaster drill regulations.
4. Consult the principal, assistant principal, secretary, or an assigned teacher if there are questions about the day's activities.
5. Serve bus duty, lunchroom duty, or any other duty assigned to the regular teacher. **Similarly, when needed, the School Administration may ask you to cover a class during a planning period.**
6. Explain lessons for the day so that students understand specific directions.
7. Be responsible for the care of classrooms, furniture, equipment, textbooks, reference books, and all other materials used in the classroom.
8. Observe student health and safety procedures.
9. Never release students from the building during the school hours without permission from the office.
10. Never release students from your classroom without a written pass or equivalent pass according to the school policy.
11. **Do not remove or make copies of any materials from a school.**
12. **Cell phones may not be used while supervising students.**

### **Maintain effective classroom discipline:**

1. All discipline cases, which cannot be handled in the room in an appropriate manner, should be referred to the principal or assistant principal. Follow local school policies concerning discipline procedures.
2. Under no circumstances should the substitute teacher administer corporal punishment.
3. Substitute teacher should never leave the class unattended.

### **Check the room condition at the end of the day including the following items:**

1. Classroom lighting.
2. Classroom temperature.
3. Classroom seating arrangement.
4. Report any problems to the appropriate administrator.

### **Secure the classroom:**

1. Check teacher's procedures for collecting and grading written work assigned in the lesson plan.
2. Monies collected should be deposited in the office with adequate records.
3. Send all medications brought to school by students to the office at the beginning of the school day.
4. **Leave the classroom in a neat and orderly fashion – ready for the next day of learning.**



**In summary, the Substitute Teacher is expected to carry out the work of the regular teacher and is not employed simply to maintain order.**

## Chapter V -- Guidelines for Implementing Lessons

### 1. **Implement the teacher's plans as fully and as completely as possible.**

No Substitute Teacher can be expected to implement any lesson exactly as the regular teacher, but the closer one can approximate the teacher's procedures, the better it is for the students, the regular teacher, and the substitute.

### 2. **If you must modify a lesson, modify as little as possible.**

If you understand the teacher's objective but do not understand one of the activities, modify the activity. If the activities are clear, but a procedure is unclear, modify the procedure.

### 3. **If you cannot modify the lesson, contact the principal or designee to implement an alternative lesson.**

Many substitutes prepare additional activities in anticipation of this situation. Examples include math practice activities, reading materials of high interest/low vocabulary, and topics for creative writing activities, crossword puzzles, road map activities, and educational games.

The substitute should leave a note to the teacher informing him/her of the decision to implement an alternative lesson when this has been necessary.



## Chapter VI-- Classroom Rules

It always is better to use the teacher's rules that the students are familiar with, rather than new ones, which may be confusing to the students. If you cannot find the teacher's rules, you may want to use the following. They are simple, cover most situations, and may be used at all levels.

1. Listen carefully.
2. Follow directions.
3. Work quietly. Do not disturb others who are working.
4. Respect others. Be kind with your words and actions.
5. Respect school and personal property.



## **Chapter VII -- Classroom Management**

Substitute teachers who are effective in the classroom strive to create a climate in which success is expected, academics are emphasized, and the environment is orderly.

As a substitute teacher, it is essential to understand and practice good classroom discipline and management. This is necessary before any classroom learning can occur. Good classroom control can be the best prevention of major classroom difficulties.

It is not unusual for a class to “test” a substitute teacher. Students may try to gain status by upsetting class routines. Your response to these situations is crucial. Teacher self-control is a must! You need to begin by establishing order during the first minute of the first period of the day. Your responses need to be calm, firm yet fair, and tempered with good humor. You can prevent many problems with a combination of planning, awareness, and sensitivity.

To assist you in maintaining discipline, the following guidelines are recommended. Study and implement them as appropriate to your specific substitute-teaching situation.

