

Substitute Teacher Handbook

2011-2012



Human Resources Services and Support

INTRODUCTION	4
Welcome	4
Orientation	4
Web-based Support and Information	4
Professional Opportunities	4
Professional Development	4
Types of Substitutes	4
Substitute Teacher Incentive Program (STIP)	5
SUBSTITUTE SYSTEM (SmartFindExpress)	5
Overview	5
Registration	5
Logging onto the Substitute System (SmartFindExpress)	5
Requesting and Pre-assigning Substitutes	5
Job Numbers/Calendar of Jobs	6
Profile Settings	6
Call Out Times	6
Requesting Not To Be Called	6
Reviewing and Canceling Jobs	7
Searching for Jobs	7
Long-Term Assignment	7
Setting Dates of Unavailability/Do Not Disturb	7
Lost/Forgotten PIN numbers	7
RESPONSIBILITIES OF SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS	8
Ethical Behavior	8
Hours	8
Minimum Days	8
Punctuality	8
Reporting for Duty	8
Supplies, Materials and Equipment	8
Leaving the Campus	8
Other Duties as Assigned	9
At the End of the Day	9
Classroom Duties and Instructional Responsibilities	9
Lesson Plans	9
Student Attendance	9
Written Work/Grading Papers	9

Classroom Management	10
Discipline	10
Referral Process	10
Office Communications	10
Unattended Classroom	10
Firm, Fair and Consistent	10
Additional Resources	10
Active Involvement	10
Seek Help!	10
PAYROLL AND EMPLOYMENT ISSUES	11
Terms of Employment	11
Changes in the Personal Profile Information	11
Rates of Pay	11
Payroll Process / Timesheets	11
Pay Resolution Process	11
Ability to Purchase Health Benefits	11
Closing Comments	12
2010-2011 School Calendar	13
Viewing and Accepting a Substitute Assignment Online	14-15
My Favorite Trick: The Substitute Teacher Bag	16
Classroom Management Tips - Interacting with Middle School Students	17
Substitute Site Experience Survey	18

INTRODUCTION

Welcome

The staff of Human Resources Services and Support joins Superintendent Tony Smith, in welcoming you to the noble and challenging teaching profession. Nationwide, statistics show that students will be taught by a substitute teacher for the equivalent of one entire academic year, between kindergarten and twelfth grade. This staggering fact makes all the more important the contributions you will make as a substitute teacher toward sustaining the education of the District's students. In our District, we like to think of our substitute teachers as "Guest Teachers," and treat them with the respect and support guests deserve.

Orientation

Before beginning their substitute duties, all substitute teachers new to the District are encouraged to attend a New Substitute Site Tour / Orientation Day. The full day session includes visits to 3-5 District schools, an overview of the Substitute System (SmartFindExpress), one hour of classroom management training and answers to the most frequently asked questions about substitute teaching. You can sign up for the next New Substitute Site Tour / Orientation Day during your pre-employment session or by contacting the Substitute Office.

Web-based Support and Information

The District has a web site dedicated to substitute teachers that includes frequently asked questions, resources on the internet, the District map, this Handbook and other resources intended to enable substitutes to be more successful in their jobs. Substitutes are strongly urged to visit the site often at www.ousd.k12.ca.us.

Professional Opportunities

Professional Development

The District offers several workshops and other professional development opportunities throughout the year for substitute teachers. Please see the current Substitute Office calendar for upcoming workshops and trainings.

Topics include:

- Classroom management
- Open Court
- Serving in a special education classroom
- Tips for teaching high school math
- Working with English Language Learners

Types of Substitutes

The District has several types of substitutes, each with different requirements. If you know people who may be interested in working for the District please encourage them to login to www.edjoin.org to apply for a substitute position.

The District is actively recruiting for the following positions:

- Substitute Teacher K-12
- Substitute Intervention Specialist
- Clerical Substitute
- Substitute Instructional Aide
- Substitute Custodian
- Substitute Food Service Worker

Substitute Teacher Incentive Program (STIP)

STIP substitute teachers work full-time at specific school sites. STIP substitutes are hired by the school sites and fill in for the first absent teacher at their school site each day. When no teacher is absent, the principal assigns STIP substitutes additional instructional duties, including providing one-on-one and small-group instruction, releasing teachers for peer observation and assisting in classrooms.

In exchange for a full-time commitment STIP substitutes receive:

- \$138 per day
- Kaiser Health Benefits for employee only
- 5 paid sick days per year, accumulate one sick day for every two months of work.

