PASCACK VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

Substitute Teacher Handbook

2025-2026

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Pascack Valley Regional High School

Foreword

Congratulations on your selection as a Pascack Valley Regional High School District substitute teacher. Substitute teachers are vital to the continuity of the instructional program and are essential to a quality education for each student in our district. Your role is crucial to maintaining our district's high level of educational performance in the classroom.

Please take the time to review the materials in this handbook. We hope that this information will help you to have an effective and rewarding teaching experience.

District Administrators

Mr. Dirk Phillips	**Acting Superintendent**	**Ext. 21005**
Dr. Mark Russo	**Director of Curriculum & Instruction**	**Ext. 22032**

Building Administrators

John Puccio	**Principal**	**Ext. 24003**
Tom Gallione	**Assistant Principal**	**Ext. 24001**
Alison Petaccia	**Assistant Principal**	**Ext. 24001**

Subject Area Supervisors

Valerie Mattessich	**English, Art, Library**	**Ext. 24041**
Jessica Nuzzi	**Mathematics**	**Ext. 22052**
Joe Orlak	**Social Studies/Business**	**Ext. 22050**
Sean Struncis	**Guidance**	**Ext. 24009**
Chiara Kupiec	**World Language, Music, Home & Cons. Sci.**	**Ext. 24054**
Megan Graziano	**Science, Technology**	**Ext. 22040**
Jonathan Hesney	**Director, Special Services**	**Ext. 24018**
William VanKersen	**Physical Education & Director of Athletics**	**Ext. 24035**

PASCACK VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL
ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPERVISORY STAFF

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

1. **Report to the Main Office at the beginning of each day. Sign-in sheets and appropriate forms will be available in a folder on the front counter. The main office secretary will be your contact person (ext. 24001).**

2. **Consult with the Assistant Principal regarding discipline.**

3. **In terms of discipline, substitute teachers should:**
   - **Be cordial, but firm. YOU are in charge.**
   - **Be fair. Do not place yourself in a position of disciplining an entire group for the actions of one.**
   - **Never lose your self-control.**
   - **Never touch a student except in self-defense or to protect the safety of another.**
   - **Remain standing in the classroom—your control is much better.**
   - **Refer problems to the Assistant Principal who will handle the situation.**

4. **Substitute teachers should execute the lesson plans left by the regular classroom teacher. Subsequent lessons by that teacher may depend on what you do.**

5. **Substitute teachers should never leave a group of students unsupervised. Do not send a group to another room to work without supervision.**

6. **Substitute teachers are to remain in the building throughout the day unless the Main Office is notified.**

Specific Duties for Substitute Teachers

1. **Assume all commitments of the regular classroom teacher, including duty assignments.**

2. **Check attendance <u>personally</u>.**

- **Students are to report to class by 8:00 am.**

- **Take attendance in each class**. If any student is absent, please call extension 24000 and leave a message for *Attendance* telling them whose class you are covering, which period, and who is absent. Please speak slowly and clearly.

3. **Permit students to leave the room <u>only when it is necessary</u>**. If you must send a student out of the classroom, make sure that the student possesses a corridor pass. <u>Do not give students passes to the cafeteria.</u>

4. **Insist that students be engaged in productive activity.**

5. **The first five minutes of the second period of the day are devoted to the flag salute and announcements**.
    - Check the regular teacher's mailbox and distribute any communications addressed to individual students.
    - Insist upon quiet in the classroom when announcements are being made over the P.A.
    - Return guidance appointment forms of absent students to the Guidance Office.

6. **Leave classrooms in an orderly condition**. Be sure windows are closed and the lights are shut off at the end of the day.

7. **Be sure that equipment and supplies are not mishandled, and that all electrical equipment is turned off at the end of each period.**

Important Reminders for Substitute Teachers

Professional Attire: Substitute teachers are expected to dress appropriately and serve as role models for students. Attire should always be neat, clean, and appropriate for an educational setting.

