

Attleboro Public Schools



Substitute Teacher Handbook

Revisions will be made as necessary. Updated versions of the Substitute Teacher Handbook are available on the Attleboro Public School System website.

Introduction

Welcome – The staff of the Attleboro Public School System joins the Superintendent in welcoming you to the noble and challenging teaching profession. Nationwide, statistics show that students will be taught by a substitute teacher for the equivalent of one entire academic year during kindergarten through twelfth grade. This staggering fact makes all the more important the contributions you will make as a substitute teacher toward sustaining the education of Attleboro’s children and youth. In Attleboro we like to think of our substitute teachers as “Guest Teachers” and intend to treat them with the respect and support guests deserve.

Overview - The purpose of this handbook is to provide information that will help with questions and pave the way for a successful year. Not all district policies and procedures are included. Those that are, have been summarized. This handbook is neither a contract nor a substitute for the official district policy manual. It is not intended to alter the at-will status of noncontract employees in any way. Rather, it is a guide to and a brief explanation of district policies and procedures. District policies and procedures can change at any time and these changes shall supersede any handbook provisions that are not compatible with the change. District policies are available on-line at the district’s website: www.attleboroschools.com

OUR VISION

To be the center of a community united around education, where all stakeholders value and participate in our collective success.

OUR MISSION

To develop and deliver relevant learning experiences that engage, challenge and inspire all students to maximize their unique potential and improve our world.

Attleboro Public Schools
 100 Rathburn Willard Dr.
 Attleboro, MA 02703
 (508) 222-0012
www.attleboroschools.com

As a substitute, you are one of the most vital parts of our school system. It takes a special kind of person to be a successful substitute—A person, who earnestly cares about children, is patient, creative and versatile. Thank you in advance for your interest in working with the students and staff in the Attleboro Public School System.

SCHOOL DIVISIONAL INFORMATION

Administration

Superintendent	Mr. David Sawyer
Asst. Superintendent	Mrs. Laurie Regan
Director of Finance and Controller	Mr. Marc Furtado
Director of Special Education	Ms. Ivone Medeiros
Asst. Director of Special Education	Mr. Tim Traut-Savino
Director of Human Resources	Mrs. Julienne Singer
Office of Information Technology	Mr. Jonathan Plourde
Aspen Project Manager	Ms. Natalie Carr
Personnel Services	Mrs. Kathy Black
Facilities Manager	Mr. Jason Parenteau

Principals Secondary Schools

School	Principal	Phone	Email
High	Mr. Bill Runey	508-222-5150	bruney@attleboroschools.com
Brennan	Mr. Fredrick Souza	508-222-6260	fsouza@attleboroschools.com
Coelho	Mr. Andrew Boles	508-761-7551	aboles@attleboroschools.com
Wamsutta	Mr. Joseph A. Connor	508-223-1540	jconnor@attleboroschools.com

Elementary

School	Principal	Phone	Email
Hill-Roberts	Mr. Frank Rich	508-399-7560	frich@attleboroschools.com
Hyman Fine	Mrs. Patricia Martin	508-223-1560	tmartin@attleboroschools.com
Studley	Mrs. Joanne DiPalma	508-222-2621	jdipalma@attleboroschools.com
Thacher	Mrs. Veronica Learned	508-226-4162	vlearned@attleboroschools.com
Willett	Mr. Jeffrey Cateon	508-222-0360	jcateon@attleboroschools.com

School Day

School	Staff Day	Students Day	Student Early Release
High School	6:55 AM-2:10 PM	7:15 AM-1:50 PM	7:15 AM-10:50 AM
Brennan Coelho Wamsutta	7:30 AM-2:40 PM	7:50 AM-2:20 PM	7:50 AM-11:30 AM
Studley Willett	7:55 AM-3:10 PM	8:15 AM-2:55 PM	8:45 AM-12:30 PM
Hill-Roberts Hyman-Fine Thacher	8:25 AM-3:40 PM	8:45 AM-3:25 PM	8:45 AM-12:25 PM

General Information

This handbook is printed for the benefit of the substitute teachers in the Attleboro Public School District. Knowledge of these guidelines and procedures are your responsibility as a member of our substitute staff. Please read through this manual in its entirety, many common questions are already answered here.

