

# MARSHALL COUNTY SCHOOLS



## SUBSTITUTE HANDBOOK

**MARSHALL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION**

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**Dr. Cindy L. Wigley, Superintendent  
Marshall County Public Schools**

# Introduction

## Welcome

The Marshall County Board of Education joins the Superintendent in welcoming you to the challenging position of substitute.

## Web-based Support and Information

Marshall County is in the process of developing a section on the system web-site for substitutes that will include frequently asked questions, resources on the Internet, the District map, this handbook, and other resources intended to enable substitutes to be more successful in their jobs. Substitutes are strongly urged to visit the site often at [www.marshalk12.org](http://www.marshalk12.org) and follow these directions to access information:

1. Log on to [www.marshalk12.org](http://www.marshalk12.org)
2. Click the link "Employees"
3. Drag down to "Sub opportunities" where you will see the following sub-tabs
  - a. Training announcements
  - b. Teacher substitute application
  - c. Support substitute application
  - d. Substitute handbook

## I.D. Badges

All required paperwork must be completed and received by the Central Office as well as fingerprint and background checks approved. Substitutes must wear or display a temporary school I.D. badge at all times when on campus. This will be given to you upon signing in at the main school office for that day of substituting.

## Calendar of Jobs

The substitute will receive a copy of the School Year Calendar. This will allow prior knowledge of possible scheduling needs. Attached to the calendar, the substitute should keep a personal log of all jobs worked including dates, places, and names of workers/assignments. The log will help if there are any questions or concerns regarding payroll purposes. Having a calendar handy at all times is also helpful when workers or administrators want to request or prearrange a substitute for a job.

# RESPONSIBILITIES OF SUBSTITUTES

## A. Ethical Behavior

Substitutes have a responsibility to conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times when carrying out their duties.

### 1. Confidentiality

Substitutes have a great responsibility to treat with confidentiality matters pertaining to students. Student behavior, performance, and achievement levels are not subjects of general conversation and should not be discussed outside of the school setting. When working with special needs students, substitutes must exercise an even greater degree of caution when discussing school children assigned to them.

### 2. Criticism/Comparisons

The substitute is encouraged to speak honestly about their experiences in the District. However, the mission of the Marshall County School System and the goals of the school are prevented when a substitute engages in malicious talk about their experiences. Derogatory comments comparing one school with another or comparing the children in one neighborhood with those of another should not be made. Unless raising concerns to an administrator, under no circumstances should substitutes make negative comments regarding a school, personnel, students, or the school system.

### 3. Substitute/Student Relationships

Substitutes should exercise extreme caution and good judgment in verbal and physical contact with students. Substitutes should establish a position of authority with the students; they may be friendly without "befriending" the students. Under no circumstances may a substitute engage in a relationship with a student (Sexual Harassment Policy). Yelling at students, calling them derogatory names and using insults or other threatening verbal attacks will not be tolerated and may be grounds for dismissal.

## **B. General Duties**

### **1. Accepting and Cancelling Jobs**

Whenever possible, substitutes should accept the jobs they are offered. Once they have done so, they should write down the date, time, location and other information pertinent to the assignment. If, after accepting a job, a substitute must cancel a job, he/she should do so at the earliest possible opportunity. This is critical because there must be time to arrange for another substitute to fill the position. **Cancellation with less than 48 hour notice will prevent substitutes from accepting another position within the district for the next 48 hours.** It is important that schools are able to depend on those substitutes who are on the school substitute lists. If a substitute consistently "turns down" a job or cancels often, he/she will not be considered reliable and may not be contacted for additional jobs.

### **2. Parking and Privileges**

Substitutes can park in "reserved" or "visitor" parking areas. Some schools may also have designated parking. If so, please ask about the possibility of using the space of the worker for whom you are subbing. See administration regarding appropriate parking areas.

### **3. Punctuality**

Substitutes are expected to be on duty the same length of time as the regular worker. This includes reporting to duty **BEFORE** the start of school, which will allow time to find the office, sign in, and prepare for a successful day of substituting. The exact beginning and ending times for substitutes may vary slightly from school to school, so be certain to verify the work times with that particular school.