Taking Roll: It is the professional and legal responsibility of teachers to ensure accurate student accounting each class period. Call out the names of the students you have listed as absent before calling in the list to the office. The responsibility of attendance taking is that of the substitute teacher; students should never take attendance. Taking attendance at the beginning and then at the end of a period is advised if the substitute is unfamiliar with the students.

Confidentiality: Confidentiality is not only a legal responsibility; it is essential for the protection of students and families. Discussing school matters outside of the school should be avoided. If there is a serious concern about a student, please contact the school administrators immediately.

Use of Controversial Materials: Substitute teachers should obtain prior approval from the school administration before showing private or commercial videos to students. Usually only "G" rated or "PG" rated videos will be allowed. Videos need to serve a legitimate educational purpose and should be closely related to the curriculum. At no time should a substitute teacher deviate from a lesson plan. If there are any questions regarding the use of the particular materials, administrative approval should be obtained prior to substitute teachers using the materials in the classroom.

Student Use of Computers and the Internet: Students will have their own laptop computers for use in class. Students will be allowed to use computers only if the lesson plan left by the teacher indicates their need. Otherwise, all laptops should be turned off and closed. If a student refuses to comply, please call an administrator at 24001/24003.

Being Alone with Students: Unfortunately, in today's society, teachers are placing themselves and the district "in harm's way" if they allow themselves to be alone and outside the view of others with individual students. Substitute teachers should avoid situations where they are left alone with an individual student.

Medical Issues: If an emergency arises in your classroom, call the nurse/administrator, ext. 24021, send two students to the nurse and two students to the Main Office for help. Do not leave the student who is ill at any time.

Tips for Substitute Teachers

☑ *Preview the roll for any difficult to pronounce names that may give you problems*. Ask another teacher or a student how to say those names.

☑ *Identify and familiarize yourself with emergency exits and routes.* Each classroom has an emergency exit diagram posted near the door. In addition, an Internal Lockdown site for each room is posted near the door.

☑ *Have something for the students to do as soon as they enter the classroom*. Engaging students right away is always an effective practice.

☑ *Take notes for the report that you leave the teacher*. This will ensure that you have the names and facts correct for your Substitute Teacher Report.

☑ *When addressing a serious behavior issue with a student, speak to that student privately at the front of the room after giving the rest of the class an assignment*. If you make students feel cornered behavior problems will worsen.

☑ *Always, ALWAYS, follow the classroom teacher's lesson plans (or whatever substitute instructions they have left).* The top complaint heard from teachers about substitutes is that they do not follow the lesson plan.

☑ *Take time before school to review material that is unfamiliar*. If that still does not help, try to find another teacher who will explain it to you. (The second most common complaint heard from teachers about substitutes is that they did not know anything about the subject, and confused the students.) Make every attempt to understand the lessons.

☑ *Leave a note for the teacher at the end of the day (Substitute Report Form).* Let the classroom teacher know how the day went. Did the students struggle with the lesson? If so, let the teacher know. Did the students have fun with an activity? Again, let the teacher know. Remember to include the positives of the day as well as the negatives.

☑ *Make sure the room is in order before leaving.* Another common complaint is that the teacher can never find books and papers when they return. Make an effort to stack handed-in assignments in a neat and organized manner where the teacher can easily find them. Put all books away where they were at the start of the day. Be sure the room in general looks orderly.

- *Avoid speaking negatively about students, other teachers, or about the class or school*. Negativity is almost never appreciated. The result is often damaging and frequently results in the substitute developing a negative reputation.

