



Substitute Teacher Handbook

Welcome to Billings School District #2!

The Billings School District welcomes you to the noble and challenging teaching profession. You have become part of a team that is committed to providing the best possible educational opportunities for our students. Your role as a substitute teacher is essential in maximizing the potential of each student. This handbook will orient you to both the District's policies and procedures and to your responsibilities.

Mission Statement

In partnership with our community, our mission is to educate individuals of all ages to become caring, competent, and contributing members of the community and the world.

Important Contact Information

Superintendent	406-281-5065
Executive Director of Human Resources.....	406-281-5039
Substitute Teacher General Help Desk (HR).....	406-281-5042
Payroll	406-281-5012
Emergency Preparedness/Safety Plan.....	406-281-5989
Billings Public Schools Website.....	www.billingschools.org
Workers Compensation Desk.....	406-281-5045
Technology Help Desk.....	406-281-5151
Montana Teachers Retirement (TRS).....	406-444-3134 866-600-4045
Absence and Substitute (A&S) Help.....	absence.substitute@tylertech.com 800-785-6690
Absence and Substitute (A&S) Job Dashboard.....	https://app.readysub.com

General Substitute Information with Step by Step Guides for ReadySub:

<https://support.readysub.com/support/home>

Select “Substitutes” for help articles and Step by Step Guides. This will be your best resource for general questions.

Starting the Day

Arriving a few minutes prior to the start time of a job will allow you time to orient yourself to the teacher's schedule as well as familiarizing yourself with lesson plans and other duties. You will receive the start and end times of the assignment through **Absence and Substitutes (A&S)**. Keep in mind that you are required to be at the school by the start time of the job and stay until the end time of the job, even if one of the periods is a prep period. Any deviations from the posted job times must be approved by the building principal or secretary. Start and end times, plus lunch times, will vary per school.

- Start Times: 6:30am - 8:15am
- End Times: 3:15pm – 5:00pm

Prior to leaving home, verify that the job is still active and was not canceled. A job may be canceled up to 30 minutes prior to the start time. It is your responsibility to make sure the job was not canceled. If the job was canceled 30 minutes or more before the start of the job, you will not be paid for presenting that day.

As a substitute teacher, you may be asked to take a different assignment when arriving at the school. This will only occur in emergency situations. The school may also ask you to sub in another room, during any prep times, when the need arises. You will never be asked to take an assignment in which you do not feel comfortable or qualified for. If such a situation arises, please inform the school Secretary or Principal to see if there is another assignment in which you may help with.

When you arrive at the school:

- Report to the building secretary or principal. Introduce yourself and let them know the teacher's name that you are subbing for. Please have the job number available if requested.
- They will provide any pertinent information you will need for that day and will give you a link to access the digital sub teacher folder which will include that school's Evacuation and Safety Plan.
- Get clarification about the guidelines for student cell phone usage during the class you are subbing for.
- Familiarize yourself with recess times, lunch, art and music periods, the schedule and routine of the classes, etc.
- Introduce yourself to teachers in nearby classrooms. This will help in case of an emergency, as they will know you may need help getting students to safety. It will also aid you if you need extra help in the classroom.

Substitute teaching jobs are to be canceled for emergency reasons only, e.g., illness. You may not cancel to take a different job.

If an emergency occurs and you are unable to fulfill your substitute assignment, please cancel yourself out of the job in **Absence and Substitute** immediately so the sub finder can try to fill the job with another substitute.

If you have canceled a job last minute, please contact the school immediately to let them know so they can make sure the job has been reset to find a substitute.

Canceling to accept another job is not tolerated by the School District and is subject to disciplinary action. If there is a special circumstance, this needs to be adjusted through Human Resources. Excessive cancellations will be recorded and could lead to removal from the substitute list.

