



2024-2025

SUBSTITUTE TEACHER HANDBOOK

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Welcome & Contact Information

Welcome to Dickinson Public Schools!

This Handbook is intended to help you become familiar with your responsibilities and expectations as a Substitute Teacher in the Dickinson Public Schools (DPS).

Substitute teaching plays a critical role in the operation of a school district. We value you, and we would like to thank you for the services that you will provide as a Substitute Teacher.

As a Substitute Teacher, your role is to replace the regular teacher during their absence, and to carry out, to the best of your abilities, the duties, responsibilities, and instructional plans of that teacher for the day. We trust that each time you substitute the students will have a meaningful and productive educational experience.

DPS will provide training opportunities once or twice a year for Substitute Teachers. These events will provide professional development in areas such as use of technology, classroom management, effective instruction, etc.

If you have any questions, please contact the Human Resources Department at (701)456-0002, or if you wish, you can stop by the Central Office at 444 4th Street West, Dickinson. (It is always best to make an appointment in advance.)

Dickinson Public School Buildings

The contact information for all of the Dickinson public school buildings can be found on the DPS website <https://www.dickinson.k12.nd.us>.

Terms of Employment

Substitute Teachers are on-call Independent Contractors who are potentially employed for the academic school year only (9 months).

Absence Management

Dickinson Public Schools (DPS) utilizes an automated system, Frontline Absence Management, that greatly simplifies and streamlines the process of finding and managing substitute jobs in this district. This system is available to registered users 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and is accessible via internet and mobile phone. Once you have successfully been added to our approved Substitute Teacher list, Human Resources will contact you and send you an email with access information so you can start looking for jobs. There is a Frontline mobile app available to Substitute Teachers at no additional cost. This means that you now have access to view and accept jobs using your smartphone. Information will be found in your welcome email.

Using Absence Management via the Internet:

Log in at <https://app.frontlineeducation.com/>. On your profile page you will see available jobs, view your scheduled jobs, check your job history, enter in non-workdays, change your pin, and adjust your personal preferences. Please check under each tab to familiarize yourself with each of these options. On your profile page you will find a Frontline Support tab. Here you will be able to find many topics to guide you through using and understanding Absence Management.

NOTE: If you have days or partial days when you are not able to substitute, you can create "Non-Work Days" so you are not contacted by Absence Management and/or the School Secretary to offer you jobs on those days.

Using Absence Management via the phone:

Call 800-942-3767. Simply follow the voice menu. If the teacher has left you a note or lesson plans are provided, Absence Management will mention there are special instructions. You will be able to view the *Notes to the Substitute* online once you accept the position.

Absence Management will call substitutes:

Listen for prompts and job announcements. If you accept a job, please wait until you receive a confirmation number. Your transaction is not complete until you have received a confirmation number.

The standard call times when the Absence Management service may call for substitutes is between 5:00 am to 10:00 am and 4:00 pm to 11:00 pm.

Substitute Teaching License

Every Substitute Teacher in North Dakota must hold a current ND Teaching License, ND Substitute Teacher License, or ND Interim Substitute Teacher License. It is your responsibility to make sure our Human Resources Department has a copy of your current license on file. Substitute Teachers with an expired license will be removed from all upcoming job assignments. Your status will be made "inactive" in Absence Management until a copy of your current license is received.

The Substitute Teaching License is issued by the North Dakota Education Standards and Practices Board (ESPB). To complete an application, visit www.nd.gov/espb. Log in to your profile to renew your license and to print a copy of your license for Human Resources.

To help defer the costs associated with becoming licensed, new substitute teachers will receive a one-time \$150 sign-on bonus added to their first paycheck.

Salary and Benefits

The current rate for substituting is \$147.00 per day (\$21 per hour). Payment (direct deposit) is issued on the 20th of the month. A pay schedule will be provided in your onboarding packet.

If the 20th falls on a Saturday or Sunday, checks will be issued on the previous Friday. If Federal Reserve (bank) holidays cause the effective payroll date to be later than the 20th, payment will be issued the previous business day or non-Federal Reserve holiday.