School Year Bell Schedule

Bell Schedule						
	Monday All		Tuesday R1	Wednesday R4	Thursday R3	Friday R2
7:45-7:55	Arrival	7:45-7:55	Arrival	Arrival	Arrival	Arrival
8:00 – 8:41 41 minutes	Period 1	8:00 – 8:56 56 minutes	Period 1	Period 4	Period 3	Period 2
8:45 – 9:28 43 minutes	Period 2	9:00 – 9:58 58 minutes	Period 2	Period 1	Period 4	Period 3
9:32 – 10:13 41 minutes	Period 3	10:02 – 10:58 56 minutes	Period 3	Period 2	Period 1	Period 4
10:17 – 10:58 41 minutes	Period 4	11:02 – 11:53 51 minutes	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
11:02 – 11:53 51 minutes	Lunch	11:57 – 12:53 56 minutes	Period 5	Period 8	Period 7	Period 6
11:57 – 12:38 41 minutes	Period 5	12:57 – 1:53 56 minutes	Period 6	Period 5	Period 8	Period 7
12:42 – 1:23 41 minutes	Period 6	1:57 – 2:53 56 minutes	Period 7	Period 6	Period 5	Period 8
1:27 – 2:08 41 minutes	Period 7					
2:12 – 2:53 41 minutes	Period 8					

SPECIAL BELL SCHEDULES

Half Day		**Delayed Arrival (PD)**		**Delayed Arrival (SNOW)**		**Delayed Arrival (SNOW)**	
	Monday		**Monday**		**Monday**		**Tues-Fri**
7:45-7:55	Arrival	9:45-9:55	Arrival	9:45-9:55	Arrival	9:45-9:55	Arrival
8:00 – 8:27 27 minutes	Period 1	10:00 – 10:27 27 minutes	Period 1	10:00 – 10:27 27 minutes	Period 1	10:00 – 10:37 37 minutes	Period 1
8:31 – 9:00 29 minutes	Period 2	10:31 – 11:00 29 minutes	Period 2	10:31 – 11:00 29 minutes	Period 2	10:41 – 11:18 37 minutes	Period 2
9:04 – 9:30 26 minutes	Period 3	11:04 – 11:31 27 minutes	Period 3	11:04-11:31 27 minutes	Period 3	11:22 – 11:59 37 minutes	Period 3
9:34 – 10:00 26 minutes	Period 4	11:35 – 12:02 27 minutes	Period 4	11:35 – 12:02 27 minutes	Period 4	12:03 – 12:50 47 minutes	Lunch
10:04 – 10:30 26 minutes	Period 5	12:06 – 12:53 47 minutes	Lunch	12:06 – 12:53 47 minutes	Lunch	12:54 – 1:31 37 minutes	Period 6
10:34 – 11:00 26 minutes	Period 6	12:57 – 1:23 26 minutes	Period 5	12:57 – 1:23 30 minutes	Period 5	1:35 – 2:12 37 minutes	Period 7
11:04 – 11:30 26 minutes	Period 7	1:27 – 1:53 26 minutes	Period 6	1:27 – 1:53 26 minutes	Period 6	2:16 – 2:53 37 minutes	Period 8

Media Inquiries during Emergencies or Events

- Individuals should not speak to the media, even if they are persistent. Refer media inquiries to the district Public Information Officer, Ms. Tracy Leigh.
- Deviation from this procedure could put people in harm's way, violate privacy laws, or compromise an on-going incident.
- No faculty or staff should post incident details or photos to social media.

Active Shooter & Lockdown Procedures

In the event of a known threat to safety or security in the building, you must call the main office to initiate a lockdown. (i.e. person with a weapon, gunshots fired, hostage situation, non-compliant trespasser, or any situation where there is a threat or perceived threat in the building)

1. Use district phone and dial 24000.
2. Inform the office personnel what you witnessed.

- Staff in classrooms will quick glance outside their rooms and then close their doors, press in the door locks, draw the window shade, and have all students get quiet and assemble in the taped off area out of view of the door.
- Staff and students in the hallway will quickly move to the nearest classroom or office. If they find themselves locked out, they will move to the nearest restroom and either barricade the door or place themselves on top of the toilet with the stall door locked.
- Staff and students outside the building (i.e Phys. Ed. classes or between classes) will move to the nearest cover or concealment or retreat inside building; whichever is closest and more prudent, unless instructed otherwise on the radio by administration or in person by law enforcement.
- If lockdown occurs during lunch, cafeteria staff/lunch duty personnel will move students to the area behind the serving area and in the back-storage room.
- If lockdown occurs while in the media center, staff will lock media center doors and move students to an area not visible from the front doors or the windows.
- Disregard all bells.

