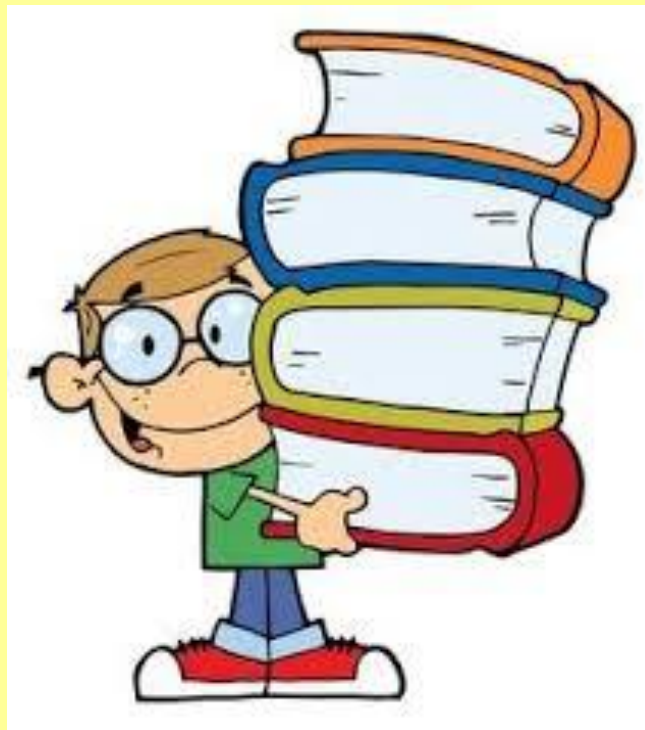


USD 303 SUBSTITUTE TEACHER'S HANDBOOK



SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

The goal at USD 303 is to enable all students to reach their maximum levels of achievement to become responsible, productive citizens.

Adopted by the USD 303 Board of Education: 7/13/2026

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APPLICATIONS

Individuals who want employment as a substitute teacher should make application to the superintendent at any time during normal working hours. The prospective substitute must submit a copy of a valid teaching certificate to teach in Kansas and complete other necessary forms.

RATES of PAY

Substitute teachers will be paid at the rate as approved by the Board of Education.

PAY PERIOD

The end of the pay period will be the fifteenth of every month unless this is a holiday or a weekend. If the 15th of the month is a holiday or a weekend, paycheck will be issued on the day preceding the holiday or weekend.

REPORTING for DUTY

Substitutes are to report to the building secretary who will provide instructions about clocking in and out, lesson plans and other specific instructions.

BEFORE YOU LEAVE

Correct papers. One of the major obligations of a substitute is to make the return of the classroom teacher as easy as possible. For this to happen, a teacher should not have to return to a stack of papers that have not been graded. Unless instructed otherwise by the principal, the substitute teachers should see that all papers are graded and left on the teacher's desk for him/her to review and record.

Leave pertinent information for the regular teacher. This might include a short list of the things accomplished during the day, special incidents, and communications. Leaving a note can be a big help to the regular teacher.

Report incidents to the building principal. Feel free to visit with the principal about any individual, class, parent communications, discipline problems, accidents, room damage, etc.

Put the room in good order. This includes closing the windows and blinds, turning off the lights and shutting the door.

Check out as instructed. Be sure to clock in and out on the timekeeping system.

DISTRICT EXPECTATIONS OF SUBSTITUTES

Recognize the importance of the job. The job of the substitute is extremely important. Substitutes are not employed to baby-sit but to educate youth. Please take the obligation for which you are employed seriously.

Be professional in your relationships. Never compare one school with another, one principal with another, one teacher with another, or one set of boys and girls with another.

Be prepared to do the job fully. The regular classroom teacher is expected to do many things beyond routine classroom lessons (e.g., assigned duties, extra help for slow children, etc.). As a substitute you must be prepared to take over duties assigned to the teacher for the day. If the substitute period is an extended one, be prepared to assume reasonable obligations within the limits of your ability.

Be available. Do not place your name on a substitute list unless the school can generally expect a “yes” when calling you. Schools must operate regardless of laundry day, a downtown sale, or a club meeting. When illness or a change in family obligations makes you temporarily unavailable, notify the school and tell us when you will again be able to substitute.

Arrive early. Sometimes substitutes are not called until just prior to the beginning of the school session. Even so, get here as early as you can. This is especially important if it is your first day in a new situation. Regular teachers know the room, the group, what she has to work with, where she left off, and where she plans to go. You will have to find your way!