Routine Procedures and Expectations

- Responsibilities to the regular teacher include:
 - Do your best to follow the lesson plans provided by the teacher.
 - If lesson plans are not available, please seek assistance at the main office; do not make up your own lesson plan. If you complete a lesson plan for the day, contact the main office for additional materials.
 - See that all assigned work is completed as much as possible.
 - Be prepared to assume all responsibilities of the classroom teacher, including special duties such as lunch, recess, and bus duty.
 - Leave a report of work covered and any incident(s) that the teacher should know about. There is also a feedback option in **Absence and Substitute** for each job you have completed. Please complete this at the end of each day if possible.
- Immediately report an accident to the principal or main office.
- Use unstructured time to plan and prepare materials.
- Elementary teachers are required to escort classes to and from special activities such as music, physical education, library, lunch, bus loading, etc., according to the schedule provided. **NEVER LEAVE THE STUDENTS UNATTENDED.** Leaving students unattended for any reason will be cause for immediate removal from the substitute teacher list. No exceptions.
 - Remember that we have several schools that are multi-level. If you are unable to use the stairs with students, we ask that you not accept those jobs or call ahead so that the school knows they will need to make accommodations to help during those times.
- Students cannot leave the classroom without your permission.
- The substitute should never dismiss class ahead of time, or hold class or individual(s) after school, without authority from the building principal.
- Leave the classroom just as you found it. Teachers have asked you to be a guest in their “home” and it is not in your position to rearrange or fix something. If you have a concern with the condition of a room, please contact the main office or principal.
- Under no circumstances will the substitute teacher:
 - Release a child from his or her jurisdiction during school hours without written permission from the office.

- Give any information about a student to someone who is not directly associated with the school – if this situation occurs, contact the building principal immediately.
- Leave money, medications, tobacco, or valuables unsecured.
- Use physical punishment, threaten, harass, or intimidate students.
- Suspend a student or hold them after school.
- Dismiss class ahead of time without the building principal’s approval.

Tips for a Great Day

- Be respectful to students. This is the best way to gain respect.
- Leave your personal life at home.
- Be positive, confident, and professional. This includes dress, speech, written communication, and ethical behavior.
- Be informed - know the rules of the school and what is expected of you.
- Be balanced and neutral, i.e., no talk of politics or other sensitive topics
- Review the lesson plans and procedures prior to student arrival.
- Move around the classroom during instruction and work time.
- Use student names whenever possible.
- Follow through with promises and consequences.
- Students have a variety of learning challenges. Be sensitive to the fact that learning is more difficult for some students than for others. If you are unsure of a situation, ask the principal if there is something you should be doing for a student that you feel may need extra help. At no time is it acceptable to “call out” any student for needing the extra help.

Managing Students in a Classroom

It is important to be fair to all students. Despite all of your preparation, some students will challenge you. The following tips may help when you are faced with a difficult situation:

- Tell students what you expect in the classroom in terms of rules, guidelines, expectations, etc., and stick to them. Be firm, fair and consistent. Remember to follow the rules of the school and permanent teacher. Be sure to communicate clearly with students. Do not surprise students with consequences. They need to know in advance what they can expect as a result of unfavorable behavior. Then, hold only the troublemakers accountable; avoid threats and group punishments.
- Begin the class immediately. Eliminate lulls and downtime – especially at the beginning of class. This will eliminate some of the opportunities for students to cause trouble. Students learn and behave better if they are actively engaged in learning.
- Manage by walking around. The closer you are to students, the more likely they will listen and behave. Do not remain behind the desk all day.
- If students won’t pay attention or do what they are instructed, try to determine what is causing the inappropriate behavior.