• Instruct students not to use cell phones, laptops, or post to social media. It could put them in danger or spread false information/panic.
• If the fire alarm goes off while in lockdown, stay in lockdown and do not evacuate the building; A lockdown supersedes a fire alarm.

3. Office personnel will call 9-1-1. The caller should be prepared to:

• Describe the situation to the 911 dispatcher, including if a weapon is involved and how many suspects.
• Indicate the last known location of the threat.
• Describe any medical injuries, number of victims, and location of victims, if applicable.

4. SLEO III officers will respond towards the threat and control the scene.

Recovery: Lockdown

After the situation has been brought under control, the School Administrator will follow orders for ending the lockdown from the law enforcement incident commander. Law enforcement will advise if they want to clear each room individually or if they want a mass evacuation.

• If individual rooms are being cleared, the school administrator will make an announcement over the PA system all call "*The lockdown is over. Remain in your classrooms. No one is to leave the classrooms until police officers come to your room and tell you to do so. Please keep your hands visible and do not have any objects in your hands.*" This will be followed by a second announcement from a teacher, administrator, or staff member who will identify themselves and say a second time: "*The lockdown is over. Remain in your classrooms. No one is to leave the classrooms until police officers come to your room and tell you to do so. Please keep your hands visible and do not have any objects in your hands*."
• If the entire building is being evacuated at the same time, the school administrator will make an announcement over the PA system all call "*The lockdown is over. Classes should stay together and evacuate the building to the football field for attendance. Do not take any bags or items with you. Please keep your hands visible.*" This will be followed by a second announcement from a teacher, administrator, or staff member who will identify themselves and say a second time: "*The lockdown is over. Classes should stay together and evacuate the building to the football field for attendance. Do not take any bags or items with you. Please keep your hands visible*."
• Staff evacuates the building using the designated exit routes and alternate routes to the assigned assembly areas and take attendance. Administration is to be notified of any missing staff or students.

Drills

PVHS: A school administrator will send an electronic announcement via email and/or the Remind system advising that the drill is over and you can secure from the lockdown.

Off-Site Evacuation Procedures

Certain events and/or circumstances may mandate evacuation of students and staff to an off-site location. The decision for such an evacuation would be made by police personnel in charge of the incident, in conjunction with school administration. In general, the following procedures will be followed:

1. Police will coordinate decisions and actions as to:

- Location or locations to which students and staff will be moved;
- Traffic control measures to ensure safety while moving away from the school building;
- Security to be provided in the event of immediate danger.

2. School personnel will be responsible for controlling student response and behavior during the evacuation and at the off-site location. Teachers will check attendance periodically throughout the incident.

PVHS: If a threat of immediate danger does not exist and an off-site evacuation is warranted, the superintendent of schools and the school principal, after consultation with the police, will contact the Superintendent of Schools in Hillsdale to arrange for an immediate evacuation to Meadowbrook School for PVHS Students. [201-664-8088]. Students will leave the Pascack Valley property via Piermont Road.

In an effort to avoid bottlenecks and delays, classes will be dismissed in an organized fashion. Police and SLEO III officers will control traffic in order to facilitate a safe evacuation. Once at the evacuation site, teachers are to keep their class together and take attendance. Students will be housed in the gymnasium and dismissed to parents from the site at the appropriate time. If possible, students and staff will return to their school prior to the normal end of the school day.

Fire
Notify Police and Fire Department: Dial 9-1-1
General Procedures:
The first responsibility is student safety. Do NOT attempt to fight the fire. Evacuate students from the area, pull the fire alarm, and evacuate the building. Do not re-enter unless advised by administration.