### **4. Report for Duty**

Substitutes should report to the school office before assuming any duties. While in the office, they should sign in, ask for a temporary I.D. badge, and then ask for assigned duties. Temporary I.D. badges should always be worn on campus. Many schools have prepared folders for substitutes containing such information as the school staff, map of the school, evacuation procedures, emergency plans, bell schedules, and a list of key personnel. They should ask if there are any special instructions or other information needed to carry out the day's activities.

### **5. Supplies, Material, and Equipment**

Teachers' materials and supplies should not be used unless the lesson plans authorize their use. Any materials and equipment borrowed should be returned to the proper person before a substitute leaves the campus. At the end of the day, the teachers' room and equipment should be left the way they were found. The full-time teacher's desk, files, and other storage areas should be regarded with respect.

## **6. Leaving the Campus**

The care and supervision of the students assigned to the substitute should be of paramount importance. At no time during the day should the substitute leave campus unless authorized to do so. Substitutes should not leave campus at the end of the school day until they have been cleared through the school office.

## **7. Other Duties as Assigned**

Occasionally, a substitute may be asked to perform duties in addition to those of a regular substitute. Also, a substitute may be asked to be in a classroom other than the one he had agreed to when contacted. In both cases, the substitute is expected to demonstrate flexibility and cooperation with the school administration in its attempts to meet the instructional and safety needs of the students under their care.

## **8. End of the Day**

When the children have been dismissed for the day or placed safely on the correct school bus, the substitute will still have several more duties to perform. The room should be checked to ensure that it is restored to the way the substitute found it. Books, supplies, and instructional materials should be returned, desks placed in their original positions, etc. Successful substitutes will take a few minutes to leave a detailed note for the teacher. The teacher appreciates knowing how much of the lesson plan was accomplished and any other important information about the substitute's instructional efforts. The teacher should also be informed of any behavior problems or unusual events that may have occurred during his/her absence. In addition to leaving a note for the teacher, the substitute should always check out through the office when leaving for the day. This provides the office staff with an opportunity to deliver any messages that may have been received and to note the time of departure. Be sure to ask about the automatic checkout system.

## **9. Changes in Personal Profile Information**

Throughout the year, the substitute has the responsibility of keeping current the information that is stored in the Substitute Files. This includes your current address, which may be the location for receipt of paychecks. Please speak with the Payroll Clerk about Automatic Deposit to your bank.

## **10. Seek Help!**

At all times, and in all matters related to substituting, the substitute should never hesitate to SEEK HELP when needed. Everyone in the school system wants the substitute to be successful. Help is only a few steps or a call to the office away at any time. Key personnel are available to assist with any questions or concerns.

## **C. Classroom Duties and Instructional Responsibilities**

Substitute teachers are expected to perform all the duties of the regular teacher unless the administrator releases the substitute from a particular responsibility. Check the teacher's planning book or substitute folder to see if there are any students with special needs or medical conditions of which to be aware. If the book is unavailable or a substitute folder does not indicate this information, please check with the office. Substitute teachers should maintain the regular routine of the class. They should follow the daily class schedule and lesson plans provided by the regular teacher.

### **1. Lesson Plans**

When teachers are absent from school, they will leave lesson plans for the substitute teacher to follow in order to maintain a continuity of instruction in the classroom. The substitute is expected to adhere to the scope and sequence of instruction documented in the teacher's lesson plans. Any deviation must be substantiated with sound reasoning and be based on established curriculum and instruction theory and practice. Most of the time, teachers anticipate their absences. However, if a teacher is absent due to an emergency, the substitute may not have lesson plans provided. When this occurs, help is available from other teachers and support staff in the school. Teachers from the same grade level or field of study should be able to provide assistance.

### **2. Student Attendance**

One of the many regular duties of the full-time teacher is the taking of student attendance. Substitutes are expected to assist in compliance with this requirement. Attendance must be taken in every class and this information must be provided to the school office following the procedures established at the school.

### **3. Written Work/Grading Papers**

The substitute teacher should not assign written work and leave it to be graded except at the request of the regular teacher. Nor should the full-time teacher expect the substitute to grade papers not assigned in the lesson plan. Extreme caution should be used when substitute teachers are asked to grade papers, the result of which will be made a part of the student's permanent grades.