Interested in serving as a STIP Substitute? Apply on www.edjoin.org

SUBSTITUTE SYSTEM (SmartFindExpress)

Overview

The District uses an electronic system for reporting absences and arranging for substitutes to fill the requests created by the absences. It is called SmartFindExpress and can be accessed either over the telephone or on the internet. All substitutes must use the SmartFindExpress system.

Registration

After attending the New Substitute Site Tour and Orientation, all substitutes must phone the Substitute System (SmartFindExpress) at **(510) 379-9303**, and follow the voice prompts to get their Personal Identification Number (PIN.) **Write down your number** in a safe and secure place, easily accessible when calling or logging into the Substitute System (SFE). You will need the PIN number when using the Substitute System (SFE) online as well.

If you choose not to participate in the New Substitute Site Tour and Orientation day you must contact the Substitute Office approximately one week after completing your pre-employment requirements to obtain your employee ID number to register with the Substitute System (SFE).

Logging onto the Substitute System (SmartFindExpress)

You may use any computer with internet connectivity to check for jobs or review your jobs. However, the computer must use one of the following browsers for accessing the Internet: *Microsoft Internet Explorer* version 5.0 or later, or *Netscape Communicator* version 6.0 or later. To log on to the Substitute System (SFE), you will need two numbers – your PIN number, obtained from registering with the Substitute System (SFE), and your Employee ID number.

Find the link to the Substitute System (SFE) at <https://Oakland.eschoolsolutions.com>

Requesting and Pre-assigning Substitutes

When employees create their absences in the Substitute System (SFE), they have several options regarding the use of a substitute: 1) no substitute may be required for the absence; 2) a specific substitute may be requested through the system; and 3) a substitute may be pre-assigned to assume the duties of the absent employee. If a substitute is requested, the Substitute System (SFE) will search to see if the requested substitute is available and call the substitute. To pre-assign a substitute to an absence, the employee must have contacted the substitute directly – in person, by phone, or via email—and received assurance from the substitute of eligibility and availability for the job. The employee then confirms the requested substitute in Substitute System (SFE).

In either case—whether requesting or pre-assigning a substitute— the employee must use the substitute's **EMPLOYEE ID—not PIN**—when entering the information into the Substitute System (SFE).

Job Numbers/Calendar of Jobs

When an employee successfully creates an absence, a **job number** is assigned to that absence. Substitutes should always keep a record of the job numbers for the employee absences that they fill. An ideal place to keep these records is on a calendar onto which the substitute can enter the dates, locations, employee names, and specifics about the assignments, including the job numbers. It is strongly recommended that substitutes carry a calendar with them so that if teachers or administrators want to pre-assign a job with them, they will have their calendar handy to check for availability.

Profile Settings

Substitute teachers can view profile settings and change select settings using the Substitute System (SFE) website.

- **Schedule:** The schedule indicates which days you are available to work. The system will not call you or offer you jobs when you search for available jobs for days that you indicate you are not available. You will not be offered long-term assignments if you are unavailable for one or more day during the week. You can alter your schedule yourself.
 - **Do Not Call:** You can create a schedule of the times you do not want to be called. See directions under “Requesting not to be called.”
- **Unavailable Dates:** Going on vacation? You can set specific unavailable dates and the system will not offer you jobs for those days. You can select whether or not you would like the system to call you during the unavailable period to offer jobs for when you return.
- **Callback Number:** This is the phone number that the system calls and the number that the Substitute Office uses if they need to reach you. You can change this number at any time (for example, if you are house-sitting you can change the number to your friend’s house and then change it back when you are done house-sitting). It is required that you have a valid callback number.
- **Location and Classifications:** Locations indicate which sites you are willing to work at. Classifications are the types of assignments you are willing to accept, such as grade level and subject. The system will not offer you assignments that do not match your location and classification profile settings. If you call or login to the system to search for jobs you will not see jobs that do not match your location classification settings. Only the Substitute Office can alter these profile settings.

Call Out Times

The Substitute System (SFE) will begin calling substitutes to fill jobs at 5:00 p.m. and continue calling until 10:00 p.m. for jobs that need to be filled for the next day or beyond. The Substitute System (SFE) will also call the substitute beginning at 5:30 a.m. to fill jobs for that day. It will continue to call for current day jobs even after the start of the work day. Substitutes are encouraged to accept these belated job offers even if it means that the substitute will not be able to begin the assignment until after it has begun. Simply call the school and inform them of your approximate time of arrival.

