



RMS

Substitute Teacher

Handbook

WELCOME! This handbook has been designed to assist in the implementation of the daily routines and procedures at Readington Middle School. We have attempted to provide you with the necessary information about our school as well as our expectations for substitute teachers that you will need to be successful. Our staff is very supportive and appreciative of the work you do, so please do not hesitate to ask if you have questions or need assistance.

A good substitute is an invaluable asset to our school district. The substitute must assume all of the responsibilities of the regular teacher and provide continuity for the instructional program. An effective substitute teacher ensures that the students experience minimum disruption in their educational program, as well as their daily routine.

Substitute teaching is a difficult and challenging job. Just answering the question, "Who are you today?" over and over can be frustrating, not to mention being reminded by students at every turn, "That's not the way we usually do that." However, your interest in our school and its students is gratifying and your service is truly appreciated.

We welcome you as a member of our professional team and offer you our whole-hearted support in your service to the children of the Readington Middle School.

Business & Financial Matters

Substitute teachers' workday at the middle school is from 7:20a.m. to 2:25p.m. Substitute teachers are encouraged to report to school no later than 7:15 in order to check on special duties and to have adequate time to review the teacher's plans for the day. Substitute teachers are expected to stay until 2:25p.m., correct papers as necessary and to organize the classroom for the next day.

Substitutes hired for a half day only will be expected to work the following hours:

Morning: 7:20a.m. - 11:10 a.m.
Afternoon: 11:10 a.m. - 2:25 p.m.

The present daily rates of pay for on-call substitute classroom teachers are \$95 for those with County substitute certificates and/or NJ teaching certificates. The rate for on-call substitute instructional and clerical aides is \$83.

The Readington School District uses a Substitute Pay Voucher to document semi-monthly payment of substitute teachers. Subs should be sure to sign their individual vouchers each day when they report for work.

Paychecks are issued twice a month. Vouchers submitted on the 15th of the month will be paid on the 30th of that month. Those submitted on the 30th of the month will be paid on the 15th of the following month. The following deductions are made for each pay period.

- Federal Withholding Tax (according to your W-4)
- NJ State Withholding Tax (according to your exemption status)
- State Unemployment Insurance
- FICA

Substitute Procedures For AESOP

In your web browser type in www.aesoponline.com, that will bring you to the homepage in AESOP. Log in using your ID (phone number) and PIN code (last 4 digits of social) from your AESOP welcome letter. You should check this periodically during the day for available assignments. Substitutes' daily assignments are subject to change by the building administrators, depending on staff absences and availability of substitute teachers.

Last-minute entries (the night before or the morning of an absence), are not viewable far in advance, and in addition to being available online, may also result in a phone call from AESOP or a personal phone call from our back-up sub caller during the same hours as AESOP would call. Please be sure to answer the call if you are ready to accept an assignment. If your answering machine is reached, AESOP will not call you back for up to an hour if the job is still available. You may, however, be called by our back-up sub caller.

In some cases, lesson plans or instructions will be attached to the teacher absence notification online. There will be a notation in the absence if this is the case. Please check for any attachments when accepting an assignment. You can print out these plans/instructions for your convenience. If no plans/ instructions are attached to the absence notification, please check with the school secretary when signing in for the day.

Whenever a last-minute absence is entered in AESOP by a staff member, either the night before or the morning of the absence, substitutes will be contacted by AESOP or our back-up sub caller from 5:30 to 10:00PM the night before the absence or from 5:30 to 8:00AM on the morning of the absence, in order to fill the open assignment. These open assignments will also be viewable on the web page for all qualified substitutes, so it is advisable to check late at night or early in the morning to view any unfilled assignments. Please remember to remove yourself in AESOP if you are unable to work specific dates.

In accordance with the policy at Readington Middle School, it is the intent that no substitute be assigned to his/her own child's classroom or team. Such an assignment may occur only when no other suitable arrangements can be made.

Inability to Report for an Assignment

If you should accept an assignment and later find that you are unable to report, please remove yourself from that assignment as quickly as possible so that it will re-open again for another substitute. It is essential that a substitute be in place at the start of the day for each absent faculty member.

Should you need to call later in the morning because of a last minute emergency, please call RMS front office directly.

Inclement Weather Delays & Cancellations

It is sometimes necessary to delay the opening of school or to cancel classes for the entire day. In either of these circumstances, every effort will be made to contact those subs who have already been scheduled to work that day. However, it is advised that substitutes check our district home page and AESOP home page regarding delays and closings.

As well, the following radio & TV stations carry delayed opening/cancellation announcements for "Readington Township Schools."

- 101.5 FM
- 90.5 FM
- 94.5 FM
- ABC
- CBS
- Channel 27 (HCRHS)

Getting Started

Substitute teachers should report directly to the main office at the start of the day. There they need to sign the Sub Book and their pay vouchers. If it is your first day at RMS, someone from the professional staff will be available to guide you through the morning routine.

Sub Folders will be available in the respective teacher's mailbox.