### **4. Classroom Management**

Substitute teachers are expected to model and reinforce the expectations of the permanent teacher. Classroom rules are posted in most classrooms and except for the first few days of class, all students know the rules of behavior and the consequences for not following them.

### **5. Discipline**

When students cause behavior problems that are disruptive to the learning environment, the substitute teacher should attempt to maintain discipline in the classroom using

acceptable behavior management strategies. However, sometimes even the most effective classroom management strategies will fail and individuals or groups of students may need to modify their behavior. Substitutes must never administer corporal punishment, physically discipline a student in any way, or verbally abuse the students. Shouting at students or calling them derogatory names may constitute verbal abuse and is forbidden. Sarcasm is ineffective in the classroom and should not be used. Only when all reasonable efforts to maintain order have failed should the substitute teacher refer students, with a discipline slip or note explaining the circumstances, to school administrators.

The substitute should **NEVER** leave the classroom unattended. Even if a student runs out of the room, the teacher should not follow. Contact the office immediately for assistance and they will handle the situation. If the substitute needs to leave the classroom for personal reasons, a nearby teacher should be notified so that the classroom will be supervised.

#### **6 Active Involvement**

The successful substitute teacher is actively involved with instruction. This includes circulating around the classroom often, checking student work and assisting with assignments as needed. Many discipline problems can be avoided by the substitute's use of proximity to the students.

# DISTRICT GUIDELINES AND POLICIES

## A. Dress/Grooming

Substitutes are held to the same standards as regular employees. They should exercise discretion and good judgment in their attire and should be appropriately dressed to the assignment. If a substitute is in doubt about what to wear, the following tips will come in handy:

1. Always dress **professionally**. Do not wear blue jeans on the first day unless it is appropriate for the position. A nice pair of black or khaki pants with a nice shirt, blouse or polo shirt is always appropriate.
2. No matter what everyone else is wearing, make sure that shirts or blouses are **not too low cut or revealing**.
3. Substitutes will spend a lot of time standing, sitting, and leaning over to get on a student's level. Wear clothes that are **comfortable**. Do not wear clothes that are too tight or that restrict bending. Make sure that sitting in a chair does not reveal a gap between the bottom of a shirt and the top of pants. Skirt lengths should be long enough to over thighs when sitting and standing. Wearing clothing that makes one feel confident will make for an easier day. Wearing clothes that makes one feel self-conscious takes away from interaction with students and should be avoided.
4. Being comfortable is especially true for **shoes**. Substitutes will be amazed at how much time is spent standing. The wrong pair of shoes may be painful. Never try to break in a new pair of shoes when substituting. Shoes that will last throughout the day (painlessly) should be selected.
5. Never assume that every school has Casual Friday until actually substituting on a Friday. Dress as you be appropriate for any other day of the week until verification is met for casual days.
6. Always bring a **jacket**. Different facilities operate at different air-conditioning levels and temperatures vary greatly. It may be too hot in the winter, yet too cold in the summer. Once at a school or classroom, the substitute is there for the day and needs to feel comfortable for the whole time.

## B. Sexual Harassment

Conduct constituting sexual harassment is strictly prohibited and is grounds for immediate termination. All allegations of harassment are investigated and appropriate action will be taken.

## C. Possession of Firearms and Weapons

Employees, visitors, and students are prohibited from bringing firearms or other weapons onto school premises or any grounds or building where a school-sponsored activity take place. To ensure the safety of all persons, employees who observe or suspect a violation of the district's weapons policy should report it to school administrators or supervisors immediately.



#### **D. Visitors in the Workplace**

All visitors are expected to enter any district facility through the main entrance and sign in or report to the building's main office. Authorized visitors will receive directions or be escorted to their destination. Employees (including substitutes) who observe an unauthorized individual on district premises should immediately direct him/her to the building office or contact the administrator in charge.

#### **E. Smoking/Tobacco Products**

District policy prohibits the use of tobacco products anywhere on school property. For further information, please refer to the District's Policy File.

#### **F. Computer Use**

Most every classroom in the District has a computer and most have access to the Internet. Only if the workers job requires the use of a computer should the substitute ever use school computers. Substitutes should not use school computers to check their personal e-mail, etc.