**Say exactly what you mean.  
Let students know you mean what you say.  
Do what you say you will do.**

1. Let students know what you want from them and you will get exactly that.
2. State what you want in clear, concise terms.
3. Be consistent.
4. If questioned, make the exact same statement again and again, if necessary.
5. Be firm.
6. Establish eye contact.
7. Know what you can and will do, if inappropriate behavior continues.

## Chapter VIII -- Avoiding Negligence

Primary among many substitute teachers' concerns is protecting their students from harm and themselves from lawsuits. The following guidelines are offered to help you prevent injuries to students under your care, act responsively in the event of accidents, and avoid legal problems should mishaps occur.

1. Maintain a neat, orderly, and safe environment for the students.
2. Caution students against hazards or unusual conditions such as slippery floors, which require extraordinary care.
3. **NEVER leave a classroom unattended.** Use the classroom intercom/telephone or send a student with a message if you need to contact the principal or another teacher.
4. Know how to quickly contact school personnel who can assist with an emergency (administrator, nurse, or counselor).
5. **NEVER give medicine of any kind** (including aspirin or cough drops) to students. Refer students who are taking any type of medication to the office for supervision.
6. Don't order a disruptive student to leave class unsupervised. Instead:
  - a. Use the intercom/phone to ask for assistance from the office;
  - b. Ask another teacher to escort the student to the office; or
  - c. Ask another teacher to supervise your class while you escort the student to the office.
7. **NEVER use corporal punishment with students.** Corporal punishment includes hitting, pushing, shaking, jerking, pinching, forcing a child to stand up for long periods of time, making the student do push-ups, or using any physical force.
8. Do not keep students after class or after school.
9. Obtain permission from the principal before sending notes or other communication home to parents.
10. **Do not introduce controversial subjects or materials** (information on religion, the occult, racist cartoons, sexually explicit books, etc.) to classes.
11. Do not advertise products or services or announce public meetings during class.
12. Do not date students or socialize with them after school; avoid establishments suspected of serving alcohol to minors.
13. If a student teacher is assigned to your class, remain on duty in the classroom.
14. All videos/recordings must be approved by a school administrator before use.

15. You must report any known or suspected incidents of child abuse, neglect or abandonment to the Florida Abuse Hotline (800/962-2873) and to a school administrator or counselor. (We recommend you make the call from the counselor’s office with the counselor present.)

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| ABUSE       | Normally defined as wrongful use, mistreatment, or insulting language.   |
| BATTERY     | Battery is a criminal charge (misdemeanor) made by someone when another person touches a person with the intent to harm. Intent is defined by the person being touched.  |
| CHILD ABUSE | Child abuse is normally defined in the context of a criminal act in a school setting when an employee willfully, intentionally, and with malice causes an injury to a child. Often the charge is filed as battery. Child abuse could be physical abuse, mental abuse, sexual abuse, or extreme negligence. |



## **Chapter IX -- Substitute Teacher Classroom Survival Tips**

### **Arrive in class before the students**

1. Check lesson plans
2. Gather materials for the lesson(s)
3. Check the names on the roll.

### **Write on the board**

1. Your name (Mr., Mrs., Miss, Ms., Dr.)
2. Date
3. Student assignments

### **Welcome students to class**

1. Greet students with a smile
2. Always stand if possible.

### **Start class as soon as bell rings**

1. Introduce yourself with a smile
2. Call the roll
3. Praise student with a smile
4. Explain class assignments
5. Praise and encourage students
6. Circulate around the classroom and smile whenever possible
7. Praise students
8. Watch for hands; go to the student(s)
9. Collect assignments with a smile

### **Write the teacher a note explaining the day's events**

1. Which students were helpful?
2. Lesson plans (what was completed, what was not, where completed assignments are located, etc.)
3. Student(s) who became ill or hurt
4. In addition to helpful students, identify students who were disruptive
5. Leave mail and notes from parents in teacher's mailbox
6. Explain incomplete assignments
7. Leave a list of students who were absent/tardy to each class.