When you arrive in the teacher's first period classroom you should find all the materials you will need for your day. In addition to maintaining up-to-date plan books, teachers are expected to provide substitutes with the following:

- the teacher's daily schedule, including times and locations of classes
- accurate rosters and seating charts (when appropriate) for all classes
- locations of all books, manuals, supplies, etc. and any special instructions for use of materials or equipment in the classroom
- fire and safety drill procedures
- list of students with special medical needs, including descriptions of any emergency procedures to be followed by the classroom teacher
- identification of a teacher who is most readily available to help with questions or difficulties
- identification of students who have special instructional needs
- identification of particularly dependable students who may be able to help with questions about the routine
- alternate plans and extra work/activities to be used in place of or in addition to the plans in the plan book for any given day
- Behavior Referrals

The students' day officially begins at 7:35 a.m.

- Morning announcements are made during homeroom. Students are expected to stand respectfully and recite the Pledge of Allegiance, as well as to listen attentively to the morning announcements.
- Teachers check attendance and report any absent students to reception area EXT. 3826. Attendance should be taken during homeroom by 7:40 a.m.

Getting Through

Begin class immediately. It is important to follow the "substitute" plans left for you by the regular teacher. If specific plans for the day are not available, locate the more general "emergency" plans in the Substitute Folder.

At the beginning of each class please take attendance and note any absentees on the class list. If a student's name does not appear on the day's absentee report, notify the office immediately that he/she is missing from your room.

Please dismiss students according to the schedule provided by the teacher. Students have 2 minutes to pass to their next class, where they will be expected to arrive on time, so please do not keep students beyond the class time.

At each changing of classes, please make every effort to supervise the students leaving and entering your classroom as well as those moving through the corridor.

There may be graded papers to be returned to students. These will be clearly marked for your convenience. If such is the case, distribute them in a way that does not call attention to any child's grade.

Except in the case of long-term teaching assignments, substitutes are not expected to design tests, but may be expected to administer tests. Please be certain to follow the teacher's instructions for administering a test and to closely monitor students in any testing situation. If the teacher intends for you to collect papers, clear instructions will be left to that effect. Be aware that during one teacher's planning time another teacher may use the classroom.

Remember to check for any extra-duty assignments. In addition to teaching classes, the substitute will be called upon to fulfill all duties of the regular teacher, such as tutorial, activity, or lunch supervision. These duties are noted on the teacher's schedule and in the Substitute Folder.

Student Conduct

It is appropriate for you to expect polite, cooperative behavior from every Readington student. Students are expected to arrive on time for class, prepared for the day's work. Students need to be attentive and show respect for both the teacher and their classmates. Specific procedures or standards of conduct for an individual classroom will be found in the substitute folder and/or posted in the classroom.

"I am the decisive element in the classroom. It's my personal approach that creates the climate. It's my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher, I possess a tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or humor, hurt or heal. In all situations, it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated and a child humanized or dehumanized." Haim Ginott

Class Control

This is a difficult area to define, yet it is one of the most important aspects of being a teacher. If a class cannot be controlled it cannot be taught. As a substitute teacher, you are an adult leader to the students. Since their classroom routine has been altered, they may be more difficult to control. As a substitute, be friendly but firm with the students. Administer discipline in a positive and diplomatic manner. Do not use sarcasm or threats with students. Corporal punishment or physical handling of a student is never permissible. If possible, handle students' problems yourself, but if a situation persists or seems to be getting out of control, consult another teacher or contact the vice principal immediately.

Behavior Referrals are for more serious infractions such as disrespect, insubordination, and inappropriate behavior toward staff or students. The substitute should send the student to the vice principal's office immediately with the Referral form filled out in detail. Please inform the vice principal's office prior to sending student down so that they can expect student.

Any discipline problems should be included in the report to the teacher. The teacher will take the appropriate actions based on classroom rules.

Make the school day as normal as possible for the students. By keeping the students busy you will have them in good order, and they will be less likely to cause trouble.

Although you may be involved with the students outside of school and may be addressed on a first-name basis, this is not acceptable in the classroom. Please write your title (Ms., Mr., etc.) and your last name on the board for the students to refer to throughout the day.

May We Suggest...

- Keep your sense of humor and an objective approach.
- Use praise whenever it is deserved - for good effort or a cooperative spirit as much as for the correct answer.
- Do your best to ensure positive comments about students and teachers.
- Try to be aware of the level of understanding of each class and keep your approach on that level. It is better to realistically challenge the students than to talk down to them.
- Respect the individual differences of the children. Students are rarely slow "on purpose." They need understanding and encouragement, not public corrections and certainly not ridicule or sarcasm.
- To the best of your ability maintain the group arrangement or seating plan, and make every effort to avoid addressing the students as "you" or by pointing.
- Discipline, don't threaten. Threatening is a negative approach and you might find yourself in the untenable position of not being able to follow through. This destroys your credibility with the class.
- The entire class should not be reprimanded for the conduct or poor work of one or two students.
- Maintain established routines as much as possible. If for some reason you must change the routine, be pleasant but firm.
- Don't attempt to gain popularity by permitting children more freedom than they can handle or ought to have.

