

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PALM BEACH COUNTY

SUBSTITUTE TEACHER HANDBOOK



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REPORTING TO AN ASSIGNMENT

1. You must be available to answer the phone during call out periods since the Sub Locator does not have the capability to leave a message. Therefore, all recorded hang-ups will be considered as 'UNAVAILABLE TO SUBSTITUTE' for that particular opening.
2. In the event of last minute cancellations you **MUST** notify the school.
3. Learn the location of schools, and the opening and closing schedule, especially those in your area.
4. **ARRIVE** at school at the time indicated on the Sub Locator. If you are called late, it is suggested that you call the school and state that you will be arriving as soon as possible. A sub gets paid only for the hours they are at the school site.
5. You **MUST** register in the Main Office and record your name as it appears on your Social Security card. This is your assurance that your pay can be verified.
6. Obtain the teacher's schedule and find out if the teacher has any extra duties or if there are any irregularities in the schedule. Learn your responsibilities as to lunch duty, class changes, etc., where applicable. **Substitute teachers are not guaranteed a planning period; you are expected to perform the duties assigned by the principal.**
7. Identify the instructional materials available and how they may be obtained by asking the substitute contact at the school. Also, obtain information about where discipline referrals and accident report forms are located.
8. Read current notices on the office bulletin board and substitute information location. There may be special activities planned that will affect the usual procedures for the day.
9. Check the teacher's mailbox to see if there are any bulletins, messages or announcements. Personal mail should be left in the box.

PROCEDURE UPON ARRIVAL AT THE CLASSROOM

1. Look for the daily program and seating charts, if applicable. Locate the teacher's plans, texts, and guides. If these are not in the room, request assistance from the office.
2. Keep a dated list of absent pupils. All teachers should have a folder for substitute teachers with blank attendance slips and an outline of procedures.
3. **DO NOT** record grades in the teacher's grade book or on report cards. Keep a list of pupils and grades you assign. The same list may be used for several days. If you are on a long assignment, obtain instructions on how and where to record grades.
4. Familiarize yourself with fire drill procedures to identify the route your students will take to leave the building. If specific instructions have not been left, check with the principal/designee as to the procedure to follow.

ITEMS REQUIRING OFFICE APPROVAL

1. A student who has been absent with a contagious disease **IS NOT** to be readmitted without office permission.
2. No outside agency or person (including parents) is to question or interview a student except in the presence of the principal/designee. You have a responsibility to see that the rights of the students are not violated. **THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS RULE.**
3. Pupils are not excused to leave school under any circumstances without permission from the principal/designee. If you believe a student should be excused to go home, send the student to the principal's office. If the student does not return to your room, check to see if the student was allowed to leave.

4. Notes or any other communication should not be sent to parents without permission from the principal/designee.
5. Accidents involving any of the students in your care must be reported immediately to the principal/designee. Please complete an accident form and submit to the principal's office promptly.
6. Any student that complains of illness should receive immediate attention. Please follow the schools procedure.
7. Do not keep any student after school hours without the permission of the principal/designee. Parents must be informed if a student is to be detained after school, and the approval of parents, as well as the principal/designee, must be obtained before such action is taken.
8. Check with the substitute contact to use any business machines or equipment.
9. If medication is observed **DISCREETLY AND IMMEDIATELY** notify the administration.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

