

MLS School District Volunteer and Substitute Handbook

Welcome

MLS School district welcomes you on behalf of the students and staff, we thank you for your interest in substitute teaching or volunteering in our district. Without the support from community members like yourself, our district would not be successful. We're glad that you've chosen to help our students.

Substitute Teachers

Policy DJA governs substitute teachers. As a substitute at MLS, we consider you to be an essential and valuable part of our educational team. We appreciate your willingness to provide service to our students in your role as a substitute. We also recognize the challenging nature of this task.

Substitute teachers are subject to all applicable district policies governing staff conduct and teaching requirements and are excluded from continuing contract and nonrenewal rights.

Substitute teachers must be qualified to teach in North Dakota schools and must possess a valid license.

MLS Schools is an equal opportunity provider.

Reporting

All substitute teachers should check in at the main office each day, try to be at least 15 minutes early.

Obtain classroom key

Obtain any documents left by the teacher or announcements for the day

Before Class Starts

Introduce yourself to other teachers around you (adjacent classrooms), ask about special notices, duties, etc.

Organize materials to be used during the day and check equipment you might use to ensure it is working properly

Locate seating charts, lesson plans, teaching materials, etc.

Check the teacher's mailbox

Locate and make sure you know how to use phone system in case of emergency

Familiarize yourself with safety protocols, fire drill procedures, exits, etc.

Locate copy machine, lunchroom, playground, restrooms

Write your name on the board

Familiarize yourself with teacher's lesson plans, teacher edition, etc.

Make notes in your own words so you'll be more comfortable

Anticipate student questions and prepare answers

Remain close to door in the hallways during class changes. Greet students. Smile!

During each class

Begin promptly when the bell rings

Take attendance and lunch counts if applicable

Follow the lesson plan or note changes you make

Present an overview of the day's lesson

Introduce the lesson (what you are going to be doing today and why if noted by the teacher)

Ensure that the students understand the lesson- checking constantly for understanding

Give clear directions, explain, and watch for signs that they are confused or lost.

Move around the class. Check their understanding, keep proximity for management, praise students for doing what they should be doing. Give corrective feedback and encouragement.

Don't let the instruction drag

Be organized

Ask students to help (Pass things out, collect papers, check for "helper" list)

Move quickly from activity to activity but be systematic (summarize the first activity, pause for questions, introduce the next activity)

Call on multiple students- not just the same ones or just the ones with hands up

Planning Period and Lunch

Shut classroom door and if possible lock it. Do not leave valuables in unlocked room

Let the office know if you are leaving over lunch

Eat lunch for free with your students, with other teachers, in staff lounge, etc.

End of the Class

Summarize lesson

Answer questions

Review overall objectives

Answer what is next (Next lesson or activity)

Go over homework assignment- carefully explain, give directions, when is it due

After School has ended

Leave a note for the teacher letting them know how the day went. Be honest and specific

Leave all teacher materials and student work in the classroom or in the office as instructed

Collect student work, secure papers label papers, verify everyone has handed in work

Secure room- shut down computers, close windows, have kids pick up floors, etc.

Return the classroom key and double check with office for any exit protocol

Classroom Management and Discipline

An effective substitute teacher strives 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.

Often a class will “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 must begin by establishing order during the first minute of the first day. Your responses must 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 them and implement them appropriately in your specific substitute situation.

1. Before entering the classroom, ask the school administrator for information on the “school’s discipline plan” and other information on any special discipline policies or procedures followed at this school.
2. Always insist that students address all teachers and adults by their titles: Mr., Mrs., Miss, and Ms.
3. Remember that you are an adult leader and therefore not a “pal” to these students.
4. Set clear limits/standards/rules for the students and then be CONSISTENT in enforcing them.
5. Do not punish the group for the misbehavior of one.
6. Expect students to behave well and PRAISE STUDENTS for their good behavior.
7. As you speak, CIRCULATE in the classroom to monitor activity and to target possible trouble spots.
8. Use your voice, eyes, and other nonverbal signals to communicate.
9. GO TO THE STUDENTS when they request help. This avoids confusion and unnecessary commotion.

10. Pause and wait, if necessary, for attention and silence before speaking. Avoid sarcasm and shouting!
11. Avoid any kind of CORPORAL PUNISHMENT – NEVER TOUCH A STUDENT!
12. Don't make promises or threats that you may not be able to keep!
13. Be prepared. Keep activities moving and students working. Always have some additional activities planned.
14. Use a POSITIVE approach.
15. If you are having problems in maintaining classroom discipline, consult one of the school's administrators.

