

# **Fall River School District**



## **Substitute Handbook**





## Fall River School District

*Helping every student achieve their greatest potential*

To: All Substitute Teachers and Substitute Aides

Re: Welcome to the School District of Fall River

Dear Substitute Teacher and/or Aide,

Welcome! You, as a qualified substitute teacher or aide, are a great asset to our school district. The goal of the district's substitute teacher program is to provide a seamless flow of the curriculum to our students in the absence of their regular teacher. Having highly skilled, caring, and enthusiastic substitute teachers is essential for us to meet our goal.

This handbook is designed to help you understand some of the routines, procedures, and expectations of which you will become an important part. It is meant to serve as a guide to help you fill the role to the best of your ability. In addition to providing assistance to the instructional program, another primary responsibility of substitute teachers is to maintain a safe, supportive educational environment for the students entrusted in your care.

Helping you become acclimated to the normal operating school day is largely the responsibility of the building administrator. He is prepared to assist you in your contribution to the ongoing program our building. Please do not hesitate to contact the building administrator if you have questions or concerns. We hope your work with us will be enjoyable.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael S. Garrow". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Dr. Michael S. Garrow  
District Administrator

# General Information

This handbook is printed for the benefit of the substitute teachers in the School District of Fall River. Knowledge of these guidelines and procedures are your responsibility as a member of our substitute staff. Please read through this manual in its entirety, many common questions are already answered here.

## **Non-Discrimination**

Pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 118.13 and Wis. Admin Code PI § 9, it is the policy of the School District of Fall River that no person may be denied the benefits of or be discriminated against in any curricular, extracurricular, pupil services, recreational, or other program on the basis of sex, race, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, or physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability.

This policy also prohibits discrimination under related federal statutes, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (race and national origin). Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 (sex), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (handicap).

## **Background Checks and Obligation to Report Criminal Record**

The District will conduct a background check on the substitute teacher in advance of employment and may deny employment based upon findings.

The District may conduct criminal history and background checks periodically at the District's discretion and will take appropriate action based on findings, up to and removal from the substitute teacher list. The District shall comply with the state and federal laws governing arrest and conviction record discrimination with regard to the use of information disclosed in response to reports and gathered in Criminal Background Checks.

All substitute teachers shall notify the Business Office, in writing and as soon as possible (but no more than three (3) calendar days after any arrest, indictment, conviction, no contest or guilty plea, or other adjudication of the employee, whichever occurs first, for any felony or misdemeanor.) The requirement to report shall not apply to minor traffic offenses, e.g., speeding tickets, parking tickets, et al. However, an offense of operating under the influence, revocation or suspension of license, and/or driving after revocation or suspension must be reported if the substitute's duties require the substitute to drive or operate a District vehicle or piece of mobile equipment, or transport students or staff in any vehicle.

## **Daily Procedures**

Substitute teachers should report immediately to the principal and/or building administrative assistant upon arrival to receive instructions as to the building routine and hours of work, as well as to sign in. Performance of the regular teacher's building duties is required unless the principal makes other arrangements. Please ask the building administrative assistant for a substitute teacher ID badge. This ID badge should be worn at all times. You will also receive other information regarding room assignments, location of materials, plans, charts, and records. Upon the completion of your assignment, you will need to sign out and turn in the ID badge to an office administrative assistant.

## **Classroom Procedures**

Plan to arrive at your assigned room well in advance of the students (see Punctuality). This will afford an opportunity to become familiar with the physical setup of the room and to locate materials necessary to carrying out the assignment in a successful manner.

Introduce yourself to each new group of students with whom you come in contact throughout the day. Write your name on the board to avoid any confusion during the day. Meet and consult with other grade level teachers. Please do not hesitate to ask questions regarding routine matters.

Follow the lesson plans left by the regular teacher in order to maintain a certain level of continuity of instruction in the classroom. You are expected to adhere to the scope and sequence of instruction documented in the teacher's lesson plans.

Most of the time, teachers anticipate their absences due to scheduled appointments or staff development requirements. However, if a staff member is absent due to an emergency, you may not have lesson plans provided by the teacher. Should this occur, help is available from other teachers and support staff in the school. Teachers from the same grade level, neighboring classrooms, departments, etc., should be accessed to provide assistance when lesson plans are missing or insufficiently developed. Building administrators should also be contacted for additional support under such circumstances.

Do not assign written work and leave it to be graded by the regular teacher unless so indicated in the lesson plans. Any written work assigned that is beyond the lesson plans of the regular teacher should be graded and left for the teacher to examine.