Absence Management System – Automated Sub Calling System [Frontline](#)

Absence Management System will call subs starting at 5:30 a.m. for assignments for the same day. Substitutes will also be called approximately two days prior to an assignment, between the hours of 5:50 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. Also if a staff member must leave work during the day, you may be called to fill a partial-day assignment.

All teaching assignments are to be made through the Absence Management System, rather than through teachers making their own arrangements. This keeps the lines of communication clear.

Building Procedures

Substitute teachers should report immediately to the principal and/or building administrative assistant upon arrival to receive instructions as to the building routine and hours of work, as well as to sign in. Performance of the regular teacher's building duties is required unless the principal makes other arrangements. Please ask the building secretary for a substitute teacher ID badge. This ID badge should be worn at all times. You may also receive other information regarding room assignments, location of materials, plans, charts, and records. Upon the completion of your assignment, the ID badge should be turned into the building clerk.

Building Routines

- ◆ **Attendance Records and Reports**—**DO NOT** make any entries in the teacher's record book. Record attendance and tardy information on the forms provided. At the middle school

and high school level, keep a record of names of students who are absent or tardy for individual blocks and leave it in the substitute folder for the regular teacher. In serving longer assignments, consult the building principal before recording grades.

◆ **General Supervision**-Try to fit into the regular program as nearly as possible by assuming the duties of the regular teacher. Sometimes it may be necessary for you to perform routine tasks such as hall duty, lunchroom supervision, playground duty, and the like, in addition to your regular class work.

◆ **Mail**-Do not remove mail or other articles from the regular teacher's mailbox unless directed to do so by the building principal. This policy changes when assuming long-term substitute duties.

◆ **Safety Drills**-All classrooms have directions for evacuation drills placed on a sign near the exit of the room. Read these directions immediately! Check other safety drill regulations with a grade level teacher. Other Safety Drills include Lockdown and Shelter in Place.

Teaching Materials

Routine supplies and materials are found in each classroom. However, after you determine what supplies are needed to carry out the plan of the day, you should locate these materials immediately and notify a grade level teacher if a particular supply or teaching aid cannot be found.

Classroom Procedures

◆ Plan to arrive at your assigned room at least 15 minutes in advance of the students (see Punctuality). This will afford an opportunity to become familiar with the physical setup of the room and to locate materials necessary to carrying out the assignment in a successful manner. Your school day ends when students have been dismissed for the day, and assigned duties have been completed.

◆ Introduce yourself to each new group of students with whom you come in contact throughout the day. Write your name on the board to avoid any confusion during the day. Meet and consult with other grade level teachers. Please do not hesitate to ask questions regarding routine matters.

◆ Follow the lesson plans left by the regular teacher in order to maintain a certain level of continuity of instruction in the classroom! You are expected to adhere to the scope and sequence of instruction documented in the teacher's lesson plans.

◆ Most of the time, teachers anticipate their absences due to scheduled appointments or staff development requirements. However, if a staff member is absent due to an emergency, you may not have lesson plans provided by the teacher. Should this occur, help is available from other teachers and support staff in the school. Teachers from the same grade level,

neighboring classrooms, departments, etc., should be accessed to provide assistance when lesson plans are missing or insufficiently developed. Building administrators should also be contacted for additional support under such circumstances.

- ◆ Do not assign written work and leave it to be graded by the regular teacher unless so indicated in the lesson plans. Any written work assigned that is beyond the lesson plans of the regular teacher should be graded and left for the teacher to examine.
- ◆ On completing an assignment, a definite statement of the work done in each subject, specifying pages covered in various textbooks, should be left. New assignments should be noted in the teacher's assignment book or on a card inserted in the desk copy of the text. All papers should be graded, records made, and preparations for the next day completed if time permits.
- ◆ You should assume the same responsibility for the order and discipline of students in the classroom, in the halls, or on the playground as does the regular teacher.
- ◆ The housekeeping arrangements of the regular teacher should be continued with all books, supplies, and equipment in order. Check windows, shades, and general classroom arrangement.

Punctuality

Substitute teachers are expected to be on duty the same length of time as the regular classroom teacher. Many experienced substitute teachers advise arriving to school as early as possible before the start of the school day in order to sign in, find the classroom, locate lesson plans, prepare the room and instructional materials, and otherwise prepare for a successful day of substitute teaching.