Things Not to Do

- Don't use your cell phone while supervising students
- Don't tell jokes (you never know how kids will take them)
- Don't use district technology for personal use
- Don't use social networking to interact with students
- Don't touch students or their belongings
- Don't discuss your personal problems
- Don't make a big deal out of minor behavior problems
- Don't place students in the hallway or in a corner as a disciplinary action
- Don't keep students after the bell
- Don't overreact!
- Don't complain to students
- Don't let students have access to the teacher gradebook
- Don't embarrass or humiliate a student in anyway
- Don't allow students to leave your class without permission

Avoid Negligence

- Never Leave Students unattended- ask other teachers to cover
- Never use corporal punishment- no hitting, pushing, pinching, forcing a student to stand for long periods, making a student do push-ups, or using any physical force. Never Touch A Student!
- Never give medicine of any kind to students
- Maintain a neat, orderly and safe environment

Immediate address any harassment, intimidation, bullying, behaviors (stop them and report them)

Report all accidents immediately, keep a written record of what happened

Do not let students leave campus without office checkout procedure

Do not let people from outside of the school into the class without proper check-in procedures

Safeguard equipment and materials

Please check in at business office if you are new to substituting.

Substitute teachers will each receive free lunch. Just let them know in cafeteria that you are subbing.

Substitute teachers should follow teacher lesson plans to the letter unless there is good reason to change.

Please consult with other teachers in grade level, department or area for advice or call the principal. Ask questions, our principals and teachers expect to help.

Contact the principal with any discipline issue that cannot be handled. Do not let things escalate or get out of hand especially if student safety or welfare is at stake.

Substitute teachers should keep roll, maintain accurate records, and maintain all work handed in within an organized framework.

Drug and Alcohol free workplace- all employees, substitutes and volunteers are prohibited from the use, possession, distribution, dispensing of drugs or alcohol while on school property. Policy DEAA.

Confidentiality- Policy DEBA. Any person working or volunteering at the district has a responsibility to protect the privacy of students and their parents. This responsibility applies to time spent at school as well as away from school. Questions from the general public concerning students or staff should be referred to an administrator. Substitutes and Volunteers should not share any information regarding students or staff learned from their role with the school.

Maintaining Professional Boundaries with Students- Policy DEBD. The board requires that employees, volunteers and students treat on another with respect and professionalism. Employees and volunteers should maintain professional boundaries with students at all times and exercise good judgement in all interactions. Employees and volunteers are expected to be aware of the appearance of impropriety in their own conduct and the conduct of other employees when interacting with students. Be especially careful of social networking, sexual dialogue, jokes, innuendos, etc. with students. Report any inappropriate boundary violations immediately to the building administrator.

Social Media- Policy DEBH. Employees are expected to exercise good judgement and serve as positive ambassadors for the district and role models for the students while using social media. Substitute teachers and volunteers are expected to maintain professionalism in their interactions with students and the community at all times. Especially important is relationships with students on social media, release of any protected information (pictures included), unprofessional conduct, etc.

NONDISCRIMINATION AND EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The School Board does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, disability, marital status, or age in its programs and activities, including employment opportunities

Opportunities for Volunteers

MLS recognizes the talents and abilities of the members of the surrounding area provides many opportunities to aid and enhance the learning experience of our students. There are many opportunities to become involved in our school district, from one-time events to programs that week often.

The main focus of a volunteer in school activities is the safety, education and enrichment of our students. Volunteers are expected to abide by district policies and rules (especially confidentiality requirements) while performing assigned duties. Our policies can be found on our district website.

Volunteers should enter the building and sign in with the office. We would ask that they sign out at the office when done.

Requirements of volunteers are based upon the duties and their interaction with students. If a volunteer works directly and has unsupervised access to students, then they will need to complete a background check.

Harassment Complaint

If a student reports to you being harassed listen openly and objectively. State your intent to give this report to an appropriate administrator and follow through. Create a written record of this event, sign the document, give a copy to the administrator and keep one for yourself. You are expected to maintain confidentiality of all information and not interfere or attempt to influence the investigation. Remind reporter that retaliation against the accused is forbidden and that they should not spread anything to peers or through social media (ok to talk with parents, law enforcement, administration).