On completing an assignment, a definite statement of the work done in each subject, specifying pages covered in various textbooks, should be left. New assignments should be noted in the teacher's assignment book or on a card inserted in the desk copy of the text. All papers should be graded, records made, and preparations for the next day completed if time permits.

You should assume the same responsibility for the order and discipline of students in the classroom, in the halls, or on the playground as does the regular teacher. *Never leave students unattended in the classroom.* State law is very specific in requiring districts to supervise all children at all times and to provide a "safe place" for the children entrusted to its care.

The housekeeping arrangements of the regular teacher should be continued with all books, supplies, and equipment in order. Check windows, shades, and general classroom arrangement.

### **Completing an Assignment**

When your assignment has been completed, report to the school office. Be sure to return keys, ID badge, and other materials that you received upon your arrival. Also be sure to sign the substitute sheet upon your departure.

A summary or an outline of the work covered during an assignment or any comments, which might prove helpful to the regular teacher, should be left in the office at the conclusion of your assignment. The school provides forms for this purpose. Be sure to return them to the office before leaving the building.

New assignments should be noted in the teacher's assignment book, or on a card inserted in the desk copy of the text. All papers should be graded, records made, and preparations for the next day completed. Substitute teachers should follow teaching daytime schedules as designated for each building (See the Punctuality section).

### **Computer Access**

Occasionally, a teacher may include a computer program or an online resource in his or her daily lesson plan. As a result, it will be important for you to follow proper procedures in preparing for such situations. To anticipate this, all substitute teachers are required to read and sign the ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY. The signed copy should be turned in to the substitute coordinator with the rest of your paperwork to be kept on file.

Each time you need access to the computers or online resources to perform your substitute teaching assignment, you will need to contact the building administrative assistant or a technology coordinator to obtain a username and a password. You will need to request access each time you need it.

When using the computers it will be important to practice good security procedures to maintain the overall integrity of the network. Usernames and passwords should not be shared with students or other staff members.

## **Discipline**

Principals and teachers are jointly responsible for the maintenance of order within the classroom and the school. Problems of a student-staff nature are discussed personally with the building administrator.

As a substitute teacher, you 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 what the rules of behavior are and what the consequences are for not following them. Effective classroom management will lead to effective teaching.

When students cause behavior problems that are disruptive to the learning environment, you 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 in order to resume effective teaching. You 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 is unacceptable. The building principal should be contacted in case of serious behavior problems.

## **Items Requiring Office Approval**

Students are not to be dismissed or allowed to leave the school grounds during the school day under any circumstances without the permission of the building principal or office staff.

Accidents involving a student under your supervision should be reported to the school office immediately! If a student becomes ill, you should immediately refer that student to the school office.

Notes or any communications should not be sent to parents without permission of a principal. Students should not be detained after school hours without permission from a principal's office. Parents should be informed if students are to be detained at noon or after school and the approval of parents, as well as a principal, must be obtained before such action is taken.

## **Personal Use of School Property**

School facilities, equipment, and supplies are intended to support the education of students and therefore shall not be used in any manner other than for the direct or indirect benefit of the students. School-owned supplies shall not be consumed for personal reasons nor shall any school-owned equipment be taken from the premises for personal use.

## **Punctuality**

Substitute teachers are expected to be on duty the same length of time as the regular classroom teacher. Many experienced substitute teachers advise arriving to school as early as possible before the start of the school day in order to sign in, find the classroom, locate lesson plans, prepare the room and instructional materials, and otherwise prepare for a successful day of substitute teaching.

# **Routines**

**Attendance Records and Reports** – Do not make any entries in the teacher's record book without expressed permission from the teacher. Record attendance and tardy information on the forms provided. In addition, on a separate sheet of paper, keep a daily record of names of students who have been absent or tardy and leave the information for the regular teacher. In serving longer assignments, consult the building principal before recording grades.

**General Supervision** - Try to fit into the regular program as nearly as possible by assuming the duties of the regular teacher. Sometimes it may be necessary for you to perform routine tasks such as hall duty, lunchroom supervision, playground duty, and the like, in addition to your regular class work.

**Mail** - Do not remove mail or other articles from the regular teacher's mailbox unless directed to do so by the building principal. This policy changes when assuming long- term substitute duties.

**Fire Drills** - All classrooms have directions for fire drills placed on a sign near the door of the room. Read these directions immediately! Check other safety drill regulations with a building principal.

### **Teaching Materials**

Routine supplies and materials are found in each classroom. However, after you determine what supplies are needed to carry out the plan of the day, you should locate these materials immediately and notify the school office if a particular supply or teaching aid cannot be found.