The exact beginning and ending times of the teaching day vary from school to school. Information regarding the individual schools, starting and ending times, their locations, and administrators, can be found under the section, School Day.

Discipline

Principals and teachers are responsible for the maintenance of order within the classroom and the school. Authority to use reasonable and prudent force and restraint for the purposes of maintaining order and for safeguarding the students and school employees is delegated by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Problems of a student-staff nature are discussed personally with the administrator in charge of the building.

As a substitute teacher, you are expected to model and reinforce the expectations of the permanent teacher. Classroom rules are posted in most classrooms and, except for the first few days of class, all students know what the rules of behavior are and what the consequences are for not following

them. Effective classroom management will lead to effective teaching.

- **Use a positive approach**—Start with positive correction. Be direct with your request for positive behavior; the direct request to a student is to state the desired behavior. It is better to make a request in a soft, firm voice rather than a loud voice. Making eye contact will help convey your message.
- **Give the student time to comply**—After you make a clear request for positive behavior from a student, give him/her a brief moment to comply. Be sure to maintain eye contact and restate the request in a calm manner if necessary.
- **Don't take it personally**—It is important to stay emotionally detached and remain professional.
- **Common Sense** should be used anytime you are working with students. Make all consequences fit the infraction.
- **Exercise self-control** by always being in control. As the adult in the classroom, the substitute teacher is expected to be the authority figure. Treat all students with respect. Avoid discussions that contain controversial topics, personal qualities, decisions, opinions, or judgments.

If a student becomes non-compliant, there are several techniques you should try that may prevent the situation from escalating:

- **Proximity** is the strategy that is effective for good classroom management. Standing near a disruptive student, while continuing to instruct, will often change the behavior.
- **Relocating** students may be done, but should only be done if other requests to stop the undesired action fail. Asking students to change seat locations may be disruptive and challenging.
- **Never degrade** or intimidate students. Always stick to the rules. Remember, being fair and consistent is an important feature of working with students.
- **Avoid giving threats or ultimatums**—Try a calm, matter-of-fact approach void of emotion or sarcasm. Reinforce the idea of consequences when a student makes the choice to misbehave.

If a student remains non-compliant after trying all of the above techniques, you will need to implement the specific building's discipline procedures. Always consult the school administrator for major discipline issues including when safety is being compromised.

Items Requiring Office Approval

Students are not to be dismissed or allowed to leave the school grounds during the school day under any circumstances without the permission of the building principal or office staff.

Accidents involving a student under your supervision should be reported to the school office immediately!

If a student becomes ill, you should immediately refer that student to the nurse's office.

Notes or any communications should not be sent to parents without permission of the principal. Students should not be detained after school hours without permission from the principal's office. Parents should be informed if students are to be detained and the approval of parents, as well as the principal, must be obtained before such action is taken.

Completing an Assignment

When your assignment has been completed, report to the school office. Be sure to return all items provided to you to the school office at the end of the day. Also be sure to sign the substitute sheet upon arrival, and departure.

A summary or an outline of the work covered during an assignment or any comments, which might prove helpful to the regular teacher, should be left in the office at the conclusion of your assignment. The school provides forms for this purpose. Be sure to return them to the office before leaving the building.

New assignments should be noted in the teacher's assignment book, or on a card inserted in the desk copy of the text. All papers should be graded, records made, and preparations for the next day completed.

Substitute teachers should follow teaching daytime schedules as designated for each building (see the Punctuality section).

Personal Use of School Property

School facilities, equipment, and supplies are intended to support the education of students and therefore shall not be used in any manner other than for the direct or indirect benefit of the students. School-owned supplies shall not be consumed for personal reasons nor shall any school-owned equipment be taken from the premises for personal use.

Computer Access

Occasionally, a teacher may include a computer program or an online resource in his or her daily lesson plan. As a result, it will be important for you to follow proper procedures in preparing for such situations. If you are unsure that you have completed this, please talk with the technology

office. Each time you need access to the computers or online resources to perform your substitute teaching assignment, you will need to contact the building secretary or library media specialist to obtain a username and a password. Please keep in mind that this access will only be valid for the length of that particular teaching assignment. You will need to request access each time you need it.