Requesting Not To Be Called

If you prefer not to receive automated calls from the system, you can adjust the do not call settings in your Substitute System (SmartFindExpress) profile. You can change this profile setting yourself, you do not need to contact the Substitute Office.

To change your profile:

Step	Notes
1 Login to the Substitute System (SFE)	➤ Find the link at https://Oakland.eschoolsolutions.com
2 Click “Profile”	➤ Select from menu near left upper corner of screen

- 3 Click "Schedule"
 - 4 Click "New"
 - 5 Select desired days
 - 6 Select all day box next to "The system will NOT call"
 - 7 Click "Save"
- - Select from menu in the blue bar near the top of the screen
 - The button is located near top of screen
 - Defaults to every calling day. If you do not want the system to call you leave all days checked.

Reviewing and Canceling Jobs

Substitutes may *review* jobs that they have already accepted by either calling the Substitute System (SFE) or logging in through the website. If they are ever in doubt about a date, location or person for whom they are substituting, they should review the job. Substitutes are strongly discouraged from canceling a job. If there is an emergency situation and you need to cancel please contact the school site and the Substitute Office as soon as possible.

Searching for Jobs

In addition to reviewing jobs already accepted, substitutes may also search for available jobs using the Substitute System (SFE). The system will play/display jobs for which the substitute is eligible so that the substitute can elect to accept or decline the job.

Long-Term Assignment

Substitute Office frequently receives requests for long-term substitutes. If you are interested in long-term assignments please indicate it on your Profile Form and inform Substitute Office staff. Be sure to mention any preferences you have about assignments, including grade level and subject.

Setting Dates of Unavailability/Do Not Disturb

Substitutes **must** enter date ranges during which they are unavailable to work so that the system does not continuously call them for jobs for which they cannot work. They may also activate a *Do Not Disturb* feature so that they will not be called again during a specific call-out period.

Lost/Forgotten PIN numbers

Please contact the Technology Services Help Desk for assistance with logging into Substitute System (SFE), including lost/forgotten PIN numbers. The Help Desk is available 7:30am-4pm Monday-Friday and can be reached at **879-8178**.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

Ethical Behavior

Substitute teachers have a responsibility to conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times when carrying out their duties.

Hours

Substitute teachers are expected to be on duty the same length of time as the regular classroom teacher. Schedules vary by school site. It is critical to pay attention to the job information in Substitute System (SFE).

Working hours for substitutes working in elementary schools shall be a continuous block of six hours and 45 minutes, including 30-minute duty-free lunch, and for secondary schools, a continuous block of seven hours, including 30-minute duty-free lunch. The working hours shall not commence before 8:00 a.m. nor conclude later than 3:45 p.m. (OEA Contract 10.2.1)

Substitutes working four (4) hours or more will be paid at the daily rate. Substitutes working less than 4 hours will be paid at the hourly rate.

A daily substitute is entitled to any regular break time, or conference time including a duty-free lunch that the regular teacher's schedule calls for. At the elementary level, scheduled prep time shall be used for correction of student work when specific instructions and answer keys are left by the teacher.

Minimum Days

The minimum day is more than 4 hours, so substitute teachers are paid at the daily rate and must be available to work 6 hours if requested by the principal. Principals may assign additional duties for the substitute to complete after students are dismissed.

Punctuality

Substitutes should report to duty **at least fifteen (15) minutes before the start of school**. Many experienced substitutes advise arriving at school 30 minutes before the start of school to allow time to find the office, sign in, find the classroom, locate the lesson plans, prepare the room and instructional materials, and otherwise prepare for a successful day of substitute teaching. The exact beginning and ending times for substitute teachers may vary from school to school, so be certain to listen carefully to the start times as indicated by the sub-finder system. **When in doubt, call the school the day before to verify the start time and to get directions to the school if needed.**

Reporting for Duty

Substitutes should report to the school office before assuming their duties in the classroom. While in the office, they should ask for a **substitute's folder or binder**. Many schools have prepared folders or binders containing information such as the staff roster, school map, evacuation procedures, emergency plans, bell schedules, and list of key personnel. They should also ask if there are any special instructions or other information needed to carry out the day's activities. Finally, they should where the absent teacher's **lesson plans** are.

Supplies, Materials and Equipment

Teachers' materials and supplies should not be used unless the lesson plans authorize their use. Any materials and equipment borrowed should be returned to the proper person before a substitute leaves campus. At the end of the day, the teachers' room(s) and equipment should be left as found. The classroom teacher's desk, files, and other storage areas should be regarded with respect.