## **Professional Ethics**

The School District of Fall River expects all of its employees to maintain a high moral standard. Please read over the following ethical expectations:

- Maintain a positive, professional attitude toward your work. A friendly, cheerful, and cooperative attitude toward both the building personnel and students will help to start the day right and tend to keep it running smoothly. Your attitude will have a great deal to do with your acceptance by the faculty and the students.
- Plan to spend the entire time working with and for the students and keep all children in your room under supervision at all times. You are expected to carry out the program as outlined by the regular teacher and are not employed simply to maintain order.
- You are expected to observe the same ethical codes as regular teachers. You are as legally responsible for students, equipment, and materials assigned to your care as is the regular teacher for whom you are substituting.
- Be an advocate of the School District of Fall River – promoting the positive events and happenings of the school and its students and refraining from expressing any negatives within the community.
- Visitors are not allowed while you are on duty as a substitute teacher. A principal has the right to refuse to let anyone see you while on the job. You may not leave the classroom for personal telephone calls; messages will be taken and delivered to you. Personal cell phone usage during class time is prohibited.
- Please do not call the regular teacher concerning the class work or anything else you are doing for the teacher unless requested to do so.
- A substitute teacher refrains from discussing incidents that occur in one building with teachers of another or in the community at large. Conferences with parents and/or students are not conducted except by special permission of the building principal.

As a substitute teacher, you have a responsibility to treat most matters pertaining to students with confidentiality. Student behavior, performance, and achievement levels are not subjects of general conversation and should not be discussed outside the school setting. **When working with students with special needs, you must exercise an even greater degree of caution with regard to confidentiality.**

You should exercise extreme caution and good judgment in verbal and physical relationships with students. You should establish a position of authority with the students; you may "be friendly" without "befriending"

the students. Under no circumstances may a substitute teacher engage in an inappropriate relationship with a student, regardless of who initiates the relationship.

Yelling at students, calling them derogatory names, and using insults or other threatening verbal attacks will not be tolerated. Failure to meet any directives listed above may result in your immediate removal from the substitute teacher list without warning.

## Safety and Health

The School District of Fall River provides certain procedures and information regarding our students' health and safety while in attendance. The building has an emergency team of trained members to respond to injuries and/or accidents. The building also has a procedure in place to access this team.

Since some children have medical problems that could interfere with their school day, the building maintains a Confidential Health List. Students who may have a medical problem are placed on this list with parental permission. This information remains strictly confidential and is not to be shared with other sources. Please check with your principal if you need to review this list.

**All School District of Fall River rooms are supplied with copies of Crisis Response Information. This information provides quick steps to respond to a variety of crisis situations. These should be located on the wall, near to the door exiting the classroom.**

## Compensation

Please read the following very carefully. If any updates are to be added they will be mailed to the address that we have on file for each substitute teacher. All substitute staff need to supply the District Office with a current email address. This email will be used to provide you with the link to your access to your paystub and W-2.

The current rate of pay for substitute teachers is **\$105.00** per day. The long term sub rate is **\$188.00** per day. The hourly rate of pay for substitute teachers is \$13.13/hour for less than four (4) hours worked in any given day. The rate of pay for substitute aides is \$11.88/hour. Substitute teachers working four (4) hours or more shall be paid for a full day, and are expected to assist in other classroom to fulfill a full working day.

Substitute paychecks are issued every two weeks.

All new employees to the School District of Fall River will have their paychecks directly deposited.

Medical and Dental Insurance and participation in a Group Life Insurance Plan is only available to those substitutes who work more than 30 hours per week. At the point in which your hours drop below 30 per week, you would be responsible for any/all additional associated costs of coverage during your period of eligibility.

All substitute teachers are reminded to make sure the school district is notified of any name change, address change, phone number change, or bank change as soon as possible.

- Substitute teachers or aides requesting removal from the substitute list should call Carri Lee at (920) 484-3333 x 221.
- If you have any questions regarding compensation or other payroll related issues, please contact Andy Christensen at (920) 484-3333 x 223.

# Child Abuse Reporting and Investigating

The School District of Fall River is dedicated to the goal of protecting our students from and responding effectively to incidents of child abuse and neglect. The district recognizes the many efforts to confront problems associated with child abuse and neglect and will work cooperatively with all agencies with responsibilities for addressing such concerns.