#### **G. Cell Phones/Pagers**

Cellular devices and pagers are allowed on the school campus as long as they are turned off and out of sight during the school day. No personal calls should be made or received during the work day.

# SUCCESSFUL SUBSTITUTE EXPERIENCE IS...

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## A TWO-WAY COMMITMENT

*Expectations of the  
School System*



*Expectations of the  
Substitute*

### Expectations of the School System

Given the qualifications, training, credentials, and code of conduct/professionalism and ethical standards for a substitute, the local school district (also known as the school system or local education agency/LEA) expects the substitute to meet the following conditions:

1. The substitute needs to know how to find the location of the school and to be punctual. (A map of the school can be requested in the principal's office, upon arrival, in order to locate the classroom.)
2. The substitute needs to be punctual and is required to stay at the school for the full assignment unless there is an extenuating circumstance that requires an approved release by the principal.
3. The substitute is required to dress professionally and appropriately for the assignment.
4. The substitute is expected to follow the guidelines for classroom management, attire, and ethics. (**Substitute teachers should not leave students unattended at any time.**)
5. The professional's routine and lesson plan are expected to be followed by the substitute.
6. The substitute should refrain from eating food and drinking beverages in the classroom during classroom time.
7. It is expected that cell phones and computers for personal business will not be used by the substitute during scheduled classes. This includes all forms of social media.
8. It is expected that the substitute adhere to a strict code of confidentiality regarding students.
9. It is expected that substitutes should not log on to any form of social media during the school day or post confidential information regarding students to any form of social media.
10. A request for assistance is expected from the substitute when lesson plans are not understood, accidents occur, or student behavior is not manageable.
11. An evaluation of the day's assignment is expected in order to build upon success and to correct undesirable conditions.
12. To practice and maintain good housekeeping routines in all classes.
13. To comply with all the school rules, regulations and policies.

## Maintaining Classroom Discipline

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Helping students govern their own behavior in ways that help them learn is a long-standing goal of all teachers. Here are a number of ways that substitute teachers can promote good discipline:

1. Promote good methods of classroom discipline by modeling the behavior you expect from students.
2. Know your school guidelines for discipline procedures.
3. Be fair, positive, and consistent. Be the kind of person young people can like and Trust - firm, friendly, courteous, enthusiastic and confident. Keep your sense of humor.
4. Get to know you students. Learn their names quickly and use them in and out of class. You will soon develop almost a sixth sense for anticipating trouble before it begins. Don't act as though you expect trouble or you will almost certainly encounter some.
5. Begin class on time and in a businesslike manner.
6. Praise good work, good responses, and good behavior.
7. Do not threaten or use sarcasm. Never use threats to enforce discipline. Never humiliate a child.
8. Make sure that all students can easily see you when you are presenting information.
9. Avoid arguing with students. Discussions about class work are invaluable, but arguments can become emotional encounters.
10. Dress professionally. Think about the image you would like to portray .
11. Be aware that the effects of your dress, voice, movements, and body language will be reflected in students' behaviors.
12. Let the students know you care. Show interest in what students say- whether or not it pertains directly to the lesson.
13. Treat students with the same respect you expect from them.

Schedules will be changed without warning and unanticipated events will occur. Be flexible in responding to the unexpected. Ask your professional colleagues for suggestions on how to deal with situations.

## Classroom Management Techniques

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1. Always take class attendance, writing the names of students who are tardy.
2. Move around the room. If there is a pocket of disruption or noise, move nearer to those students.
3. Avoid making an example of a particular student or group of students. If possible, speak to a disruptive student in private, not giving him/her an audience of peers.
4. Know when to ask for help.
5. If a dangerous situation occurs, send a student next door or to the office for help if there is not a telephone or intercom system in the room.
6. Become familiar with the referral/detention procedures of the school. If a student fails to comply with a directive or violates a school/class rule, leave notification for the teacher, write a referral to the office, and/or call for security to assist. (Sub discipline form)
7. Let the teacher know about any classroom management issues that occurred during the day. It is a good idea to let the teacher know if there were no issues.

