

Handbook for Substitute Teachers 2026-2027

Power in the Preparation...Excellence in the Journey...Success for a Lifetime...

Governing Board: Dawn Densmore, Denise Destiche, Jennifer Drake, Stephen Skvara, Mary Jane Ziola





Welcome, and thank you for choosing to serve as a substitute teacher in the Dysart Unified School District. We are pleased to have you as part of our educational team and appreciate your commitment to supporting our students and schools.

This handbook is designed to help you succeed in your role. Inside, you'll find essential information, guidelines, and practical tips to navigate the various situations you may encounter in the classroom. By following these procedures and best practices, we aim to ensure your experience is both rewarding and impactful for you and the students you serve.

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Welcome to the Dysart Unified School District!

Dear Substitute Teacher:

On behalf of the Governing Board, faculty, staff and students, I extend to you a warm welcome. We value the contribution you make to each of our students.

Substitute teaching is a challenging responsibility; one that demands you be at your best each day. It is our expectation that you make every day a positive learning experience for all students you encounter.

We assume the responsibility of providing the proper environment in which you can be successful as you work with our students. Let us know if there is anything we can do to make your substitute teaching experience with Dysart more rewarding. If you have any questions, feel free to speak with any administrator.

Best wishes to you! You are an important part of our educational program.

Sincerely,

Steve Mattingly
Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources

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ACCEPTING ASSIGNMENTS – FRONTLINE ABSENCE MANAGEMENT

The Dysart School District uses an automated substitute placement and absence management system called Frontline Absence Management. The Absence Management system allows substitute teachers to search for and accept assignments using the online Frontline Absence Management system.

To access the Absence Management system, you will need a Username and Password. Your employer, Educational Service Inc. (ESI) will provide you with this information upon hire.

Please refer to your user guide for complete instructions on using the Frontline Absence Management system.

When you successfully accept an assignment, Absence Management will confirm the assignment by providing you with a confirmation number. This number is your assurance that you have successfully been assigned to the absence.

DO NOT ACCEPT A REQUEST TO SUBSTITUTE TEACH FROM A CLASSROOM TEACHER OR A FRIEND WHO IS AN EMPLOYEE OF THE DYSART SCHOOL DISTRICT.

ONLY ACCEPT ASSIGNMENTS FROM THE ABSENCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM OR THE SUBSTITUTE COORDINATOR.

IF YOU HAVE TO CANCEL AN ASSIGNMENT - The District acknowledges that it may become necessary for you to cancel an assignment; however, the expectation is that you only cancel assignments if it is absolutely necessary and **NEVER** in order to accept a different assignment. In the event it is necessary for you to cancel an accepted assignment, please do so as soon as possible.

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Refer to your Absence Management user guide for instructions on how to cancel an assignment. Absence Management will not accept cancellations within one hour of the assignment start time. In the event you have an emergency and need to cancel under these circumstances, **you must contact the school site directly or the Substitute Coordinator, Michelle Castro**, at 623-876-7076 or hrbox@dysart.org.

SCHOOL CHECK-IN PROCEDURES

You should arrive at the school 30 minutes prior to the start of class to check in with the school secretary. This is where you will receive the necessary information concerning lesson plans, procedures to be followed in case of an emergency and location of restrooms and the staff breakroom. You will be notified about any changes from the usual daily schedule. You will also be introduced to a neighboring (buddy) teacher who can help you during the day.

Upon check-in with the school secretary, be sure you receive the following items:

1. Sign in on the Substitute Sign-in Sheet
2. Obtain a Substitute Teacher Identification Badge
3. Obtain Classroom Key(s)
4. Obtain a Substitute Folder

If you have any questions, the principal, secretary or any staff member will be able to assist you.

We suggest you familiarize yourself with the district before your first assignment. You can find a list of all of our schools on our website, www.dysart.org. Each school has a link to view a map of the location.

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ARRIVAL IN THE CLASSROOM

When you arrive in the classroom with your students, write your name on the board, introduce yourself and smile! Your day with the students has begun. As a substitute teacher, you should fulfill your obligation to make the school day as valuable to the students as you can.

Rapport with your students should be established quickly. A pleasant, sincere, but firm approach and adherence to the established routine of the classroom will help ensure a relationship of mutual respect with the pupils. **STUDENTS SHOULD BE UNDER YOUR SUPERVISION AT ALL TIMES.**

You are responsible for upholding rules and regulations and maintaining daily attendance records and performing extra duties, such as lunch or recess duty, etc. If you are in doubt about the method of daily attendance keeping, information may be secured from the school secretary, the nearest classroom teacher or the school principal.

If the assignment is for a long-term assignment, you should attend departmental and staff meetings, unless excused by the principal. This is one of the ways you can keep informed about recent developments in school procedures. You are not, however, expected to participate in special District workshops or staff development days when children are not in school.

Helpful Tips:

- Develop your own "survival kit."
- Combine decisiveness with a good sense of humor
- Have a neat appearance. It will encourage respect
- Treat each student as an individual
- Avoid ridiculing students
- Administer discipline privately
- Remain objective
- Be caring of your students
- Don't make meaningless threats
- Only use cell phones during breaks & lunch



LUNCH BREAK

You are invited to purchase your lunch in the school cafeteria or bring your lunch from home and join the rest of the staff in the breakroom.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE

You will receive an outline of our schools' student behavior and discipline expectations. If you follow the expectations at each school, there should be little or no issues with discipline. If the students are involved in meaningful, worthwhile instruction, discipline problems usually will not develop. Be friendly, firm and fair.

