OUACHITA PARISH SCHOOLS

Building Bridges to the Future

SUBSTITUTE TEACHER HANDBOOK

AUGUST 2020

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SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS: GENERAL INFORMATION

QUALIFICATIONS:

The minimum requirement for all substitutes is a high school diploma.

COMPENSATION:

Substitutes are paid on the 26th of each month or thereabout. All employment documents must be filled out before payment can be made. All documents are completed through the Personnel Department. Deductions taken out are federal and state taxes, Medicare tax, and deferred compensation. Fingerprints for background checks must have been completed before you receive your first check.

TELECOMMUNICATION DEVICES:

Substitutes may have cell phones in their possession; however, they may not be used during instructional time. They must be off or on silent during instructional time. They may only be used during break time.

DRUG FREE WORKPLACE: (OPSB POLICY #GAMD)

The Ouachita Parish School Board shall advise all employees through the distribution of this policy that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of a controlled substance and/or intoxicants are prohibited in any workplace with the Ouachita Parish School System.

NOTE: ALL SUBSTITUTES MUST READ AND ABIDE BY THE OUACHITA PARISH SCHOOL BOARD DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY #GAMD.

EMPLOYEE DRESS CODE

I. PHILOSOPHY

Each employee of the Ouachita Parish School Board is expected to give proper attention to his/her personal appearance as required by work responsibilities. The Ouachita Parish School Board is one of the largest employers in Ouachita Parish, and the image projected by its employees is an important influence on the degree of public support it receives. An appropriately dressed employee not only serves as a suitable role model for our students, but also has a positive impact on the general learning environment. Extremes in any clothing should be avoided. (i.e., too tight, too short, clothing that causes a distraction or disrupts the learning environment)

II. GUIDELINES (please refer to complete policy by viewing OPSB Policy GAMB)

1. Female employees may wear earrings. However, large gauge earrings, or disk earrings that stretch the ear are unacceptable. The only allowable piercing jewelry shall be earrings worn on the ear.

2. Dresses, skirts, and split-skirts must be no more than 2" above the kneecap when standing.

3. Shorts will be considered inappropriate for all employees, with the exception of physical education instructors while performing within their instructional areas. Shorts may be no shorter than 2" above the knee while standing.

4. Pants, capris and any other pant-like clothing must be mid-calf to ankle length.

5. Any tight-fitting or clinging attire is inappropriate for school or office wear. Additionally, necklines should be modest. (**i.e., cleavage should be covered**)

6. Recreational clothing, sweat suits, sweat pants, overalls, t-shirts and jogging suits may not be worn. Exception: T-shirts may be worn on designated spirit days.

7. Jeans may be worn only on designated spirit days, and must be worn with a school spirit shirt. Spirit days will be determined by the building administrator, but cannot be allowed more than one day per week. Jeans may be worn on field trips with approval of the building administrator.

8. Teachers of agri-science, career and technical education classes, nurses, bus drivers and custodians will be required to dress appropriately according to their job descriptions/responsibilities, as approved by the program/building administrators.

9. Scrubs may be worn by custodians, cafeteria technicians and SPED paraprofessionals.

10. Any current fad presented in a professional format may be considered and/or approved by the building administrator, as long as the fad does not directly contradict a specific policy in this employee dress code. (i.e., colored jeans may be in style but may not be approved.)

11. Leggings, opaque tights and other such clothing may only be worn with a shirt, blouse or dress that reaches at least 2" above the knee.

12. Appropriate, professional footwear shall be required. No rubber, foam, or plastic flip-flops may be worn. Any deviation from the footwear policy requires a physician's excuse with a specific description of footwear.

13. Tattoos which are distracting, or not appropriate for students must be covered. Building administrators will make this determination.

14. Unnatural* hair color and/or distracting hair styles shall not be allowed. *Unnatural is defined as not naturally occurring on human beings. (i.e., purple, green, pink, etc.)

SCHOOL'S RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE SUBSTITUTE

1. Brief subs on the school's crisis plan.
2. Inform them of medical needs of students and the procedures to follow.
3. Require all permanent teachers at the school to have emergency substitute packets.
4. Provide information on the school-wide discipline policy.
5. Inform subs of any special duties associated with the permanent teacher's assignment.
6. Make sure they are aware of any special schedules for that day.
7. Provide a copy of the school-wide procedures.
8. Provide assistance with securing/copying materials if needed.
9. Administration should show support by visiting class during the day.