- Attention from the teacher is a powerful tool. Recognizing a specific behavior reinforces it. Do not focus continually on inappropriate behavior. It is important to recognize good behaviors. Also, be alert for students who use their disruptive behavior to gain attention.
- It is better to be positive than negative. Provide positive reinforcement when something is done well. Positive verbal praise, a smile, a nod, and other appropriate gestures, are all ways to help reduce problem behavior. Make sure your positive statements outnumber negative statements.
- Ask questions which encourage self-correction
 - Where should you be right now?
 - How do we line up?
 - What should you be doing when the bell rings?
- Give choices that avoid a power struggle:
 - Can you solve this problem or should I get involved?
 - Will you play together or do you need to sit down for a while?
 - To curb arguing: “You’re talking right now and I need you to listen.”
- It is sometimes effective to ask disruptive students to step into the hall so you can talk to them. This has a quieting effect on the other students and allows you to calmly explain your expectations to the student.
- Suppress the urge to lose your temper or react in a negative way. Unless what you are about to do or say has a good chance of improving the situation, don’t say or do something that will make it worse.
- Do not threaten consequences that you cannot enforce or that are unreasonable. Saying things that you do not mean, or cannot enforce, undermines your authority.
- Do not attempt to handle difficult situations. If your intervention attempts have not been successful and you must send a student to the principal, be very specific when directing the student:
 - “Please go to the principal’s office now. I will notify them you are coming.”
 - Call the office or send a classroom aide with the student and let them know the reason for the discipline referral. Follow up with a visit to the principal as soon as possible. Do not leave your class unsupervised. Handling these situations correctly serves the dual purpose of defusing a situation and demonstrates that you are capable of using numerous resources when a problem occurs.
- Sticking to the lesson plan, as laid out for you, will help manage classroom time. Keep your personal opinions to yourself about the lesson plan or topic of the lesson plan. Students can quickly escalate a situation and then the classroom is no longer manageable. At no time is it acceptable to make personal remarks about a lesson plan and refuse to do it. If you show enthusiasm about a lesson plan, students will reciprocate that. If you are negative and unsupportive, they will be as well.

Ending the Day

Substitute teachers should remain in the building for at least 7 ½ teaching hours for full day assignments and 4 teaching hours for half day assignments - unless prior arrangements have been made with the building principal.

- Leave the room in an orderly condition.
- Correct all papers and workbooks only if directed by the classroom teacher.
- Leave a note for the classroom teacher focusing on student learning, including:
 - Your name, phone number, and the date you subbed.
 - Progress on lesson plans and activities – What was completed? Did the students have problems comprehending the information? Etc. Please be descriptive and not judgmental.
 - Behavior – exceptional helpers, volunteers, attitude, and any issues.
 - Students that were absent.
 - Anything you feel is pertinent for the Teacher to know.
- Do NOT do any duties the teacher has not asked you to do.

Completing the feedback form in Absence and Substitute is not required but is a quick and easy way to relay the above information.

Always check out with the building principal or secretary to see if your services are needed further for the day before leaving the building.

General Employment Information

Identification Badge (ID Badge)

To help ensure the protection of staff and students, as well as reduce the possibilities of theft, vandalism, and loss of district property, all substitutes shall be issued an ID badge at the Human Resources Office. **This also lets staff and students know that you are a “safe” person.**

- ID badges are the property of the district for use by district employees. Any employee who duplicates or lends his/her ID badge will be subject to disciplinary action.
- ID badges are to be worn in plain sight when the substitute is engaged in the performance of district duties on district property.
- A report of a lost or stolen badge must be made to the Human Resources Office immediately. Please call 406-281-5117.
- An ID badge that is lost, stolen, or damaged due to circumstances beyond the employee’s control will be replaced by the district at no cost to the employee. Other badge replacements may be charged per replacement.

District Policies

For a full description of the Billings Public Schools' Policies, visit the District's website at: www.billingschools.org

- Computer Usage
 - Substitute teachers are not set up with an account to use or access the District's computers. If you need assistance with accessing your information, you will need to contact Technology by calling 406-281-5151.
 - Personal computers/laptops are also NOT allowed. All computer usage during the assignment is subject to the district's computer use policy.
- Cellular Phone Usage
 - Substitute teachers should not use their cellular phone during class time, even when the students are studying or when you have recess duty. Cell phones and tablets are allowed during breaks and lunches ONLY!
 - Cellular phones are not to be used for the purpose of taking pictures, illegal transactions, harassment, or obscene behavior in any manner that violates any District Policies.
- Dress Code
 - Employees are expected at all times to present a neat and professional image to fellow staff members, administrators, teachers, students, and to the public. Such Standards shall be approximately the same as those of like professions in the community.
 - Fridays are generally considered "casual day" where employees are allowed to wear jeans and dress in a more casual fashion. However, employees are still expected to present a neat and casual professional appearance.
 - If you are substituting for a PE class, you may wear sweats. Please call ahead to find out if you will be outside. Remember also that in upper grades, you may spend some of your day in PE and some of your day in a regular classroom and you will need to plan accordingly.

