

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT, PROFESSIONALISM, AND ETHICS

Standards of Conduct

The Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) is committed to establishing a workforce dedicated to the education of the state's youth and creating an environment conducive to productivity for the benefits of its employees and students. The ALSDE and Local Education Agency (LEA) will recruit and employ highly professional employees who demonstrate ethical behavior on the job and outside the workplace.

All employees hired as substitute teachers are expected to maintain a standard of dress, personal appearance, general decorum, and behavior that reflects positively on their status as employees and as role models for students. The ALSDE and each LEA expect that substitute staff will set examples for students that will serve them well in their own conduct and behavior and that will contribute toward an appropriate instructional atmosphere. It is a condition of employment that those employed by state and local agencies as substitute teachers will perform their duties and comply with all policies and regulations set forth by local school boards and the state school board as well as state and federal laws and regulations.

Professionalism in Behavior

Substitute teachers should always have a back-up plan for routines, procedures, rules, and appropriate instructional activities. They should review and familiarize themselves with the plans left by the regular teacher and look for posted rules, routines, schedules, procedures, seating charts, and a grade-level chair or same-subject teacher on the hall for support. They should stand at the door and greet students as they enter, directing them to put things away properly and to organize their materials and start on any assigned work left by the regular teacher. They will collect any notes sent by parents, guardians, or other teachers. The substitute will introduce himself or herself with a confident, assertive, and pleasant voice. The professional substitute will be positive and treat students with respect and let them know expectations at the beginning of the day or class period. They will be firm, fair, and consistent. They should try to learn the students' names and call them by their names as quickly as possible. They should also establish a signal for transitioning from one activity to the next. Students may forget what is said, but they will never forget how they were made to feel.

A substitute teacher must focus consistently on positive behavior and think prevention. He or she should be aware of potential problem behaviors. A substitute should always address the problem, not the student, when dealing specifically with the negative behavior. The substitute should minimize reactions to difficult situations, trying to stay calm and not speaking or acting in a hurtful way toward students. It is never a good practice to make an example of another student. One should try to speak to disruptive students in private or at least away from other students. Close proximity is a good key behavior. Substitutes should move among students offering assistance and giving reminders as needed. The school day should be structured so that there are time frames provided for transitioning between activities or classes. Make sure to have the attention of all students when instructing, keeping perspective and maintaining a good sense of humor. Substitutes would find it helpful to leave notes about specific actions for the regular teacher, especially with regard to any classroom management issues. If there have been no issues, it would help the regular teacher to also know this.

The Alabama Code of Ethics for Educators

Substitute teachers along with regularly assigned teachers are expected to provide an environment that is conducive to learning for every child every day. The *Alabama Educator Code of Ethics* defines nine standards for ethical and standard behavior for teachers. The standards are listed below.

Standard 1—Professional Conduct

An educator should demonstrate conduct that follows generally recognized professional standards.

Standard 2—Trustworthiness

An educator should exemplify honesty and integrity in the course of professional practice.

Standard 3—Unlawful Acts

An educator should abide by federal, state, and local laws and statutes.

Standard 4—Teacher/Student Relationship

An educator should always maintain a professional relationship with all students, both in and outside the classroom.

Standard 5—Alcohol, Drug, and Tobacco Use or Possession

An educator should refrain from the use of alcohol and/or tobacco during the course of professional practice and should never use illegal or unauthorized drugs.

Standard 6—Public Funds and Property

An educator entrusted with public funds and property should honor that trust with a high level of honesty, accuracy, and responsibility.

Standard 7—Remunerative Conduct

An educator should maintain integrity with students, colleagues, parents, patrons, or businesses when accepting gifts, gratuities, favors, and additional compensation.

Standard 8—Maintenance of Confidentiality

An educator should comply with state and federal laws and local school board policies relating to confidentiality of student and personnel records, standardized test material, and other information covered by confidentiality agreements.

Standard 9—Abandonment of Contract

An educator should fulfill all of the terms and obligations detailed in the contract with the local board of education or educational agency for the duration of the contract.

Expectations of the Substitute Teacher

As an employee of the school system, the following expectations of the substitute teacher are warranted.

1. A friendly welcome, policies, and procedures of the school system; expectations for the specific assignment with the established schedule; and directions to the classroom should be provided the substitute teacher upon arrival.
2. The provision of a lead teacher on the assigned hallway and/or a teacher in the same subject area for the day's assignment provide a support system for the success of the substitute teacher and should be implemented for the purpose of teaching, learning, and a safe learning environment.
3. A follow-up visit from a building administrator scheduled in the morning and the afternoon to ensure smooth operations for the day's assignment is strongly encouraged.
4. The provisions of attendance rosters and a detailed lesson plan(s) for the day's assignment are standard procedures for substitute teaching. (The assigned lead teacher who will provide support to the substitute teacher or the building administrator should assist with the location of the lesson plan, a review of the schedule, and an examination of the classroom layout.)
5. A layout of textbooks, manuals, equipment, and other supplies needed to complete the lesson plan of the day should be provided by the teacher for the substitute teacher.
6. A seating chart is needed for the substitute teacher to correspond with each class.
7. Class rules are expected. (Even if class rules are posted on the classroom wall, the teacher should leave a printed copy for the substitute teacher in addition to the attendance roster and the lesson plan.)
8. Support. Support. Support.