### **DO NOT:**

1. Touch students or their belongings
2. Over react
3. Tell jokes
4. Complain to the students
5. Discuss your personal problems
6. Let student(s) have access to the teacher's grade book
7. Make a big deal out of minor behavior problems
8. Be a know-it-all
9. Remain in an enclosed area alone with a student

## Chapter X -- Common Acronyms

In the educational environment, we use many unique acronyms. Examples of the language of educators are listed below.

| <b>Acronym</b> | <b>Definition</b>   |
|----------------|---|
| ADA            | Americans with Disabilities Act                             |
| ADD            | Attention Deficit Disorder                                  |
| ADHD           | Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder                    |
| AP             | Assistant Principal   |
| ASL            | American Sign Language                                      |
| CTBS           | Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills                          |
| DARE           | Drug Abuse Resistance Education                             |
| EEOC           | Equal Employment Opportunity Commission                     |
| EH             | Emotionally Handicapped                                     |
| ERC            | Educational Resource Center                                 |
| ESE            | Exceptional Student Education                               |
| ESOL           | English for Speakers of Other Languages                     |
| FCAT           | Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test                       |
| FDLRS          | Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System            |
| FIRN           | Florida Information Resource Network                        |
| FLSA           | Fair Labor Standards Act                                    |
| FPMS           | Florida Performance Measurement System                      |
| FRS            | Florida Retirement System                                   |
| FSTP           | Florida Services Team Planning                              |
| FTE            | Full Time Equivalency                                       |
| HIPAA          | Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 |
| HRS            | Health and Rehabilitative Services                          |
| IDEA           | Individuals with Disabilities Education                     |
| IEP            | Individual Educational Plan                                 |
| ISS            | In School Suspension  |
| JTPA           | Job Training Partnership Act                                |
| LRE            | Less Restrictive Environment                                |
| MAC            | Macintosh Computer  |
| MIS            | Management Information Services                             |
| MSDS           | Material Safety Data Sheets                                 |
| OJT            | On-the-Job Training   |
| OSHA           | Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970                  |
| OSS            | Out-of-School Suspension                                    |
| PO             | Purchase Order  |
| SED            | Severely Emotionally Disturbed                              |
| SLD            | Specific Learning Disability                                |
| SOI            | Summative Observation Instrument                            |
| SRO            | School Resource Officer                                     |
| SSOC           | Student Services Observation Instrument                     |
| SSS            | Students Staying in School                                  |

## Chapter XI – Ten Principles of Esteeming Discipline

### **Ten Principles of Esteeming Discipline by Esther Wright, M.A.**

1. Always remember that your mission is to serve and support your students.
2. Always speak and act from a place of respect and dignity.
3. Develop relationships with your students that nurture and esteem them.
4. Respond rather than react when dealing with discipline.
5. Model the behaviors and attitudes that you expect from your students.
6. Be open to learning from your students.
7. Speak and listen from your heart when communicating with students.
8. Seek support and coaching when you find yourself overwhelmed.
9. Be calm, fair, and firm when dealing with discipline.
10. Remember that students are human and make mistakes.

## **Chapter XII -- School Security**

### **What You Need to Know if an Emergency is Declared When You Are on One of Our Campuses or Facilities**

#### **Safety in Our Schools**

Despite news reports and recent violent incidents on a few school campuses in the U.S., it is important to know that schools still remain one of the safest places for students. At the same time, however, school districts throughout the country are implementing emergency response plans as a precautionary measure. Sarasota County Schools' Critical Incident Plans will be put into effect if we ever experience one of these emergencies. This plan includes common codes so that no matter what campus you visit, the codes would mean the same thing. If during your visit, you hear a signal for a Code Red, Code White, or Code Yellow, this brochure instructs you in the steps that you need to take.