When using the computers, it will be important to practice good security procedures to maintain the overall integrity of the network. Usernames and passwords should not be shared with students or other staff members.

Professional Ethics

Attleboro Public Schools expects all of its employees to maintain a high moral standard. Please read over the following ethical expectations:

- ◆ Maintain a positive, professional attitude toward your work. A friendly, cheerful, and cooperative attitude toward both building personnel and students will help to start the day right and tend to keep it running smoothly. Your attitude will have a great deal to do with your acceptance by the faculty and the students.
- ◆ Plan to spend the entire time working with and for the students and keep all children in your room under supervision at all times. You are expected to carry out the program as outlined by the regular teacher and are not employed simply to maintain order.
- ◆ You are expected to observe the same ethical codes as regular teachers. You are as legally responsible for students, equipment, and materials assigned to your care as is the regular teacher for whom you are substituting.
- ◆ 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.
- ◆ Do not expect to leave the classroom for personal telephone calls; messages will be taken and delivered to you. Personal cell phone usage during class time is prohibited.
- ◆ Do not call the regular teacher concerning the class work or anything else you are doing for the teacher unless requested to do so.
- ◆ A substitute teacher refrains from discussing incidents that occur in one building with teachers of another or in the community at large. Conferences with parents and/or students are not conducted.
- ◆ As a substitute teacher, you have a responsibility to treat most matters pertaining to students with confidentiality. Student behavior, performance, and achievement levels are not subjects of general conversation and should not be discussed outside the school setting. **When working with students with special needs, you must exercise an even greater degree of caution with**

regard to confidentiality.

◆ You should exercise extreme caution and good judgment in verbal and physical relationships with students. You should establish a position of authority with the students; you may “be friendly” without “befriending” the students. Under no circumstances may a substitute teacher engage in an inappropriate relationship with a student.

◆ *Yelling at students, calling them derogatory names, and using insults, or other threatening verbal attacks will not be tolerated.*

Failure to meet any directives listed above may result in your immediate removal from the district without warning.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is a very important aspect when working in a school system. There are many federal and state laws that protect the privacy of educational records and individual students, those with disabilities as well as those without disabilities. The main Federal law pertaining to confidentiality of student records is the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

EVEN CONVERSATIONS SHARED WITH NON-SCHOOL PERSONNEL OR SCHOOL PERSONNEL WITHOUT AN EDUCATIONAL INVOLVEMENT WITH A SPECIFIC CHILD CAN BE A VIOLATION OF FEDERAL LAW.

Information and records covered under this act may include, but not be limited to:

- Personal data
- Family data
- Test scores, evaluation results
- Psychological and/or medical reports
- Grades, progress reports
- Disability information
- Correspondence concerning students
- Records of conferences with students and/or parents
- IEP information

A substitute teacher or assistant will typically learn many things about students, given the nature of the position. This information is personal and private and must NOT be shared. Discussing this information is not only disrespectful but also is potentially illegal.

A substitute teacher or assistant may discuss information about the student with members of the student’s educational team only when it is relevant to the student’s education. These discussions should take place in a private rather than a public location within the school, as privacy of all students must be respected.

Suggested guidelines regarding confidentiality are as follows:

1. Never discuss information about a student in a public place (hallways, faculty workroom, restrooms, grocery stores, etc.)

2. Never discuss information about one student with the parents of another student.
3. Never discuss information about a student with another student.
4. Never discuss information about a student with school personnel who are not members of the student's educational team.
5. Never leave confidential student records or papers in public view (on desk tops, faculty workroom, library, etc.)
6. Use proper channels, as developed by the school, that concerns access to student records or other personal information.

Every person involved with students with disabilities must remember that it is his or her responsibility to treat all students and adults with dignity and respect.

Safety and Health

Attleboro Public Schools provides certain procedures and information regarding our students' health and safety while in attendance. Each school building has an emergency team of trained members to respond to injuries and/or accidents. Each school also has a procedure in place to access this team. Please check with your school principal to acquaint yourself with the procedure and team members.

Since many children have medical problems that can interfere with their school day, each school is supplied with a Confidential Health List. Students who may have a medical problem are placed on this list with parental permission. This information remains strictly confidential and is not to be shared with other sources. Please check with your principal to review this list.