Additional Incentive: A substitute teacher that works 10 full days or 70 total hours in any monthly pay period will receive a \$75 bonus. A Substitute who works 20 full days or 140 hours in a pay period will earn 2 bonuses.

Substitute teachers are covered by Social Security.

Substitute teachers with a regular ND Teaching License are not covered under the North Dakota Teacher's Fund for Retirement. However, if the substitute teacher also has an extra-curricular contract, then their substitute pay becomes TFFR eligible.

Substitute teachers with a regular ND Interim Substitute License are not covered under the North Dakota Teacher's Fund for Retirement. However, if the substitute teacher also has an extra-curricular contract, then their substitute pay becomes TFFR eligible.

Long-Term Substitute

By accepting a long-term assignment, you are agreeing to substitute for one teacher and remain in the position for the entire absence period. Make sure you are eligible to accept a long-term assignment. If you have a ND Interim Substitute License you may have a restriction indicated at the bottom of your license that limits you to thirty (30) consecutive days in the same classroom.

After completing ten (10) consecutive days of your long-term assignment, you will be paid \$227 per day starting on day 11 of the assignment.

Long-term Substitutes are not eligible for incentive bonuses.

Consecutive days will not carry over from one school year to the next.

Absences of up to two days will not constitute a reason to lose long-term pay.

If you will be absent during your long-term assignment, you must contact the school office.

In the event of an unscheduled school closing, your assignment will be canceled, and no payment will be provided for that day. This will not affect your consecutive days.

Work Day

For safety/security reasons, it is very important that you always report to the school office to sign-in at the beginning of each job assignment and to sign out at the end of your job assignment. Instructions/information from either the principal or secretary will be provided for you at that time.

All Substitute Teachers are required to arrive on time and to remain on school premises for the full assigned shift. You are expected to work the regular work hours of the teacher. There will be no early dismissal from your shift unless authorized by the school principal.

Whenever possible, please avoid cancelling jobs at the last minute. This causes a great deal of stress and confusion in the morning for the students and school staff. This may also result in being excluded from subbing at the school you were assigned to. If you find that you must cancel, please contact the school office directly.

A Substitute Teacher should be familiar with the guidelines and procedures used in each school. This information should be provided to substitutes by the school office when you are new to each school. The school should provide substitutes with a binder that includes with the following: A general map of the school, emergency phone numbers, the school's general guidelines and procedures, and the school's crisis plan. If questions arise throughout the day, you should contact the school office or the principal.

Substitute teachers can expect to work the following hours:

- Elementary School: 7:45 am to 3:30 pm
- Middle School: 7:45 am to 3:30 pm
- High School: 8:00 am to 3:45 pm

Substitute Teachers who are hired for less than a full day will be paid \$21 per hour.

Substitutes Teachers are expected to be present the entire time.

During breaks from classroom duties, substitutes are to report to the school office for assignment from the principal. Note that substitutes are entitled to the same lunch period as the regular classroom teacher whom they are subbing for.

Substitute Teachers who work a full day assignment will receive a complimentary adult meal in the lunchroom. Please see the building secretary to receive your meal voucher.

Substitute Teachers who work less than a full day may purchase an adult meal in the lunchroom. Please have exact change. (prices subject to change):
Breakfast = \$3.15 Lunch = \$5.31

Substitute Teachers are expected to stay on school premises during their entire assignment. Any exceptions to this, other than during their uncompensated lunch time, must be preapproved by the principal. Should you get approval to leave, please sign out and back in at the school office.

Responsibilities/Expectations

The role of a substitute teacher is to maintain classroom discipline and to carry out the classroom procedures as if he/she was the regular teacher. A substitute teacher has the same responsibilities and the same duties as the regular teacher, including bus duty and playground supervision.

Substitute teachers should follow lesson plans and instructions left by the classroom teacher. Substitutes do not have the authority to make changes in daily curriculum except in emergency situations.

Discipline should be maintained, and students are to be held accountable for their work, classroom behavior, attendance, etc. It is expected that the Substitute Teacher handle routine classroom management and disciplinary problems. If student behaviors escalate, please contact the school principal for assistance. Non-routine punishment (written or otherwise) should not be administered by a substitute teacher.