Reminder!!!

Pictures and/or videos of Students and/or other Staff are not to be taken with any electronic device. This is against District policy and will be grounds for immediate removal from the substitute list.

School Calendar

The school calendar is available on our district website. A color printer is required to print the calendar, as the calendars are color coded. Hard copies are available in the Human Resource Office, room 202, at the Lincoln Center.

Terms of Employment:

A substitute teacher for the Billings School District is a temporary position assigned on a day-to-day basis. The Board of Trustees establishes hours, wages, and other conditions of employment. This is not a benefit eligible position. Employment can be terminated at any time at the option of the district.

While employed with the Billings School District, if no substitute assignments are taken within a one (1) year period, and a notice of leave is not given to Human Resources, a substitute teacher may be inactivated and removed from employment with the district and will need to reapply.

Full-Day/Half-Day Substitute Pay

Pursuant to board policy, substitute teachers will be paid either for a full day or a half-day, but shall not be paid less than a half-day. A half-day consists of 3.75 *teaching* hours or less and a full day consists of anything more than 3.75 *teaching* hours but no greater than 7 1/2 teaching hours. A lunch time will be given for full days.

In the event that a substitute is called for work and a teacher returns to his/her assigned duties in the interim, or a job was canceled without notification, the substitute shall be paid the wages of the job they accepted. In such an event, the substitute may, at the discretion of the building principal, be assigned other duties for the duration of the initial job. You will never be placed into a position or given an assignment in which you do not feel comfortable. If such a situation occurs, reach out to the building Secretary or Principal to see if there is another assignment available for you.

Payroll Information

Paychecks/Direct deposits are issued on the 20th of each month for any work done the previous month. A work period consists of any work done from the first of the month to the last day of that month. For example, any time worked from September 1st -30th will be paid on October 20th. Please be sure to review your assignments in **Absence and Substitute** for accuracy, and if you find a discrepancy in the date and/or time worked, notify the secretary of that school by the last day of the month worked.

If the 20th of the month falls on a non-work day, you will be paid on the last work day prior. The other exception to your pay dates is for any time subbed in June; June time will be included in your pay on the 20th of June, along with your May time. The easiest way to balance your check to your days worked is to figure your gross wages and compare that to your check.

You may elect direct deposit by completing the authorization for direct deposit form from the Payroll Office. You may change your direct deposit at any time. Please contact the Payroll Office at 406-281-5012 for more details.

All W2's are now mailed to substitute teachers. Paycheck stubs are available online through Employee Online. If you need assistance accessing Employee Online, please contact the Help desk at 406-281-5151.

Short-Term Substitute Pay

All assignments of less than thirty (30) working days are considered short-term substitute teaching assignments.

The rate of pay for short-term substitutes who hold a current State of Montana Educator License registered with the Yellowstone County Courthouse is \$150 for a full day. The rate of pay for non-licensed short-term substitutes is \$125 for a full day. The rate of pay for a half-day is ½ of your regular pay rate as described.

Long-Term Assignments (LTA)

Teaching assignments of thirty (30) or more continuous working days are considered Long-Term Assignments (LTA). Substitute teachers must be in the application process and hold a current State of Montana Educator License that has been registered with the Yellowstone County Courthouse to teach in a LTA.

You must apply for and be interviewed for a LTA. Teachers are placed on the BEA Salary Schedule based on their education and previous teaching experience.

State of Montana Educator License

All Montana Educator Licenses must be registered with the Yellowstone County Courthouse. To register it, please take your original license to the Courthouse. They will register it, stamp it, and make two copies; one copy needs to go to the Human Resources Office.