THE PROFESSIONAL SUBSTITUTE



Prior to Entering the Classroom:

- Arrive at school enthusiastic about the day, while serious about your role. If possible, arrive at least 20 minutes prior to the beginning of class.
- Report to the office. Ask questions about duty, lunch, students with medical needs, tardiness, reporting absences, etc.
- Meet neighboring teachers.
- Ask if there is a school-wide discipline plan. If so, get a copy**.**

In the Classroom Before School:

- Put your name on the board, and familiarize yourself with the room.
- Locate and review the classroom rules, procedures, and evacuation map.
- Read through the lesson plans, and identify books, handouts, and other items that will be needed throughout the day.
- Study the seating chart, and be ready to make your own if necessary.
- When the bell rings, stand in the doorway and greet the students as they enter the classroom.
- Be professional, friendly, and enthusiastic. This first impression will take you a long way.

Throughout the Day:

- Do your best to follow the lesson plans.
- If there are no lesson plans, check first with a neighboring teacher and use filler activities until you can secure plans for the day.
- When students need to go to the restroom or the library, send only one student at a time.
- Don't try to get a student's attention by grabbing an arm or clothes. Unless a student is in danger of getting hurt, do not physically touch students in an attempt to discipline them.

At the End of the Day:

- Pick up all classroom materials used for lessons. (calculators, scissors, glue, rulers, etc.)
- Challenge students to summarize what they learned that day.
- Remind them of homework. Write homework assignments on the board.
- Have students straighten and clean up the area around their desk.
- Stand by the door as students leave for the day.
- Secure the classroom.

BY BEING PREPARED, POISED, AND PROFESSIONAL, YOU WILL GREATLY REDUCE THE STRESS ON THE TEACHER, STUDENTS, AND YOURSELF.

SUBSTITUTE'S RESPONSIBILITY TO THE TEACHER

1. Before the arrival of the students, locate the daily lesson/activity plans or schedule. Familiarize yourself with the instructions so that when the children arrive you will be in command of the class. PLEASE FOLLOW THE ABSENT TEACHER'S LESSON/ACTIVITY PLAN AS CLOSELY AS POSSIBLE.

2. Inquire as to the specific behavior modifications, as each site may have slightly different policies. It is important for the substitute to be consistent in handling discipline.

3. Learn the correct attendance procedures, take roll accurately, and submit required attendance forms.

4. Note the seating plan, if appropriate, and have the students follow it.

5. Work habits and general classroom procedures should be maintained.

6. Establish your position as the teacher from the beginning. Be firm. You are responsible for the conduct of your class. When special problems arise, please feel free to call upon the staff for assistance. Don't ever feel that such a request is a reflection upon your ability, or that it will be considered negatively by the principal. The school staff is there to assist you in every possible way. You are part of their educational team and they are eager for you to succeed.

7. Never discuss situations or problems with the student's parents. Should a parent contact you, ask the parent to wait and discuss the matter with the teacher when he or she returns to school. If it is an emergency, check first with the principal or designee.

8. Keep copies of all notices and bulletins received and leave them where they may be found by the teacher.

9. The substitute teacher should be available for any special assignments that fall within the teacher's responsibility during the instructional day.

10. Substitutes may be asked to perform duties as would be required of the regular classroom teacher, including teaching during a prep period.

11. Turn in to the office any money collected, for what purpose, and the names of students from who it was received on a daily basis.

12. A short summary of the day's experience, along with any unusual problems, should be left behind for each day of the substitute teaching assignment.

13. Before leaving the classroom at the end of each day, be certain that the room has been left in an orderly fashion, the room locked, windows closed, and keys (if applicable) returned to the appropriate source.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

1. Professional behavior is expected. Caution should be used in expressing personal opinions. Under no circumstances should the substitute criticize a regular teacher or encourage students to do so. Criticism of students and comparison of populations or neighborhoods should be avoided. Complaints or comments should be directed to the principal.

2. The substitute teacher is expected to be on duty the entire day (same hours as regular teachers.) Leave campus during the day only with permission from the principal. Keep phone calls to a minimum. Check (or sign out) with principal at the end of the day.