Staff
1. Pull the Nearest Fire Alarm. Notify the main office of location of fire. Call 9-1-1. Close the door to the fire room, if possible.
2. Evacuate. Go out with students. Close doors. Unassigned teachers should check rest rooms.
3. Move at least 200 feet from the building via fire evacuation routes and out of all driveways and await direction.
4. Take attendance. Report missing students to school administration.

Special Needs
1. Students and staff who are in wheelchairs or on crutches on the second floor should report to the designated "Safe Room" (227). This room is accessible to the Fire Department for evacuation.
2. Students and staff who are in wheelchairs or on crutches on the first floor should evacuate with their classes.

*** REMEMBER, ANY SMOKE IN THE BUILDING IS AN INDICATION OF FIRE: Pull the**
alarm and EVACUATE *

Gas Leak

Natural gas leaks are identified by an odor similar to rotten eggs. Carbon Monoxide (CO) leaks are odorless and tasteless, but indicated by an activated CO alarm or a room of people with flu- like symptoms. If a gas leak is suspected, do the following:
1. Notify the main office who will call 9-1-1 and activate the fire alarm.
2. Open windows in the immediate area to ventilate and defuse the gas.
3. Evacuate the building immediately according to the established fire evacuation plan.

Accident/Illness & Medical Emergencies

1. If what appears to be a minor injury or illness (staff or student is conscious, breathing, and not bleeding) staff member should call the nurse's office or main office giving the following information: **Location of the person, Name of the person, Type of injury or illness**
2. If there is a major illness or injury (staff or student is unconscious, not breathing, or Severely bleeding), staff member should call 9-1-1 from a school landline and then the main office. Render care, if trained. If the patient is not breathing, begin CPR and send a student for the nearest AED. If patient is bleeding, send a student for a Bleeding Control kit.
3. Keep all personnel and students uninvolved in the emergency away from the area and maintain student confidentiality.

Where to Find what I Need:

Attendance Sheets (for report to teacher)	Main Office
Discipline Referral Forms	Main Office
Substitute Report Forms	Main Office
Copy Machine	Teachers Mail Room
Phone (Emergency)	In Every Classroom
Coffee	Faculty Dining Area
Vending Machines	Cafeteria, Gym Hallway

Whom to Call About a Problem or Question:

Payroll	Cathy Tocci	Ext. 21014
Operating Procedures	Main Office Secretary	Ext. 24001
Attendance	Attendance Officer	Ext. 24000
Computers	Jamie Budakian	Ext. 24031
School Policies/ Discipline Issues	Tom Gallione	Ext. 24001
	Alison Petaccia	Ext. 24001
Lesson Plans/Curriculum		
English, Art, Library-Valerie Mattessich		Ext. 24041
Mathematics-Jessica Nuzzi		Ext. 24042
Business & Social Studies-Joe Orlak		Ext. 24034
World Language, Music, Home & Family Consumer Sciences – Chiara Kupiec		Ext. 24029
Science and Technology-Megan Graziano		Ext. 24032
Special Education-Jonathan Hesney		Ext. 24019
Health & Physical Education-William VanKersen		Ext. 24035

Important Phone Numbers:

Hillsdale Police	201-664-4200
Main Office	Ext. 24001
Attendance Office	Ext. 24000
Guidance Office	Ext. 24008
Special Services	Ext. 24018
Nurse's Office- Diane Fallon	Ext. 24021
Security	**Ext. 24068**

PASCACK VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL
HILLSDALE, NJ 07642

Substitute Report Form

Name_____Date_____

Substitute for_____Subject_____

1. Were lesson plans available? yes no

2. Were class rosters available yes no

3. Were the class rosters up to date?

yes

no

4. Were materials available for conducting the lesson? yes no

5. Did you have any problem getting into rooms? yes no

6. Did you encounter any problems with students? yes no
If yes, please describe

_____

_____

7. Were there any problems with attendance? yes no
If yes, please explain:

_____

_____

8. Please leave a message for the teacher:

9. Miscellaneous comments:

NOTES