In addition, each office area maintains emergency preparedness instructions for the district, which contains instructions on how to assist in dealing with emergency medical responses to injuries and accidents. Once again, it is important for all substitute teachers to acquaint themselves with the procedures in each of the buildings to respond to various crisis situations.

Helpful Hints for Successful Substitute Teaching

1. Arrive **early**, not just at the required time.
2. At each school, **familiarize yourself** with locations of fire extinguishers, quick response chart, emergency exit routes, “call buttons” to the office, or other communication devices, etc.
3. Keep a **sense of humor**; it helps both the digestive system and the climate in the classroom; however, *be mindful of derogatory and inappropriate jokes.*
4. Expect to **be challenged**; it comes with the territory at all grade levels.
5. Have some “**emergency plans**” in case lesson plans are either missing or inadequate or the lesson is completed in less time than the teacher anticipated. Having a "bag of tricks" on hand is helpful (i.e. a book to read aloud, word puzzles, games, brainteasers, etc.) and will always come in handy as a back-up.
6. **Let the teacher know** specifically what lessons weren't completed in your detailed note that you leave for the teacher at the end of the day. (Explain reasons why, if needed.)
7. Don't feel threatened or uncomfortable when **administrators visit** your classroom. They can be a great help in maintaining discipline.
8. Make sure the students **know your name**, but don't let them call you by your first name; it diminishes the respect you want to establish and maintain.
9. Immediately **familiarize yourself** with the “helpful students” identified by the teacher or others familiar with the class. Mention their assistance in your note to the teacher.
10. **Expect interruptions.** Fire drills, electrical outages, playground injuries, visits from other teachers, and students being “pulled out” for other programs or services are all par for the course.
11. When in doubt, confused, or otherwise unable to carry out your duties, **seek help** from another teacher at the same grade level (elementary) or subject area (secondary).
12. **Do more** than required. Your extra efforts will be noted and appreciated!

A few extra pointers . . .

It Usually Works To . . . (and other hints when working with students with behavioral and/or disabilities)

- Redirect students to tasks.
- Count silently to 10 before you make a request.
- Count silently to 10 after you have made a request.
- Give the student something if you take something away-this may help distract the student and make him/her feel less deprived.
- Pick your battles. Before you make an issue out of something, ask yourself one question: Is the student hurting self or others? If not, reconsider the importance of the situation.
- Switch your words around if you have made a request that the student does not appear to understand.
- Give the student a break during long classes prior to student getting agitated.
- Keep all requests short and direct.
- Make positive statements only-about the student and to the student.
- Give the student as much autonomy and space as possible to increase independence, to reduce stress, and make your proximity more effective.
- Back away from the student if he/she is noticeably upset.
- Respect the student's intentions. If the student is making it clear that he/she needs space (whether it is through gesture or speech), say "Okay, you need me to stand over here" something to that effect. Student need to know that we hear what they are saying and respect their needs.
- Provide verbal cues to signal transitions:
"In 5 minutes we are going to go to Mrs. Jones' class."
"You have 5 more minutes of PE time."
Students need time to transition from one activity to another.
- Encourage peer relations as a major part of the day.

10 Quick Lesson Ideas for Substitute Teachers

If you are a substitute teacher, chances are you bounce around from grade to grade, and sometimes even between different schools. While some teachers take the time to plan your day for you, or at least have lesson plans and materials ready in a folder for any time, there are times when you have to go it alone. Here are 10 quick lesson ideas that you might use for your next substitute teacher engagement. Just keep them in a tote bag and use them where necessary.

1. Create puzzles

Word search, crossword, and other printable word games are great when you need something to use in the classroom. Simply print off a bunch of different puzzles and carry them with you when you are substituting.

2. Pictionary

Write the names of some current movies, icons, popular songs, and favorite cartoon characters on slips of paper and place the slips into a bag. Now place the students into two groups. Let the first team pick a person to come up and pull a slip out of the bag, and draw what it says on the whiteboard. Let either team guess what he or she is drawing. The one to guess gets to come up and draw the next thing. Continue until the slips are gone.