3. Money should not be collected from students unless the substitute is instructed to do so and told where/how to deposit the money by the end of the day.

4. The substitute should follow the regular lesson plans of the teacher unless otherwise instructed. Any deviation from the plans should be described to the regular teacher. Leave brief notes about the class behavior, helpful and disruptive students, and significant information about the lesson.

5. All duties of the regular teacher are expected to be performed by the substitute. Those might include playground, lunchroom, hallway, or parking lot/bus duties. Leave parent conferences to the regular teacher.

6. The substitute should not assign written work and leave it to be graded, except at the regular teacher's request. Any extra work assigned should be graded and left to be examined by the teacher.

7. Dress and grooming should meet professional standards while being comfortable and suitable for the day's assignment. Substitutes, like all district personnel, should model appropriate dress and grooming.

8. Availability is important! Administrators appreciate dependable substitutes—not those who come only at their own convenience. If you wish to limit yourself to certain grade levels or campuses, do so when you make your application.

DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES



1. Become familiar with basic district discipline policy. (see policy manual)

2. **Never** leave your classroom unattended.

3. Start the day (class) promptly, firmly, and concisely. Be pleasant. Appear confident. Let the students know that "anything doesn't go." The substitute's first words and actions go a long way to set the day's discipline. You must command respect with your actions. Have a plan for them; otherwise, they will have a plan for you.

4. Be firm but low-key when handling disruptions. Plan not to lose your temper (lose your temper = lose control.)

5. Don't take student verbal "attacks" personally; you are not usually the real target.

6. Allow a student to "save face" by offering options rather than issuing ultimatums when possible.

7. Make consequences clear, but **never** threaten or physically handle a student.

8. Deal with the individual rather than the group when disciplinary action is necessary.

9. If you must send a student to the office, send a note which describes the problem and your attempts to solve it.

10. Give each student a "clean slate" every day.

DISCIPLINE

The one thing necessary to achieve any goal worth having.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT TIPS

1. Expect good behavior.

2. Be a role model for your students.

3. Take time to read the classroom expectations and procedures in the classroom in which you are substituting. These should be in your sub folder, AND posted in the classroom. Do not try to write your own rules.

4. Your success in the management or behavior frequently is related to how you say something as well as what you say.

5. Feedback is a very effective way to help a student change his/her behavior; feedback about incorrect behavior often eliminates the problem.

6. Consistent teacher discipline provides for a predictable environment which is directly linked to a feeling of security. A feeling of security allows a student to center energy on a task.

7. You want to prevent problems by knowing and following clear classroom procedures.

8. Behaviors that are disturbing to the class or which might result in harm to the child or to others must be effectively suppressed.

9. Children who are punished without an appropriate warning can become insecure and often belligerent and hostile.

10. Always PRAISE students when they exhibit desired behavior.

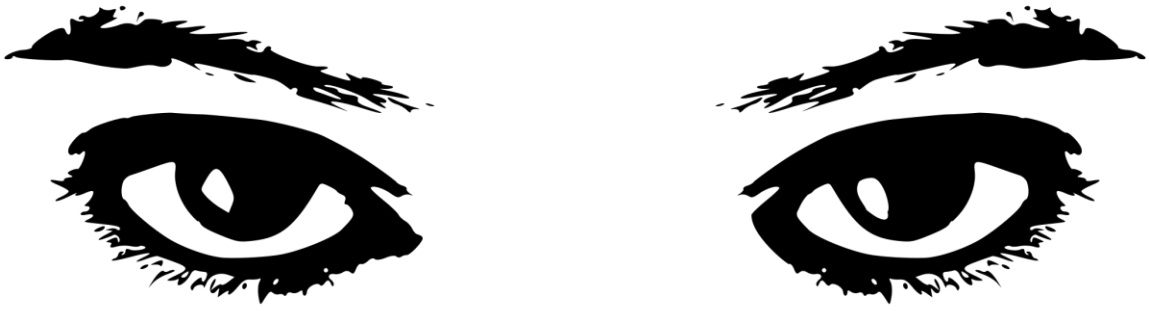
11. Remember to always be fair. Do not show favoritism for this will send a message to students that you are abusing your authority, which could lead to irate parents in the principal's office.

12. Try to never confront a student in the front of his/her peers, for you will likely cause a major scene that you will normally not win.