1. You are there to assist the learning activities of the students assigned to you for the day. Your main job is to provide the best possible service for these students.
 - a. **Use the lesson plans furnished by the teacher.**
 - b. Lesson plans represent what the students have been prepared to do and point where they are going in the future. The use of lesson plans will help assure continuity of instruction.
 - c. If the assignment is for several days and the teacher's plans are not available, contact the principal/designee for instructions. When you cannot do this, contact the Department Chairperson for assistance in acquiring lesson plans. Leave copies of those lesson plans for the regular teacher.
 - d. Occasionally, you will be given an assignment outside your competency or lesson plans may not be available. You may find it very helpful to keep a file of emergency activities, which may help when you are faced with such an assignment.
 - e. Plan to spend the entire time working with the students under your supervision. **No personal work of any kind should be done.**
 - f. The substitute teacher is expected to carry out the work of the regular teacher and is not employed simply to maintain order.
 - g. **You are now substituting for the teacher. There are three (3) things that must be observed:**
 - i. **Do not touch the students.**
 - ii. **Do not use profanity or inappropriate statements.**
 - iii. **Do not criticize the school or the teacher.**
 - h. Observe the Principles of Good Classroom Management. Classroom control is a primary concern. There cannot be meaningful learning experiences amid confusion.
2. The initial impact of the substitute teacher is the key factor in successful classroom management. Self-confidence, resilience, initiative, and resourcefulness are some necessary prerequisites. If there is time before the class arrives, review the day's schedule and become familiar with related activities. When the class arrives, introduce yourself and write your name on the board. Try to call students by their names. To help you remember names, you may wish to follow the seating chart or use nametags.
3. As a substitute teacher, you set the stage for a successful experience by being prompt, neat, patient, honest, flexible, enthusiastic, and accepting. Encourage the students to do their best. Commend them on their work as is appropriate. **BE FIRM, BUT FAIR.**
4. Discipline is based on mutual understanding, through honest and open communication. Do not **THREATEN** students with a consequence unless you plan to follow through.
5. Problems do not usually develop if the content of instruction is worthwhile, presented in an interesting manner, and students are kept busy.
6. If discipline problems arise which you are unable to manage, the principal/designee should be contacted **IMMEDIATELY** for assistance.

7. **You are not permitted to leave the school to which you have been assigned either on your planning period or lunch period. If there is an emergency, check with the principal/designee.**
8. You are as legally responsible for pupils, equipment, and materials as is the regular teacher for whom you are substituting.
9. Should a substitute teacher be assigned to a situation where a student teacher is responsible for teaching the class, the substitute remains on duty in the classroom and is expected to assist the student teacher in any way possible.
10. Do not have anyone visit you while you are on duty as a substitute teacher. A principal has the right to refuse to let anyone see you while on the job.
11. As you work with the students, refrain from discriminating on the basis of race, sex, religion, or disability.
12. While substituting in any classroom, refrain from making any statements that would be misconstrued as sexual harassment.
13. Adhere to copyright laws at all times. Check with principal/designee or media specialist for assistance. This law is a mandate and is available in every school.
14. Cell phones should only be used as an emergency communication tool. Do not use the internet unless it is part of the day's instructions.
15. Substitutes have school district email. Please check your district email, the Current Substitute website and the sub locator online for up to date information.

COMPLETING AN ASSIGNMENT

1. Remain until all of your students are dismissed before leaving the classroom. Do not leave the premises before the scheduled ending time for teachers. **Hours for elementary and middle schools are 7 hours and high schools are 7.5 hours. This includes a 30 minute, duty-free, unpaid lunch.**
2. The last few minutes of any class period may be used for putting books and supplies away and picking up paper and litter from the floor. The classroom and desks are to be left in good order.
3. All written work assigned by the substitute should be left for the regular teacher.
4. Return any supplies that belong in the office. Do not take KEYS or CLASS RECORDS away from the school.

SOME DUTIES OF PALM BEACH COUNTY TEACHERS

The following are excerpts from the policies or rules of the School Board. These items apply to all teachers in Palm Beach County, whether regular classroom teachers or substitutes.

1. Be present at the school 7 hours each day in both the elementary and middle schools. High schools, you must be present for 7.5 hours. These hours include a 30 minute, duty-free, unpaid lunch.
2. Be a loyal and cooperative member of the school's faculty.
3. Use textbooks, courses of study, and other instructional materials that have been approved by the School Board.
4. Practice democratic procedures in human relations.
5. Observe all School District of Palm Beach County policies.
6. Do not use tobacco in areas normally used by students; only in areas designated by law.
7. Refrain from discussing sectarian views in religion or partisan or sectional views in politics.
8. Accompany students from the building to the yard during fire drills.

9. Refrain from advertising or announcing public meetings or entertainment, except as authorized by the School Board through the principal.

INJURIES/ACCIDENTS

Any accidents or personal injury should be reported directly to the principal. The principal will have you complete a Notice of Injury Form. You will be sent to a district approved Worker's Compensation physician if you receive a work related injury.

PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

1. Maintain a professional attitude toward your work.
2. A friendly, cheerful, and cooperative attitude toward both the building personnel and students will help to start the day right, and keep it running smoothly.
3. Your attitude will have a great deal to do with your acceptance by the faculty and students.
4. You must be especially careful about the following:
 - a. Do not criticize the teacher for whom you substitute.
 - b. Do not find fault with the schools where you work. Never make uncomplimentary comparisons between schools.
 - c. Do not discuss the grades of the students except when it may be complimentary or when you are seeking professional assistance.