#### **The Critical Incident Project**

Sarasota County Schools, the Sarasota County Sheriff's Office and local law enforcement agencies are proud of the cooperative working arrangement they have built over many years. This collaboration ensures the safety of our students, staff and visitors in our schools. The spirit of cooperation has been an important factor as the two agencies worked to develop an emergency response plan for our school district.

The Critical Incident Plan has been developed over several months through many hours of careful thought and planning. All schools in the district have participated in training to assist them in the adoption of the plan.

The fervent hope of the Critical Incident Plan team is that we will never experience the need to implement the plan.

#### **Hurricanes**

Severe weather constitutes a critical incident for our schools. Hurricanes are a specific example of severe weather we face here in Florida. For your convenience, Appendix L contains hurricane information.

# For ALL Emergencies

**Remain calm.**

**Alert authorities.**

**Account for all students/plan for those with special needs.**

**Be ALERT for suspicious or unusual activity, people, packages or events.**



**FULL LOCKDOWN**

- Lock all doors
- Turn off lights
- Close windows and blinds
- Move out of site from the doors/windows



**LIMITED LOCKDOWN**

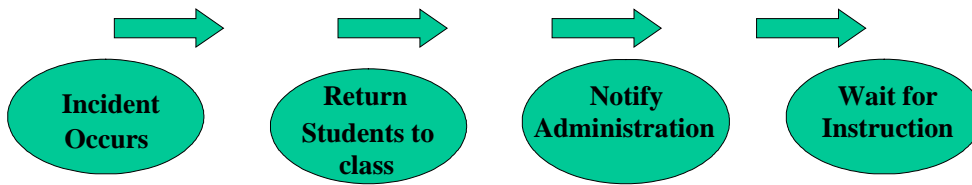
- Lock all doors
- Continue with lesson plan
- NOBODY leaves the classroom



**EVACUATE**

- Leave on lights and fans
- Utilize “buddy system”
- Move to designated area

The School Board of Sarasota County March 2006



- Bomb/Bomb Threat
- Fire/Explosion
- Intruder on Campus
- Major Student Disruption
- Tornado Warning
- Severe Weather
- Weapon/Gun
- Hostage Situation
- Hazardous Materials
- Aircraft Disaster
- Transportation Accident
- Nuclear/Radiological Blast
- Missing Child/Kidnapping
- Traumatic Event (student death)
- Medical Emergency

- Runner
- Fire Alarm
- Telephone/Intercom
- Telephone/Intercom
- Telephone/Intercom
- Telephone/Intercom
- Telephone/Intercom
- Telephone/Intercom
- Telephone/Intercom
- Telephone/Intercom
- Telephone/Intercom
- Telephone/Intercom
- Telephone/Intercom

**Staff**

**Communication of a Critical Incident**

The School Board of Sarasota County March 2006

**Staff**  
**Communication**  
**During a Critical Incident**



**FULL LOCKDOWN**

**Emergency Folder**  
**Telephone/Intercom**



**LIMITED LOCKDOWN**

**Emergency Folder**  
**Telephone/ Intercom**



**EVACUATE**

**Emergency Folder**

## **Chapter XIII – Summer Procedures**

### **A. Sub Central**

Sub Central and the automated Sub Finder system are closed during the summer break for annual maintenance.

Substitutes who are interested in substitute teaching during the summer school session should contact the schools directly and let the Administration know of their interest in substitute teaching. During this time period ONLY the schools contact substitutes directly.

At the end of the school year, all active substitutes who worked at least one day the preceding year are put in an inactive status until the reactivation the next school year either by attending the “Welcome Back” orientation or coming into Sub Central after the “Welcome Back” orientation. Your status will be activated. You must present your last year’s badge to receive a new badge.

### **B. Unemployment**

Florida Statute 443.091 defines eligibility conditions for unemployment compensation. Under the Statute, no public school employee is entitled to benefits for regularly scheduled vacations, holidays, or breaks between school terms if they have a reasonable expectation of employment when the next term commences. This includes substitutes.