THE TEACHER STARE

You may wish to practice the following technique in the front of a mirror, for it can be a very effective technique to control misbehavior. An effective teacher's look, signal or body language is normally all it takes to get most students on task.

1. STARE! Really stare at the student to stop the misbehavior.
2. If the student does not stop, calmly WALK to the student.
3. LEAN over and place your hand on the desk.
4. WHISPER into the student's ear or face.
5. SAY the student's name.
6. TELL the student what you want the student to do.
7. SAY, "Thank you."
8. STARE at the student and WAIT three seconds.
9. Leave the student with an affirmative SMILE.



MORE DISCIPLINE TIPS

Talk to Students Before Class Starts.
Stand at the door and talk to students as they arrive in the class. Get to know a few of them individually before you begin the lesson. This is also a great way to get an impression of how students will react to your presence. In addition, you might find out useful information such as school assemblies that you might not have been informed about.

Act as the One in Control.
Students are excellent judges of character. They can tell if you do not feel confident. Enter the class as the teacher for the day, and act accordingly. If something is not going as planned, or your whiteboard markers are out of ink, you will need to wing it. Don't get frantic or nervous. Transition to the next activity or come up with an alternate solution. Never hesitate to call the office for assistance.

Don't be Too Friendly Too Quickly.
While you don't need to stop yourself from smiling or being kind to students, you should avoid too much friendliness when class begins. First impressions are really important for students who can quickly take advantage of any perceived weakness. This then leads to further disruptions as the class progresses. Get the class started and the lesson rolling, then relax a little. Remember, substituting is not a student popularity contest.

Stay on Top of Discipline From the First Moment.
You must stay present and involved in classroom management and discipline from the first moment of the day. When the bell rings, get the students to quiet down as you take roll. You may want to use the counting method: "I need quiet on 1. 5….4…3…2…1." (Do this slowly and do not speak until you have silence.) You may have to wait a while or call for quiet again until students understand your expectations. As class continues, be aware of everything that is going on in the class. You will have difficulty controlling students sitting behind the teacher's desk. Move about the classroom and stop disruptions before they escalate. Use non-verbal looks, cues, etc., before you go verbal, because making a verbal statement always invites a confrontation.

Avoid Confrontation as Much as Possible.
If, despite your best efforts, a confrontational student causes a major disruption in class, it is important to keep your cool. Don't lose your temper, raise your voice, or get other students involved. This can lead to a situation where a student feels that they have to "save face." If possible, pull the student to one side to deal with the situation. If the situation is truly something beyond your control, call the office for assistance.

Keep the Students Busy.
Follow the lesson plan left by the teacher. However, if the plan leaves a lot of free time in class or the teacher did not leave a plan at all, have mini-lessons ready to go. An idle class is one that is ripe for disruption. You need to have some activities in your own personal folder that you can pull from until someone from the office can bring an assignment for the students. This could be puzzles, brain teasers and other such activities that will keep the students busy.

Have a Discipline Referral at your Disposal.
Fill in some of the information on a discipline referral so that if you need to use it, it will be easy to complete in the middle of class. If students start to get really disruptive, pull it out and show it to the students. Explain that you will use it if necessary. Sometimes, this might be enough to calm the situation. However, if you cannot resolve a discipline problem in your classroom, go ahead and fill it out. Please remember that substitute teachers will rarely be given the same respect as the regular classroom teacher for a multitude of reasons. Do not just call the office every five minutes to have a student removed, for this will mean that you are totally ineffective; however, do not hesitate to call before you allow a classroom to become dangerously out of control.

STUDENT CONFIDENTIALITY

A substitute teacher shall maintain the confidentiality of all student information. At no time should a substitute teacher EVER share incidences that happen on any campus with the general public. Any observations or concerns should only be shared with school administration. It is against the law in Louisiana to violate student confidentiality, and there are severe penalties in Louisiana for violating this law.

MEDICATION POLICY

Students are not allowed, as a general rule, to have medication on their person at school. You, as a substitute teacher, should NEVER give ANY type of medication including a common cough drop to a student. Notify an administrator immediately if you see medication in a student's possession. Do not try to handle this yourself.

SEARCHING A STUDENT

A substitute teacher should NEVER conduct a search of a student's person or belongings. Call an administrator for assistance.