Yellowstone County Superintendent's Office - Room 108
Yellowstone County Courthouse
217 N. 27th Street
Billings, MT 59101

If you receive your license after you are set up as a substitute teacher, please register it and bring a copy to the Human Resources office. The day we receive the registered copy is the day you are switched from unlicensed to licensed status.

****You must provide a copy of your Montana Teaching License to HR. It is your responsibility to provide this copy to HR at the time of application and/or receipt of license****

For questions and information about obtaining (and maintaining) a State of Montana Educator License, please contact:

Office of Public Instruction (OPI)
Certification Help (406) 444-3150
Certification Email Help: cert@mt.gov
General Information: (406) 444-3095
In-State Toll Free: (888) 231-9393
Web Page: www.opi.mt.gov

Injuries on the Job

Substitute teachers are covered under Montana Workers' Compensation. An injury sustained on school property, in the normal course of duties as a substitute teacher, should be reported immediately to the school principal or secretary as they will assist you in completing the appropriate paperwork.

Teachers Retirement System (TRS)

A substitute teacher may elect to become a member of the Montana Teachers' Retirement System (TRS) on the first day of employment. Once you elect to become a member, you must continue to be a member each successive fiscal year while employed as a substitute teacher.

If you do not elect to be a member of TRS on the first day of employment as a substitute teacher, you must become a member once you have completed 210 hours in any fiscal year. The Payroll office will contact you to fill out the additional paperwork needed. Contributions to TRS may be withdrawn and refunded by TRS if you leave the state or do not continue teaching.

For more information, or any questions about TRS, please contact TRS:

- Helena: 406-444-3134 Toll Free: 866-600-4045
- www.trs.mt.gov

Reports and Evaluations

The education of our students is this District's paramount charge. An evaluation of your performance is a key part of the service the Human Resource office provides to our classroom teachers and to our students.

Exceptional Performance

When the performance of a substitute teacher is considered “Exceptional”, a written report may be sent to the Human Resources office. This report comes from the teacher which is then reviewed by the principal, or from the principal directly. This is put in your personnel file in the Human Resources office. A copy of this report is sent to the home address of the substitute teacher as well. You may also be placed on a preferred substitute list by teachers who had enjoyed having you sub.

Unsatisfactory Performance

Any report of unsatisfactory performance will be reviewed by the principal and sent to Human Resources. If an unsatisfactory report is received, Human Resources will review the incident and may call the substitute to come in for a review and corrective instructions. Substitute teachers who perform in an unsatisfactory manner may be removed from the substitute teacher list at the District’s discretion.

Unsatisfactory performance is defined as, but not limited to, one or more of the following:

- harm to students
- a no show for one or more assignments
- arriving late to more than one assignment
- unsatisfactory classroom management skills or behavior
- a pattern of last minute job cancellations
- when three (3) unsatisfactory written reports have been received by the Human Resources Director



Substitute Teacher Evaluation

Substitute's Name: _____ Date of Assignment: _____

Confirmation #: _____

Classroom Teacher's Evaluation: Please complete the following. If you determine the substitute teacher's performance was unacceptable, please attach appropriate details, including documentation.

	Not Applicable	Exceptional	Satisfactory	Below Average	Unacceptable
Were the Lesson Plans Completed?					
Was the classroom left neat and clean?					
Was classroom work explained satisfactorily?					
Did students report that they were treated fairly and consistently?					
Were any disciplinary issues reported?					
Overall Classroom Management					

Additional Comments:

Classroom Teacher's Signature _____ Date: _____

Building Administrator's Review and Recommendations. If this is a report of unacceptable performance, please review the evaluation and documentation and complete the following:

I observed this substitute teacher: Yes _____ No _____
 I discussed the following areas of concern with the substitute teacher:

Recommendations:

Do not assign this substitute to these areas or levels: _____

Remove the substitute teacher's name from the District's list: Yes _____ No _____

Additional Comments:

Administrator's Signature _____ Date: _____