

Southwestern Consolidated School District of Shelby County Substitute Teacher Handbook



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Updated: April 20, 2026

Southwestern Consolidated School District of Shelby County

A most important and vital role in the efficient operation of a public school system is assumed by the substitute teacher. Our students are dependent upon earnest, well qualified, professional teachers coming into the classroom as temporary replacements for regular instructors. The student's educational progress should be enriched due to the association with qualified substitute teachers.

It is indeed a challenge to the ingenuity and resourcefulness of the substitute teacher to meet with a new group of pupils. This great responsibility can serve as a stimulant for providing the best type of instruction possible during the period served.

The schools will make every effort to help each substitute teacher during his/her assignment at Southwestern. One of the purposes of this handbook is to offer the substitute teacher some general help. This handbook contains information, directions, and suggestions which should be most helpful to the smooth operation of the school system: consequently, principals, regular teachers, and substitute teachers are urged to become familiar with the contents of the following pages.

We encourage all substitute teachers to become acquainted with the information in this handbook as well as with the beliefs, vision, and mission of the school district. We welcome you to become a part of our schools as we strive to focus on providing quality work for our students.

Dr. Jamie Wilkins, Superintendent

Mrs. Bonnie Thopy, Business Manager/Treasurer

Mrs. Jessica Blackwell, Deputy Treasurer/Human Resources

Mrs. Jordan Bledsoe, Corporation Secretary

Mr. Zach Sprout, District Technology Coordinator

Mr. John Fix, Facilities/Maintenance Manager

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL

The principal, office staff, and classroom teacher will see that the substitute teacher is given:

- A friendly welcome;
- An introduction to the class and to a neighboring teacher if needed;
- A bell schedule (including fire and disaster drills);
- Information about general building procedures (i.e., hall duties, lunchroom duties, restroom privileges of pupils, location of restrooms and teachers' lounge, etc.);
- Information about procedures in case of injury to a pupil.
- Notice of any extra activities for the day.

The Regular Teacher will:

- Leave a schedule of the day's program in an easily accessible location in the classroom.
- Make certain to leave the necessary supplies to carry out the day's activities
- Have an up-to-date seating chart
- Have an up-to-date class list
- Leave detailed lesson plans which substitutes can follow without the need to consult with pupils ~ pages marked, etc.
- Prepare students for the fact that he/she may occasionally be absent and strongly communicate his/her expectations for student behavior.
- Leave notes concerning any supervision or extra duties assigned to that teacher
- Leave information about usual activities, homework assignments, and privileges of pupils in the room.

Responsibilities of the Substitute Teacher

The role of the substitute teacher has many facets. In attempting to fill this role, he/she should expect to:

- know his/her responsibilities and fulfill them to the best of his/her ability;
- become acquainted with specific building procedures and guidelines so he/she may be in harmonious accord with school operation;
- keep the superintendent's office fully informed regarding changes in status; (examples: change of address, phone number, availability, etc.)
- report to the assignment on time or call ahead to notify the building principal of the delay;
- take the initiative to seek out the necessary directions and materials that will enable him/her to perform his/her duties well;
- complete, as many as is feasible, the regular teacher's extra duties and assignments, unless directed otherwise;
- regard himself/herself as a professional in every aspect. Inasmuch as the Substitute Teacher is a strong line of defense in the school and community, he/she is expected to demonstrate a sense of professional responsibility. He/she should expect to act, as well as be treated, like a professional staff member.

Professionalism of the Substitute Teacher

The role of the substitute teacher is truly professional. Resolve never to compare one school with another, one principal with another, one teacher with another, one set of students with another. Naturally, he/she will find considerable variety in the way things are done between schools and among teachers.

The substitute teacher will find it necessary to exercise flexibility. Substitute teachers should display good professional behavior at all times and should not be openly critical of the school, principal, any teacher or school staff member. If a substitute teacher has concerns about the school, he/she should put them in writing and submit them to the principal.

Students will accept the substitute teacher readily if he/she appears confident, prepared, and ready to work. The substitute teacher should remain at school until the regular teacher's day is over. Substitutes are expected to attend all assemblies, special programs, etc. As a professional, the substitute teacher has an opportunity to be a part of facilitating the success of each student with whom he/she comes in contact. This important task of providing meaningful work for students will result in higher levels of achievement.

Guidelines of the Substitute Teacher

- Substitutes for each school will receive keys to their classroom at the building's office.
- Upon arrival, report immediately to the school office to receive instructions for the day from the school secretary.
- Assure yourself time to look over the plans for the day and to read carefully any special instructions concerning a specific routine for the particular class.
- Greet your class with a smile and an air of friendly assurance and firmness.
- Introduce yourself and write your name on the board.
- Remember that students modify their behavior more readily under praise than criticism.
- Leave the room, teacher's desk, board, and supplies in good order when feasible and as time permits.
- Correct all papers of assigned work when instructed.
- Check with the office for any special events of the day.
- Report to the principal/secretary before leaving each day to sign out and complete any reports.
- Send students from class with an appropriate hall pass when applicable.
- Ask for assistance from other staff members or the principal whenever needed. They are there to support you.