Wis. Stat. § 48.981(2) requires that school personnel, who in the performance of their duties encounter a child they suspect has been physically or sexually abused, is experiencing neglect or emotional damage, or is threatened with injury, are mandated to report suspicions to the appropriate authorities. Anyone in good faith, participating in the making of a report or participating in an investigation pursuant to this section, shall be immune from any liability. Whoever willfully ignores and violates this section by failure to report as required, may be fined not more than \$1,000 or imprisoned not more than six months or both.

Wisconsin law assigns the responsibility and authority to investigate certain reports of child maltreatment to law enforcement and county departments of social or human services. *Schools do not have the statutory authority to investigate reports of child maltreatment.* Mandated reporters, including all staff, are, however, required by law to make a report to Child Protective Services (CPS) or law enforcement when they have reasonable cause to suspect a child has been sexually, physically, or emotionally abused or neglected. The mandated reporter with the most direct knowledge or observation of the abuse should be the person to make this report to CPS or law enforcement. Any doubt about reporting suspecting situations should be resolved in the child's favor. The purpose is to protect the child and help the family.

Following appropriate protocol when there is reasonable suspicion that a child has been abused or neglected, or has been threatened with abuse or neglect, is essential. To help ensure that the proper procedures are followed and the overall process is not compromised, the following reporting procedures are designed to assist in referring a child for suspected physical abuse, sexual abuse or emotional damage, neglect or threat of injury as specified in the Wisconsin Statutes:

Step #1. In an effort to better understand the definition and dynamics of child abuse/neglect, prior to making a referral, contact available building resources (school counselor and/or school psychologist).

Step #2. A staff member, under a duty to report and who suspects a child has been physically or sexually abused, is experiencing neglect or emotional damage, or is threatened with injury, shall immediately inform the building principal or designee if the principal is not available.

Step #3. The staff member shall also immediately contact the Columbia County Department of Human Services or the Fall River Police Department. When calling, the reporting individual should identify the purpose as a child abuse/neglect referral. This referral shall be made as early in the day as possible so that a social worker from the County Department of Human Services has time to begin his/her investigation by interviewing the child at school. (State Statute protects individuals and institutions filing reports and participating in such investigations from criminal or civil liability.)

Step #4. The principal or designee will document that the telephone referral was made and keep on file.

# Helpful Hints for Successful Substitute Teaching

1. Arrive early to allow yourself time to acclimate to the room, procedures, plans for the day, etc.
2. Familiarize yourself with locations of fire extinguishers, crisis response chart, emergency exit routes, phone to the office, etc.
3. Keep a sense of humor; it helps both the digestive system and the climate in the classroom.
4. Expect to be challenged; it comes with the territory at all grade levels.
5. Have some “emergency plans” in case lesson plans are either missing or inadequate or the lesson is completed in less time than the teacher anticipated. Having a "bag of tricks" on hand is helpful (i.e. a book to read aloud, word puzzles, games, brainteasers, etc.) and will always come in handy as a back-up.
6. Let the teacher know specifically what lessons weren't completed in your detailed note that you leave for the teacher at the end of the day. (Explain reasons why, if needed.)
7. Don't feel threatened or uncomfortable when administrators visit your classroom. They can be a great resource or help to classroom management.
8. Make sure the students know your name, but don't let them call you by your first name; it diminishes the respect you want to establish and maintain.
9. Familiarize yourself with the “helpful students” identified by the teacher or others familiar with the class. Mention their assistance in your note to the teacher.
10. Expect interruptions. Fire drills, electrical outages, playground injuries, visits from other teachers, and students being “pulled out” for other programs or services are all par for the course.
11. When in doubt, confused, or otherwise unable to carry out your duties, seek help from another teacher at the same grade level (elementary) or subject area (secondary).
12. Attach any behavior referral slips (to the office, nurse, etc.) to your note to the teacher.
13. Do more than required. Your extra efforts are appreciated!

**Acknowledgement of Receipt and Understanding  
of the Fall River School District  
Substitute Handbook**

I hereby acknowledge I have received the *Fall River School District Substitute Handbook*. My signature below indicates that I agree to read the *Handbook* and abide by the standards, policies, and procedures defined or referenced in this document. It is also important to know that additional regulations, policies, and laws are in District Board of Education policies.

The information in this Handbook is subject to change. I understand that changes in District policies may supersede, modify, or eliminate the information summarized in this *Handbook*. I understand that this *Handbook* does not constitute an employment contract, but is an explanation of the Fall River School District's procedures and expectations. I also accept responsibility for contacting the school office or school administration if I have any questions, concerns, or need further explanation.

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Employee Signature

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Date

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Employee Name Printed