If, in spite of all your best efforts, you find a student completely unmanageable and effectively sabotaging the learning experience for others, ask for help. Avoid threatening or demeaning the student. Do not send him/her "out in the hall," as this is probably the student who most needs direct supervision. Use the classroom phone to contact the vice principal's office. An administrator will come to your room or you may be directed to send the student to the office.

Basic Policies and Procedures

No student may be picked up at the classroom, even by a parent. All early dismissals are from the reception area. Students will be released early from school only by an administrator or the school secretary and only after a parent/guardian has signed the student out.

All visitors to RMS, including parents, must go directly to the main office and sign the Visitors' Register. They will receive passes to be worn while in the building and to be returned to the office when leaving. Please

address any visitors who do not have such passes and direct them to the main office. If there is any cause for concern, please notify the office immediately.

A student must have an appropriate pass identification when traveling to and from the following areas during scheduled class time: main office, guidance office, nurse's office, physical education office or locker room, library, another instructional area, lavatory, water fountain or locker. In addition to carrying a pass with him/her, each student is required to sign out and in on the Classroom Pass Record.

Phones for teachers' professional use are located in every classroom. You may contact the office at extension 3803 or 3804. [These phones are not for personal use and the system has a built-in 'audit' program to monitor all outgoing calls.]

Whenever possible, students should use classroom phones when unforeseen emergencies arise. This should only be done with the teacher's permission and supervision. Students should be discouraged from calling home for uniforms or sports equipment.

The office staff needs to be notified in writing of any changes in the students' schedule or class location. If two classes are working together in a single room or a class will be working in the library or computer lab for all or part of a core, please e-mail RMS Support indicating this change.

Substitutes are asked to get approval from the assistant principal before leaving the building during work hours.

Student Health Care

The following items should be handled as stated without exception.

- Any accident involving a student in your care should be immediately reported to the nurse. (Use any classroom phone for direct contact to the office.) The nurse will handle the accident from that point.
- Any student appearing ill or requesting to see the nurse should be sent there immediately, using the student pass procedure.
- All students with medication (prescription or non-prescription) must report to the health office upon arrival at school. Medicine can be taken only under the nurse's or parent's supervision. Inhalers may be taken out to the field during PE classes with the knowledge of the teacher and the nurse.
- Each teacher should have a pair of rubber gloves available in his/her desk. For your safety, please use them if it is necessary to be in contact with body fluids.

Professional Ethics

A friendly, cheerful and cooperative attitude toward both the building personnel and the students will help you to start the day right and to keep it running smoothly. Your attitude will have a great deal to do with your acceptance by the faculty and the students.

Substitute teachers are expected to observe the same ethical codes as regular teachers and should maintain a professional attitude toward their work at all times. Endeavoring to provide a social environment for the students to enhance your popularity is strongly discouraged.

Substitute teachers are to be dressed in a neat and socially acceptable manner that is consistent with community and professional standards.

As a substitute teacher you are expected to carry out the program as outlined by the regular teacher. You should plan to spend the entire time working with and for the students. If you need to leave the classroom for any reason, tell the teacher next to or across the hall from you so that your classroom will not be left unsupervised.

Many core and non-core classes in grades 6-8 are designated as "inclusion" classes. All of these classes are taught by both a regular education and a special education teacher. When a substitute teacher is taking the place of the regular education teacher in these situations, it is expected that the "inclusion" teacher will conduct the class and the substitute will assist as necessary and appropriate with both the regular and the special education students.

Teachers are legally responsible for students, equipment and materials assigned to their care. As a substitute teacher you are equally responsible.

You should not engage in any type of personal work, including crafts, reading, or any other activity of this nature. It is not acceptable to drink beverages or to eat food in the classrooms while students are present, except in the case of designated grade-level or team "snack times."

Personal phone calls should be made only in emergency situations or from the teachers' lounge during lunch. Messages will be taken for you and delivered at the appropriate time. You should notify family and/or friends to call only in an emergency situation.

The preparation time you may have during your school day should be used to review work and plan for upcoming sessions. Although it is appropriate that you review student work completed during your day, you should not record any grades on the students' papers unless specifically directed to do so by the teacher. As well, you should never have students grade their own or others' papers unless instructed to do so.

Do not make negative remarks about students in your classes to other students or teachers. If you have a problem with a particular student, consult an administrator.

Refrain from commenting to students or other teachers about the schedule or the lesson plans of the teacher for whom you are substituting.

Finally, it is essential that substitutes respect the confidentiality of student records. These would include grades, medical problems, and any other information that may be part of a classroom teacher's records.

Before Leaving

Please be sure to leave the classroom in good order. The students' work ought to be sorted (by class), clearly labeled and left on the teacher's desk. Close classroom windows; lock the corridor door as you leave. Please return your I.D. badge back to front office before leaving for the day. It may be appropriate to check with the office personnel as to a possible assignment for the following day.