Naturally there are exceptions, and occasionally problems do arise. If a discipline problem occurs which you are unable to handle, consult the principal or the person in charge.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES AND INSTRUCTIONAL EXPECTATIONS

Classroom materials and supplies should be used with discretion. There are many instances in which the regular teacher has planned ahead for their use. All teaching materials, library materials, audio-visual aids, etc., should be properly cared for and left in an orderly fashion.

RELEASING A STUDENT

If a person not connected with the school seeks information about a child or permission to take the child from the room, refer that person directly to the principal. The principal will determine whether or not the child should be excused and will notify you of the decision.

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DISTRICT POLICY ON STAFF/STUDENT BEHAVIOR

District Policy Chapter 4-202 Staff/Student Boundaries - Staff is expected to maintain appropriate boundaries with students consistent with professional, ethical, and legal standards. District staff shall **not** engage in any of the following behaviors with a student:

1. Flirtatious communication, including commenting on a student's attractiveness, appearance, or dress.
2. Banter, allusions, jokes, or innuendos of a sexual nature.
3. Confiding in a student on a personal and private matter.
4. Except in the case of counselors, inviting a student to confide in a staff member on a personal and private matter.
5. Socializing with a student outside of school or a school activity.
6. Giving or receiving a personal gift.
7. Asking a student to keep a secret.
8. Peer-like language and behavior.
9. Having personal private contact with a student.
10. Being alone with a student behind a closed door or in a confined space.
11. Physical contact that lacks a legitimate educational purpose.
12. Sending a student on a personal errand.
13. Providing tobacco, alcohol, or drugs to a student or failing to report a student's use of such substances.
14. Transporting a student in a private vehicle without administrative approval.
15. Sharing a room with a student on an overnight trip.
16. Visiting a student's home or allowing a student to visit a staff member's home without approval from the student's parent/legal guardian and the staff member's supervisor.
17. Sharing intimate or revealing photos or images or asking a student to share intimate or revealing photos or images.
18. Favoring a student with special treatment or privileges.
19. Addressing a student by a personalized term of endearment or pet name or allowing a student to address a staff member by a personalized term of endearment or pet name.

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District staff should only use District approved technologies and programs when communicating electronically with students and/or parents/legal guardians.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Emergencies can arise at any time, and you should be prepared to handle them with a minimum of confusion.

Upon arrival at the school, you should check with the front office regarding emergency procedures and guidelines for handling situations involving student accidents and illnesses.

At various times throughout the year, fire and other emergency type drills may be conducted. Such drills are preceded by a special bell or announcement over the school intercom. When such a drill is announced you should:

- Remain calm.
- Inform the students of the drill, while soliciting their silence and cooperation.
- Escort your class to the evacuation point in an orderly manner.
- Take the classroom register with student names in attendance for that day and verify their presence following evacuation.
- Permit students to re-enter only upon administrative clearance.

END OF DAY PROCEDURES

When your day is over, be sure you have taken care of the following before leaving the building:

- Feel free to leave a written account for the regular teacher regarding all assignments given, work covered and any unusual issues that may have arisen.
- Make sure the classroom is neat and tidy.
- Check in with the school secretary to see if there is anything else needed.

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- Return identification badge, keys and substitute folder.

PAY AND COMPENSATION

If an assignment is posted as a full-day, you will be paid for a full-day. If an assignment is posted as a half-day, you will be paid for a half-day.

Occasionally, there are last-minute changes; therefore, if you accept a position and then are not needed where originally requested when you arrive at the school, you will be reassigned to another position at the same school or another school in the district. If you choose not to accept the new assignment given, you will not be paid for the day.

Long-Term Assignments - If you are a long-term substitute teacher covering a certified teaching assignment, the rate of pay increases from \$150 per day for the first fourteen days, to \$175 per day beginning on the fifteen day of continuous service of the assignment.

Vacant Assignments - If you accept a vacant position (where there is not currently a certified teacher), you will receive \$175 per day beginning on day one. In these positions you are expected to manage the entire classroom, including responsibilities for preparing lesson plans, grading, attending staff/PLC meetings, training and otherwise fulfilling all the responsibilities of a contracted certificated staff member.

REPORTING WORK PLACE INJURIES

Any injury sustained while working on school property while in the normal course of duties as a substitute teacher should be reported to the school nurse as an incident and you should immediately report your injury to your employer, Educational Services Inc. (ESI).

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DRESS CODE GUIDELINES

It is our belief that professional adults know how to dress neatly and appropriately for the work day. Keep in mind children will react to the model you present and professional dress will help to establish respect and discipline among children.

PROFESSIONAL ETHICS AND CONDUCT

Confidentiality - All school records and reports should be handled with care. Many records are of a confidential nature. They are maintained to provide information on child development for the professional staff. It is essential, as a substitute teacher, that you are careful not to divulge any confidential information that has been received from contact with children and other people in the profession.

Responsibilities - Certified substitute teachers are responsible for knowing the principles of child development, accepted teaching techniques, the educational program, and the rules and regulations of the Dysart Unified School District. The two latter responsibilities can be fulfilled by familiarizing yourself with the information in this handbook and any other materials which are given to you by the Human Resources Department and the individual school.

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