Ethics

Substitute teachers are expected to maintain the same ethical standards as regular teachers, i.e., confidential information about students or staff, stories, or gossip should not be shared with anyone under any circumstances. Failure to comply with this expectation in a school environment could not only result in removal from the substitute list, but could also be a violation of laws regarding confidentiality. Every

effort should be made to carry on the program of the regular teacher and to fit in with the existing schedule. Such cooperation eliminates a disruption of the school and the pupils' learning processes. Day to day substituting precludes the opportunity to preplan subject lessons in depth. Substitutes should strictly avoid critical remarks, personal opinions and controversial issues and subjects whenever talking to students. Substitutes should always dress in good taste, be neat, practice good hygiene, and always try to set a good example for students.

Meeting the Class(es)

Upon arriving in the classroom and before students arrive; the substitute should go over the day's schedule and any other material provided by the regular teacher and/or the school. **Substitute teachers are expected to closely follow and adhere to the regular teacher's lesson plans unless instructed otherwise by the school principal.** If the lesson plans include activities which may present a safety problem or suggest activities which the substitute feels unable to properly supervise, the substitute should defer those activities until the building principal can be consulted. When the class arrives, the substitute should introduce himself/herself and write his/her name on the board. Follow the regular teacher's schedule as closely as possible. Pupils are easily distressed with changes.

Safety Procedures

Substitute teachers should make themselves familiar with the procedures for fire drills, weather drills, lock-downs, etc. This information will be provided to the substitute along with the information he/she receives when checking into the main office at the start of the day.

Classroom Activities

Supplies should be used with discretion. On a long term teaching assignment, the substitute should plan to consult with the regular teacher, if possible, and make all reports which are required (attendance, lunch, etc.). All money collected for any purpose should be turned over to the school office at the end of the day.

Avoiding Behavior & Discipline Challenges

Discipline is based on "mutual understanding" between the teacher and the pupil. The teacher understands the pupil's problems and the pupil understands what the teacher expects of him/her and to what lengths he/she will go to see that the pupil responds properly. If the teacher is firm in his/her discipline, the pupils will act accordingly. If pupils are kept busy with some worthwhile materials, discipline problems will not usually develop. The substitute should be pleasant yet firm. If the substitute knows what he/she is teaching and presents it in an interesting manner, he/she will be able to keep the pupils' attention. The substitute should maintain the respect of the pupils. He/she can do this by being prompt, being neat, being patient, being honest, having a sense of humor, being enthusiastic, and having a definite objective.

When Discipline Challenges Occur

If a discipline problem occurs, and the substitute finds he/she is unable to resolve it, he/she should

- Call the office immediately.
- Follow the instructions of the principal or assistant principal.
- If possible, seek assistance from a regular teacher in a nearby classroom.
- **Substitutes must never use physical discipline/corporal punishment of any sort.**

Procedures for Student Accidents

In case of an accident, call the main office immediately. The school nurse will be contacted, and she will apply first aid. When the nurse is away, the principal or some other person designated by the principal will administer first aid. In case of real emergency, the office will contact the parents or guardian of the child. Use the Pupil Accident Report Form for all injury cases. This form is to be sent to and secured from the principal's office. When necessary, parents will come to the school and take the pupil home.

Leaving Information for the Regular Teacher

Always leave no less than a brief note for the regular teacher explaining what was accomplished. Any comments are welcome, especially regarding any problems with student behavior or student assignments.

End of the Day

At the end of the school day and before departing school property, report to the office. Report any problems that may have occurred to the principal. Confirm your return the next day if applicable.

Recommendations by the Principal

If the substitute performs especially well at some grade level or subject area, this is noted by the principal. Other helpful comments may be made by the building administration which are taken into consideration when substitutes are placed in an assignment. When appropriate, this information is passed on directly to the substitute. Principals' requests for certain substitutes are, of course, one of the best evaluations we can have.

Pre-Assignment Observations

Observation--One of the most practical ways for a substitute to learn more about the job is to observe a regular teacher. This is especially helpful to those who have not taught for many years and to those who have never taken education courses and are unprepared for a teaching situation. Pre-assignment observations are strictly voluntary, must first be approved by the classroom teacher, and must be approved and arranged in advance with the principal.

Prohibited Activities

- Southwestern Consolidated Schools are a tobacco free campus.
- The possession, use or distribution of illegal drugs, alcohol or tobacco on school property is strictly prohibited.
- As a temporary member of our staff, you are expected to keep ALL information about students confidential.
- We expect staff members (including subs) to refrain from communicating with students in a manner that may be deemed inappropriate, this include via text messaging or through social media outlets.