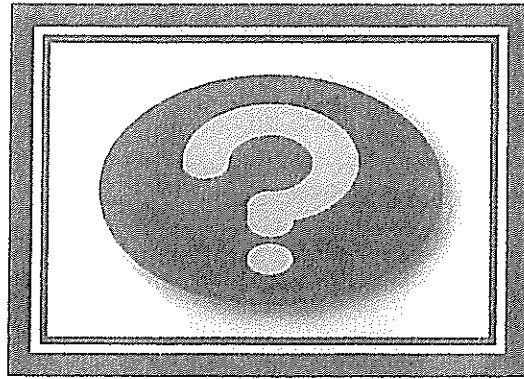
CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Critical Classroom Management Times

- The time before class instruction begins.
- At the completion of board work tasks or tests.
- When moving about the school facilities.
- During recess, play, etc.
- During water or restroom breaks.
- When interruptions prohibit classroom learning.

Classroom Management Techniques

- Keep the right perspective and a sense of humor.
- Be firm, fair, and consistent.
- Always take class attendance, writing the names of students who are tardy.
- Make a seating chart if there is not one left for a substitute. This helps to call on students by name and creates a good working environment.
- Move around the room. If there is a pocket of disruption or noise, move nearer to those students.
- Avoid making an example of a particular student or group of students. Students do not react to this method of discipline. Remain calm and learn which battles to pick. If possible, speak to a disruptive student in private, not giving him or her an audience of peers.
- Know when to ask for help.
- 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.
- 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.
- Let the teacher know about any class management issues that occurred during the day. It is also a good idea to let the teacher know if there were no issues.



What Do You Do If ...?

- **It rains at recess or break time?**

Identify an alternate place where students should report for recess or break. Ask the support teacher for the location for confirmation.

- **A student has an allergic reaction to a bee sting?**

Seek medical assistance from the school nurse or 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 the student if he/she is ill as a method of documentation. Include the school nurse if illness is suspected.

Handling Accidents, Illnesses, and Injuries

- Do not touch a student where he or she is bleeding, even if using gloves. Provide the student with gauze, tissue, or paper towels, instructing him or her to hold it on the wound.
- If appropriate, send the student to the office or nurse's station for further care.
- If the situation is an emergency, dial 911.
- Adhere to Universal Precautions at all times. Substitutes should seek training in Universal Precautions.
- Do not administer medication of any kind to students, including aspirin, cough medicine, prescription, or non-prescription drugs.
- If a substitute or a student under the substitute's supervision is injured (no matter how significant the injury), the injury must be reported to the administrator in charge immediately.



Body Fluids

Blood (cuts, abrasions, nosebleeds, menses, contaminated needles)

- Use proper first aid procedures as they are available in the nurse's office. If an injured student or staff member is able, have him or her wash or clean his or her own wound.
- Use disposable gloves when available. Remove gloves and put them in a plastic bag for disposal. Wash hands with soap under running water for 15 seconds using proper hand-washing procedures.
- Dry hands with paper towels and dispose of towels.
- If gloves are not available, wash hands with soap under running water for 15 seconds. Dry hands with paper towels and dispose of towels.
- Do not use a needle to remove splinters.
- No injections will be administered at school. If a student or staff member injects himself or herself, the student or staff member will dispose of the sharps.
- Be cautious if assisting a diabetic with a blood test and use disposable gloves. Do not recap the lancet. The student or staff member should dispose of used lancets.

Feces, Urine, Vomit

- Use disposable gloves. Remove the gloves and put them in a plastic bag for disposal. Wash hands with soap under running water for 15 seconds. Dry with paper towels and dispose of towels.
- If gloves are not available, wash hands with soap under running water for 15 seconds. Dry hands with paper towels and dispose of towels.

Respiratory Secretions (saliva, nasal discharge)

- Use disposable gloves. Remove the gloves and put them in a plastic bag for disposal. Wash hands with soap under running water for 15 seconds. Dry with paper towels and dispose of towels.
- If gloves are not available, wash hands with soap under running water for 15 seconds. Dry hands with paper towels and dispose of towels.
- Use disposable thermometer covers with thermometers when taking temperatures. Dispose of covers immediately in plastic bag. If the student is able, have him or her remove the cover and place it in the plastic bag.
- Thermometers should be cleaned in a soap solution and then placed in zephiran chloride solution holders.

Frequently Asked Questions by Substitute Teachers

Q: May I substitute for a class where my child is a student?

A: Many school systems do not approve of a substitute working in a class where his/her child is a student.

Q: Do substitute teachers ever receive any benefits?

A: On a normal basis, substitute teachers do not receive benefits.

Q: Do substitute teachers receive unemployment compensation during the summer months?

A: No, substitute teachers do not receive unemployment compensation during the summer months.

Q: Is it permissible to work at a select number of schools, only?

A: When completing an application for substitute teaching in the selected school district, you will be asked to identify schools, days, and times where and when you are available to work.

Q: Do I have to be available each day of the week in order to maintain my eligibility to work as a substitute teacher?

A: When completing an application for substitute teaching in the selected school district, you will be asked to identify schools, days, and times where and when you are available to work.

Q: If I am given one assignment before I arrive at the school and then I am given another assignment after I arrive at the school, do I have to accept the change?

A: You are strongly encouraged to be flexible. Remember, your position as a substitute teacher is one of support for the teaching and learning process.