Check the room assigned to you. Locate the plan book, the daily program, the seating plan, the register, and tornado/fire drill instructions.

Check the daily program you are to follow. You will refer to this throughout the day, but take a few minutes to get a general picture of what lies ahead. Check to see what special classes, if any, your class will be attending, and what your role will be during that time. The more familiar you are with the schedule, the better your class will function.

Review the plan book. This is your clue as to what you are to teach. As you locate textbooks and workbooks, add markers for the pages indicated. It will help later on. If films or filmstrips are scheduled, check the procedure. Organize materials so they are easily accessible. Children are used to the established routine of the regular teacher. If you appear indecisive or insecure, class control becomes more difficult.

Scan the seating plan. You cannot learn thirty names immediately so locate two or three who will serve as anchors for your name association as the day goes on. One good idea is to have each student print his/her name on heavy paper that can be folded and left standing on each desk.

Be in your room when the children arrive. This is not only a legal responsibility, but also a necessity in establishing good discipline and effective control.

Greet the children with a smile. Have a pleasant “Good morning!” Insist on children being seated and remaining so.

Follow the regular routine. If there are established routines, make no changes. If children are to sharpen pencils as they come in, if helpers should water plants or get supplies, then stay with this procedure. Do not argue with children. They will be quick to tell you if what you are doing varies from the usual way. If such a situation arises, be pleasant but firm as to how it will be done today; however, you should adhere closely to the regular teacher’s routine.

Check attendance carefully. Call each name distinctly. Graciously accept any corrections in pronunciation. Have children raise hands as names are called to help you associate names and faces.

Take count of absentees and tardies. If a child is not in school, he/she is counted absent (and this includes children who are absent because the bus could not pick them up). Tardies are tardies and excusable only if the bus had trouble. Children riding a bus are not counted tardy if the bus was late in getting to school.

Take an accurate lunch count and record attendance. At the **elementary school**, lunch count and attendance are taken the first thing every morning. The school secretary will compile the total number of lunches to be prepared for the cooks and prepare an absentee report for the principal.

At the **high school**, check attendance carefully and if a seating chart is available, hold students to that. Lunch count should be taken first thing every morning and relayed to the school secretary.

Be prepared. The outcome of the lesson as well as class control depends largely upon your preparedness. If you substitute for more than one day, you are under the same obligation to plan as the regular teacher.

Be ready to start. Have your materials ready before class. Be sure that the class is listening and do not start until you have the attention of every child in the classroom.

Motivation. Children need motivation. Remember, however, the primary purpose is to teach, not to entertain. Be brief, set the stage, arouse curiosity, and relate to the previous lesson. This can be done by a question, picture, story, or a shared experience.

Make your presentation clear. What the children gain from the lesson will depend on how well you present it.

1. Keep the language on the children's level of understanding.
2. Present one point at a time.
3. Go from the known to the unknown, the easy to the difficult.
4. Stop often and review.

HINTS FOR WORKING WITH STUDENTS

Be patient. It is natural for a class to resent and test a substitute teacher. You represent a change, and change produces insecurity. Patience, understanding and respect will banish distrust.

Expect good behavior. Children tend to respond to whatever we expect of them. Expect good behavior and reward those who respond in a positive way.

Be fair and consistent. Your success in class control will depend to a great extent on your reputation for fairness and consistent treatment of children. Children must know what to expect of you and what you expect of them. Work towards a positive, fair and consistent reputation.

Recognize the importance of every child. Children are human beings. Treat each child impartially to the best of your ability. Respect children's individual differences.

Have materials ready. Groups waiting for materials can be starting points for discipline problems.

Be ready for problems which may arise. In spite of your best efforts, you may have a pupil who is a definite discipline problem. If at all possible, avoid excluding him from the group and never lay a hand on him. As a last resort, refer him to the principal.

Watch attention spans. It is important to know when to change activities, when to speed up, and when to slow down.

Give students responsibilities. Responsibilities suited to their age and understanding help create a sense of belonging. When children feel that they belong, problems are few.

Avoid making threats. Not only is this approach negative, but also you may place yourself in the position of destroying your whole control through a threat that cannot be carried out.

Be positive. Praise that which is good far more than you scold that which is bad.

Use common sense. This is the greatest rule of all. All the rules, regulations, guides and directions in the world are not substitutes for good common sense.

Keep your sense of humor. If all else fails, a good sense of humor will help pull you through.