It is your responsibility to ensure the students are safe. Never leave students unsupervised. If an emergency occurs, the principal or principal's designee must be notified to provide temporary supervision.

Notify the school office immediately if an injury occurs. You may be required to complete an Incident Report. It is imperative that complete and accurate information be included on the report.

Substitute Teachers are expected to use professional judgment and common sense in addressing problems with students and other staff members. If, however, a problem cannot be properly resolved at an individual level after an attempt at resolution has been made, the matter should be referred to the school principal.

At the end of the day, the Substitute Teacher should write a summary of the day's activities. Include information about problems during the day and any other information that you feel the teacher may want to know. If you were not able to follow lesson plans, if an assignment could not be completed, or if you had to rearrange schedules, leave a note explaining why. At the elementary level, please correct as many papers as possible. Also, take a few moments to straighten up the classroom. Pick up any papers or other debris left on the floor. Make sure all windows and any outside doors are shut and locked. Report to the school office and sign out after each workday.

Basic Rules of Conduct

Follow these basic rules of conduct when in the classroom:

- Use verbal praise and positive reinforcement.
- Handle routine disciplinary problems. If problems escalate, contact the school principal.
- Respect students' differences. Remarks you may think are humorous may in fact be considered cultural bias or harassment.

- Treat students, parents, and co-workers with dignity and respect.
- Use professional judgment and common sense.

Classroom Behavior/Management Tips

Here are some classroom and behavior management tips:

- Let students know what you expect of them.
- Let students know what they can expect of you.
- Demonstrate leadership by managing well.
- Be organized to minimize opportunities for disruption.
- Remember that you are the leader and in control.
- Set rules early and clearly.
- Walk around the room often. Do not just sit by the desk, especially during assignments and tests. Students will be less likely to talk and cheat if you are circulating among them.
- Encourage good behavior.
- Be aware of what is happening in the classroom.
- Do not argue with students.
- Positive feedback and interaction with students will minimize behavior disruptions.
- Strive to earn the students' respect, not their friendship.
- No personal use of cell phones in the classroom.
- No personal or unnecessary computer use while students are in the classroom.
- No wearing ear buds in classroom.

What Not To Do

Substitute Teachers should refrain from the following:

- Do not over socialize with students.
- Do not flirt with students.
- Do not discuss your personal relationships or situations with students.
- Do not get involved in personal discussions.
- Do not transport students in your own vehicle.
- Do not allow students to leave during the school day, without administrative permission.
- Do not administer medication to students.
- Do not do personal work during classroom time.
- Do not overuse fragrances as others around you may be sensitive to smells, odors, and scents.

Classroom Ethics

Information obtained about students, including grades/performance must be kept confidential. It is a violation of Federal Law (FERPA) to disclose information contained in a student's personal folder, a student's grades, or the fact that a student has a special

need or disability to anyone not employed by the school district. A Substitute Teacher should assume and act as if any information learned about a student as a result of being a Substitute Teacher is confidential. In addition, personal information regarding other teachers should not be publicly disseminated. Substitute teachers are representatives of DPS.

Personal religious or political beliefs, philosophies and opinions may not be imposed upon the students. Substitute Teachers may not distribute religious, political, or commercial materials to students without prior permission from the principal.

Unscheduled School Closing/Delay

The decision to close or delay school will be made as early as possible. Announcements will be made on the District webpage (www.dickinson.k12.nd.us). Announcements will also be made on local radio and TV stations. In the event of an unscheduled school closing, your assignment will be canceled, and no payment will be provided for that day.

Active in Absence Management

All current Substitute Teachers will remain active in Absence Management until you notify Human Resources that you no longer wish to be a Substitute Teacher.

Exclusion

An individual teacher and/or school may exclude a substitute teacher from subbing in their classroom and/or in their school. Such requests will be honored if the school has a reasonable basis for the request. Depending on the circumstances and the nature of the reason for the exclusion, the substitute may or may not be notified.

Termination

All DPS Substitute Teachers are independent contractors and may decide to terminate their employment or may be terminated at any time, with or without cause, upon notice which is reasonable under the circumstances. In the event that the decision is made to remove a Substitute Teacher from the active substitute teacher list, the Substitute Teacher will be notified of the removal in a timely fashion, in person, by telephone, mail or email.