## **TIPS AT-A-GLANCE**

- Do not raise your voice.
- Try to remain calm and rational.
- **Do not touch a student especially if the student is agitated or angry.**
- Try to keep the student seated. In many instances, this is impossible. You can only suggest that the student remain seated so that he/she might explain to you what is wrong.
- Be reassuring to the student as well as the rest of the class. Explain the importance of protecting every student's right to learn. Talk about options for resolving the conflict.
- Send another student for help.
- After the incident is over, immediately document everything that happened. This documentation should include time, name(s) of student(s) involved, a brief description of the events that occurred, and any information that pertains to the student(s) or the incident. This report should be submitted to the administration. You should also keep a copy regarding the incident for a future conference with parents or school administrators.
- **Avoid talking or posting comments about individual students, staff, or confidential school business when you are out in the community or on social media.**

## What do you do if...

- A student has an allergic reaction to bee sting?
  - Seek medical assistance from the school nurse and notify an administrator.
- A fight breaks out in the hallway and you are the nearest faculty member?
  - Say "stop" but do not try to break up the fight. Ask a student to notify the office if a telephone or a two-way intercom is not in the classroom.
- You suspect a student is using drugs or alcohol?
  - Contact your support teacher and report your suspicions to the school administrator.
- A student is verbally abusive to you?
  - Maintain a calm attitude. Use assertive discipline. If the student remains abusive contact the support teacher and report the matter to the school administrator.
- You suspect a student has a gun or knife?
  - Do not delay reporting the matter to the school administrator. Contact the support teacher.
- A student falls asleep in class?
  - Do not allow students to sleep in class. Use close Proximity to ensure student engagement. Ask student if he/she is ill as a method of documentation. Include the school nurse if illness is suspected.

## A Recommended Daily Schedule and Checklist for the Substitute Teacher

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|  | Report to the office early and sign in for the day. Receive instructions and directions to the assigned classroom.   |
|  | Obtain material, information, room key, etc., from school officials in the main administrative office.   |
|  | Become familiar with the school's daily schedule and routine for both the school and the class by obtaining the necessary documents and talking with the school's administrators/teachers. |
|  | Prepare all materials needed for the day's lesson.<br>Secure all media materials needed for the day's lessons, if appropriate.   |
|  | If possible, arrive at the classroom prior to the first student and prepare for the day's activities.  |
|  | Write your name on the board.  |
|  | Introduce yourself to neighboring teachers.  |
|  | Check the roll or attendance roster in each class and follow absentee reporting procedures.  |
|  | Complete the various forms associated with attendance, tardiness, lunch, snack, etc.   |
|  | Start class on time.   |
|  | Follow the regular employee's schedule and lesson plans.   |
|  | Fulfill the regular classroom teacher's extra duties if required by the administrator.   |
|  | Try to involve all students in the lesson.   |
|  | Be enthusiastic and act professionally.  |
|  | Walk around the classroom and interact with students throughout the class time.  |
|  | Collect papers and provide homework assignments before the class ends or the bell sounds.  |
|  | Leave the classroom in order with all materials and equipment stored in their proper place.  |
|  | Check assignments turned in by the students if requested by the teacher.   |
|  | Close windows, turn off lights, turn off equipment, etc.   |
|  | Complete any reports that are due at the end of the school day.  |
|  | Avoid criticism of the regular classroom teacher.  |
|  | Return keys and other items to the school's administrative office.   |
|  | Write notes pertaining to the day's lessons, student management problems or positive student behavior, etc. and leave them in the substitute teacher folder/kit.                           |
|  | Check with the school administrator or the office manager to see if you will be needed the next day.   |

## CLOSING COMMENTS

Thank you for choosing to work for the Marshall County Board of Education. Substituting can be one of the most rewarding and difficult jobs that you can do. Most teachers and support workers will tell you that they could not do their jobs without you! In many ways the job of the substitute is much more difficult than that of the full-time worker. But, your job can be very rewarding as well. You will have the opportunity to meet and work with hundreds of people from many campuses. Yours will be rich and rewarding experience because of its diversity. Remember that everyone wants you to succeed in your endeavors as a substitute. Feel free to contact district or school administrators for guidance. Thank you for your contribution to the education of our students.