3. Brick Brainstorm

Come up with a lesson subject, such as electricity, technology, etc. Prepare bricks by using red construction paper. Give each student a brick. Now pose a question to the class, such as “What would you have done differently, if you invented the light bulb?” Let students write their responses on their brick. Then have students come up with their brick and explain their answer. Tape the brick to a wall, and as each child comes up, keep adding to make an entire brick wall.

4. Story Starters

Tell the students what the lesson is about, and then write a story starter on the whiteboard such as for a rainforest theme, “One day I was walking through the forest in Savanna, when I heard...” Now let another volunteer come up and add a sentence to the story. If you do not have time to finish the story before class ends, make it a homework assignment for the students to finish the story and bring it back the next day to give to their teacher.

5. Create a Dictionary

When presenting a lesson idea to the class, let the students come up with words that they think will be presented during the lesson. Write these words on the board with definitions, and have the students write down the words and definitions on paper. As the students learn about the lesson, let them check off any of the words that they did hear. See how many words they guessed correctly. Now have the students add more vocabulary words to their list, based on actual words used in the lesson, while you write them on the whiteboard.

6. Getting to Know You

Have students write an essay about themselves. Ask them to write the answers to these questions (and come up with others): “If you won a million dollars, what would you do with it? If you

could be anything in the world, what would you choose? What is the best vacation you ever had?"

7. Lead a group discussion

If your class seems to be under control, leading a discussion is a great way to talk about a lesson. Examples of discussion questions might include: "If there weren't such things as rules, what would the world be like? What do you think is the worst thing about school? How about the best? Who are some of your heroes? What makes them so great?"

8. Magic Tricks

Learn a magic trick or two by studying books at your library or finding one online. After you perform the trick for the class, teach them how you did it. Let them practice the trick for a while on their own.

9. Riddles

Use riddles that stretch the brain to think hard. Of course, make them grade-appropriate, but somewhat challenging. For instance ask them: "What gets wet the more you dry with it?" The owner of a hotel wants the room doors numbered in order. There are 100 rooms. You must go out and buy the numbers to hang on all the doors. How many of each digit, 0 thru 9, will you need to buy?

10. Create a Rebus

Engage students in a story by reading a short tale. Aesop's Fables work great with this idea. After reading the story, go back through the story and let students draw pictures in place of nouns. They can draw the pictures on the whiteboard. Now go back and read the story letting the students call out the nouns as you point to them on the whiteboard.

SUBSTITUTE CHECK LIST

Preparation:

- Dress should be neat, clean, and appropriate for the teaching assignment
- Enter the school enthusiastic and prepared to teach
- Try to arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the beginning of the school day

Prior to Entering the Class:

- Report to the main office to let them know you are there
- Ask about student passes, discipline procedures, and special events
- Verify if there will be any special duties associated with your assignment
- Find out how to refer students to the office
- Look for fire alarms, lock down and shelter in place instructions
- Note locations of restrooms and teacher's lounge
- If possible, introduce yourself to the teachers on both sides of your classroom
- If available, view the folder for substitute teachers
- Obtain the recess and lunch schedules

In the Classroom:

- Enter the classroom with confidence
- Write your name on the board and introduce yourself
- Make sure to take attendance
- Follow lesson plans as closely as possible
- If money is collected, record the amount, pupil name and purpose on a sheet and turn into the main office
- Check to see if all books, handouts and paper are close at hand or in the classroom
- NEVER LEAVE THE STUDENTS UNATTENDED!

End of Day:

- Remind students of homework
- Have students clean their desks and the area around their desk
- Leave desk, books, and room in good order
- Leave a note for the designated teacher about your experience with the class/students

Attleboro Public Schools
Substitute Teacher Acknowledgement

I have reviewed and I understand the policies contained in the Attleboro Public Schools Substitute Teacher Handbook. I understand that I am responsible for following the policies of the Handbook. I am aware of my role regarding Building Routines, Building Procedures, Teaching Materials, Classroom Procedures, Punctuality, Discipline, Items Requiring Office Approval, Completing an Assignment, Personal Use of School Property, Professional Ethics, Confidentiality, and Safety and Health. I understand that Attleboro Public Schools Substitute Teacher Handbook is available on the district website.

Substitute Signature: _____ Date: _____