An occurrence of the following behaviors may be subject to immediate removal as a Substitute Teacher:

- Using profanity in the presence of students, parents, and/or staff;
- Endangering students by leaving them unattended for inappropriate amounts of time or by falling asleep in the classroom;
- Making sexually or racially inappropriate oral/written comments or displaying inappropriate graphic or physical conduct, or subjecting students, parents, and/or staff to racial or sexual harassment;

- Using alcohol or unlawful drugs on school premises;
- Insubordination;
- Willful violation of school rules and district policy/regulations;
- Willful refusal to follow instructions and/or lesson plans left by the classroom teacher; or
- Any other inappropriate behavior.

Substitutes may request to be removed as a Substitute Teacher at any time during the school year by submitting a written request to Human Resources.

If more than one year has lapsed since working as Substitute Teacher, you will be removed from the active Substitute Teacher list.

Dress Code – Professional Appearance

A professional standard of dress requires that Substitute Teachers be readily distinguishable from students. Substitute Teachers are to set positive dress and grooming examples for students and adhere to standards of dress and appearance that are compatible with effective teaching and learning. If you are questioning whether a particular item of clothing is appropriate, please do not wear it. DPS recommends the following guidelines for Substitute Teachers.

Men:

- Pants: Dress and casual (business) pants are acceptable. Inappropriate pants include jeans or sweatpants.
- Shirts: Polo, golf, buttoned and/or collared shirts, and pullover dress shirts are acceptable. Inappropriate shirts include T-shirts with graphic art images/expressions, muscle shirts and sweatshirts.

Women:

- Pants, skirts, or dresses: Dress pants, casual (business) and capri pants are acceptable. Exercise pants, sweatpants, shorts, and jeans of any color are inappropriate. Skirts and dresses should be of appropriate length. Leggings (opaque, non-sheen) are appropriate if accompanied by a mid-thigh length tunic or dress. Please do not substitute leggings with exercise pants or sheen tights.
- Tops: Blouses, knit or woven tops, sweaters and turtlenecks are acceptable. Sleeveless tops must cover undergarments. T-shirts with graphic art images/expressions, sweatshirts, halter, tank, and low-cut tops are inappropriate.

All Substitutes:

- Spirit Days: Spirit days will be designated by the principal/supervisor. On those days t-shirts, sweatshirts with the school or district logo are acceptable.
- Field Trips: Jeans are allowed on field trips (at principal/supervisor's discretion). Jeans must be in good repair (no holes, rips, etc.).

- Physical Education: Physical Education teachers should wear attire appropriate for their instructional environment.
- All employees must wear a District-issued identification badge when in a school building.

Unfilled Assignments

When a substitute teacher cannot be found and a posted substitute teaching assignment goes unfilled, the building principal will attempt to cover that assignment using the following strategies:

1. Utilize DPS contracted certified teachers during their individual prep time. Teachers who cover an open assignment during their individual prep time will be compensated at the rate of \$30 per hour.
2. Utilize classified staff who possess a valid substitute teacher certification. A licensed classified staff member should be assigned in Absence Management as the substitute for that teacher. The classified staff member should clock in as usual. Classified staff who serve as a certified substitute will have \$4 per hour added to their regular salary during the time that they are serving as a substitute teacher.
3. Reassign Certified Substitutes who are filling assignments for classified staff.
4. Utilize other professional staff for whom substitutes are not required, such as: Instructional Coaches, Counselors, Physical / Occupational Therapists, School Psychologists, Social Workers and Administrators.
5. Divide the students from an open classroom between two or more “like” classrooms.
6. In the event of an emergency, a student teacher may be used
 - a. one time during their student teaching experience as a substitute teacher in their Cooperating Teacher’s regularly assigned classroom for a period not to exceed two consecutive days (see ESPB Administrative Rule 67.1-02-01-01). Or,
 - b. two times during their student teaching experience as a substitute teacher in their Cooperating Teacher’s regularly assigned classroom for a period not to exceed one consecutive day.

A student teacher will not be compensated when serving as a substitute teacher.

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