APPEARANCE

1. At all times, you must be professional and neat in your appearance. (Flip flops, jeans, tank tops, midriffs, hats, etc., are not acceptable.) Shorts are only allowed for Physical Education assignments.
2. Keep your voice clear, well modulated and use correct grammar.

PERFORMANCE CONCERNS

The principal is responsible for the operation of the school and will determine the suitability of a particular substitute for their student population. When there is a performance concern, the principal/designee is requested to discuss the performance concern with the substitute prior to the substitute leaving the school. However, this may not always be possible. Therefore, when a principal submits a request to have a substitute removed from the eligibility list at their particular school, the following will occur:

1. Principal/designee submits the request in writing to the Department of Recruitment and Retention, Substitute office.
2. The Substitute Office Contact Person will obtain additional information from the requesting school, if necessary.
3. Information will be entered on the Sub Locator so that the substitute will not be called back to that particular school.
4. A copy of the school's concern will be delivered to the substitute's district email address.
5. To be aware of important information, including performance concerns, substitutes must regularly check their district email.
6. Three (3) reported concerns from principals will result in the substitute being blocked from accepting jobs or terminated.
7. In the event that several concerns are documented, a substitute may be deemed ineligible to substitute in the district.
8. The severity of concerns will determine if termination is necessary.
9. The opportunity for remediation may be offered when the concerns are less serious.

FINAL NOTES

1. **Substitutes that have not worked one day each school semester in a Palm Beach County public school will be removed from the Substitute Teacher list. Charter schools are NOT public Palm Beach County schools. 1st semester is August – December. 2nd semester is January – End of school. Substitutes removed for inactivity must REAPPLY to be eligible to return as Substitute Teachers and may be required to be re-fingerprinted and pay the scheduled fee.**
2. We hope your experience, as a substitute teacher will be pleasant and rewarding for you and for the pupils in your charge. The administrative staff and the principal are available to you for assistance. Do not hesitate to ask for assistance in any area of concern about your work.

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Updated 03/31/2011

School Board Policy 6Gx50-3.19

POLICY PROHIBITING HARASSMENT

All employees of the School District of Palm Beach County, Florida, have the right to work in an environment free from discrimination and conduct which can be considered harassing or coercive. Therefore, harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability or any other characteristic protected by law, will not be sanctioned or tolerated. All employees should be aware of the following:

A. SEXUAL HARASSMENT

1. Sexual harassment is strictly prohibited. Sexual harassment has been defined as "unwelcome" sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, written or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:
 - a. Submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of an individual's employment;
 - b. When submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis of employment decisions affecting such individual; or
 - c. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with the individual's work performance, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.
2. Examples of sexual harassment may include but are not limited to the following:
 - a. Gestures, letters, notes, invitations, comments, slurs, jokes or epithets that are suggestive, derogatory or obscene;
 - b. Unwanted physical contact of a sexual nature, sexual molestation or assault, leering with sexual overtones, or impeding or blocking movement;
 - c. Display of sexually suggestive objects, posters or cartoons;
 - d. Continuing to express sexual interest after being informed that the interest is unwelcome;
 - e. Offering favors such as employment benefits, or promotions, favorable duties or shifts, recommendations, reclassification, etc., in exchange for sexual favors;
 - f. Coercive sexual behavior used to control, influence, or affect the career, salary, and/or work environment of another employee;
 - g. Coercive sexual behavior used to imply or withhold support for an appointment, promotion, or change of assignment; or
 - h. Coercive sexual behavior used to suggest that a poor performance report will be prepared, or probation will be failed;
 - i. Engaging in a course of conduct which, under 784.048 F.S., constitutes the stalking of a staff member, student, chaperon, or parent in the workplace.

B. OTHER HARASSMENT

1. Harassment on the basis of any other protected characteristic is also strictly prohibited. This includes verbal or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his/her race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, marital status, citizenship or any other characteristic protected by law and that:
 - a. Has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment;
 - b. Has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's work performance; or
 - c. Otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment.

C. Examples of such harassment include the following:

- a. Epithets, slurs or negative stereotyping;
- b. Threatening, intimidating or hostile acts, such as stalking; or

- c. Written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group and that is placed on walls or elsewhere on the employer's premises or circulated in the workplace.

D. PROCEDURE

1. Supervisors and managers are responsible for assuring that no employee is subjected to conduct that constitutes sexual or any other form of harassment.
2. Any employee, -who believes that he or she has been the subject of sexual or any other form of harassment by anyone at the School District or by any person who does business with the School District, should, and is encouraged to, bring the matter to the attention of his/her supervisor, or to the Equal Employment Opportunity Coordinator, located in Risk Management. Any employee who is aware of behavior toward another employee which they feel may constitute sexual or any other form of harassment shall also report the matter to their supervisor or the Equal Employment Opportunity Coordinator.
3. A prompt and thorough investigation of the alleged incident will be conducted and appropriate corrective action will be taken, if warranted. To the extent consistent with adequate investigation and appropriate corrective action, any complaints of harassment will be treated as confidential throughout the investigation. Once the investigation is completed, confidentiality shall be determined by the applicable laws. A person alleging that they are a victim of sexual harassment may request that their records remain confidential as specified in Florida Statutes Section 119.07(3)(u).
4. Any individual found to have engaged in sexual or any other form of harassment will be disciplined as appropriate, up to and including discharge. Individuals receiving action under this section may appeal such action in accordance with the appropriate grievance procedure or administrative process.
5. The School District will not in any way retaliate against an employee, potential employee, or former employee who, in good faith, makes a complaint or report of harassment, or participates in the investigation of such a complaint or report. Retaliation against any individual for good faith reporting of a claim of harassment or cooperating in the investigation will not be tolerated and will itself be subject to appropriate discipline. Incidents of retaliation shall be reported in the manner discussed in Section D above.
6. The School District will take all appropriate steps to enforce this policy.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: Sections 230.23. 230.33. Florida Statutes

LAWS IMPLEMENTED: 42 U.S. Code § 2000e and 20 U.S. Code § 1681, HISTORY: New: 9/21/94; Revised: 5/21/97

NOTE: POLICY AND DIRECTIVES ARE ALL-INCLUSIVE IN THIS POLICY

School Board Policy 6Gx50-3.26

POSSESSION OF FIREARM BY A SCHOOL DISTRICT EMPLOYEE/CONTRACTOR/VISITOR ON SCHOOL DISTRICT PROPERTY

1. It is the intent of this Policy to clearly state that possession of firearms will not be tolerated on School District property.
2. Definitions:
 - a. "Firearm" means any weapon (including a starter gun or antique firearm) which will, is designed to, or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; the frame or receiver of any such weapon, any destructive device; or any machine gun.
 - b. "Independent Contractor" means any person or company other than a School District employee, who provides goods and/or services to the School District and enters into a contracted agreement with the School District.
 - c. "Employee" means any person hired by the School District after completing the personnel procedures required by the School District.
 - d. "Visitor" means any business or personal invitee including, but not limited to, parents, volunteers, family members of School District employees or friends of School District employees.
3. No person may possess or bring a firearm on School District property. Employees who possess or bring a firearm on School District property shall be terminated.
4. No person who has a firearm in their vehicle may park their vehicle on School District property. Employees who park on School District property, with a firearm in their vehicle will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.
5. All Contract Agreements with Independent Contractors shall provide that if any employee of an Independent Contractor or Sub-Contractor is found to have brought a firearm on School District property, said employee will be terminated from the School District project by the Independent Contractor or the Sub-Contractor. If the Sub-Contractor fails to terminate said employee, the Sub-Contractor's Agreement with the Independent Contractor for the School District project shall be terminated. If the Independent Contractor fails to terminate said employee or fails to terminate the Agreement with the Sub-Contractor who fails to terminate said employee, the Independent Contractor's Agreement with the School District shall be terminated.
6. Except to the extent allowed by law, any visitor found to have brought a firearm on School District property shall be notified that all subsequent visits to School District property will be by appointment only, and that visits without prior appointment may result in a criminal action for trespass.

7. This Policy does not apply to any Law Enforcement Officer as defined in Section 943.10(1), (2), (3), (4), (6), (7), (8), (9), or (14), Florida State Statutes or any other employee/contractor or vendor who is required as part of his/her regular job responsibilities with the School District to carry a firearm as approved by the Superintendent or his/her Designee.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: 230.03(2); 230.22(1), (2), (3), (4); 790.115(3), Florida Statutes

LAWS IMPLEMENTED: 230.03(2); 230.22(1), (2), (3), (4); 790.115(3), Florida Statutes