Leaving the Campus

The care and supervision of the students assigned to the substitute should be of paramount importance. At no time during the day should the substitute leave campus unless authorized to do so. Substitute teachers should not leave the campus at the end of the school day unless they have cleared their departure with administrative or office staff.

Other Duties as Assigned

Occasionally, a substitute teacher may be asked to perform duties in addition to those of a substitute teacher. Also, a substitute may be asked to teach in a classroom other than the one he/she had agreed to teach when he/she accepted the assignment through the Substitute System (SFE). In both cases, the substitute is expected to demonstrate **flexibility** and **cooperation** with the school administration to meet the instructional and safety needs of the students. If a principal requests that you perform clerical or administrative duties, please contact the Substitute Office.

At the End of the Day

When the children have been dismissed for the day, the substitute still has several more duties to perform. The room should be checked to ensure that it is restored to the way the substitute found it. Books, supplies, and instructional materials should be returned, desks placed in their original positions, etc. Successful substitutes will take a few minutes to leave detailed notes for the teacher. The teacher appreciates knowing how much of the lesson plans was accomplished and any other important information about the substitute's instructional efforts. The teacher would also want to be informed of any behavior problems or unusual events that may have occurred during his or her absence. Finally, the substitute should always check out through the office when leaving for the day. This provides the office staff with an opportunity to deliver any messages to the substitute and sign the timesheet.

Classroom Duties and Instructional Responsibilities

Substitute teachers are expected to perform all the duties of the classroom teacher unless the administrator releases the substitute from a particular responsibility. Check the teacher's master planning book to see if there are any students with special needs or medical conditions. If the planning book is unavailable, check with the office staff. Substitute teachers should maintain the regular routine of the class. They should follow the daily class schedule and lesson plans provided by the classroom teacher.

Lesson Plans

When teachers are absent from school, they will leave **lesson plans** for the substitute teacher to follow in order to maintain continuity of instruction (OEA Contract 10.2.11). Substitutes are to implement the lesson plans exactly as the teacher indicates. The substitute is expected to adhere to the scope and sequence of instruction documented in the teacher's lesson plans. Any deviation from the lesson plans must be substantiated with sound reasoning and be based on established curriculum and instruction.

Most of the time, teachers anticipate their absences when due to scheduled appointments or staff development requirements. However, if a teacher is absent due to an emergency or illness, the substitute may not have lesson plans provided by the teacher. When this occurs, help is available from other teachers and support staff in the school. Teachers from the same grade level or field of study should be able to help with missing lesson plans.

Student Attendance

One of the many regular duties of the full time teacher is taking student attendance. State law and District policy require that student absences be excused only with a written note from the parents or legal guardians. Substitutes are expected to assist in compliance with this requirement. Attendance must be taken in every class and this information must be provided to the school office following the procedures established at the school. Attendance taking procedures are included in the substitute's folder or are available from the office or other teachers.

Written Work/Grading Papers

The substitute teacher should not assign written work and leave it to be graded, except at the request of the classroom teacher. Nor should the classroom teacher expect the substitute to grade papers not assigned in the lesson plans. Extreme caution should be used when substitute teachers are asked to grade papers, as this may impact students' permanent grades.

Classroom Management

Substitute teachers are expected to model and reinforce the expectations of the classroom 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. Workshops in effective classroom management are offered throughout the year.

Discipline

When students cause behavior problems that are disruptive to the learning environment, the substitute teacher 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 to resume effective teaching. Substitutes 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 may constitute verbal abuse and is prohibited. **Sarcasm is ineffective in the classroom and should not be used with students.** Only when all reasonable efforts to maintain order have failed should the substitute refer students to school administrators by completing a discipline slip or note explaining the circumstances.

Referral Process

Each school site has its own discipline policy and referral process. Please familiarize yourself with the policies of the schools where you work.

Office Communications

In every classroom there is a telephone or intercom that can be used if you need to contact the office for immediate assistance. If the telephone or intercom system is inoperative, you can send a student to the office with a message. Never leave students unattended.

Unattended Classroom

The substitute should never leave the students unattended. Even if a student runs out of the room, the teacher should not chase the student. Contact the office immediately for assistance and handling of the situation. If the substitute needs to leave the classroom for personal reasons, she/he must contact the office immediately and seek assistance from a neighboring teacher, school security officer or administrator.

Firm, Fair and Consistent

Most literature on substitute teaching indicates that in order to be successful in the treatment of students, the substitute needs to treat them in a **firm, fair, and consistent** manner. Fairness and consistency are key issues with students, especially in the middle school. The substitute must not “play favorites” when dealing with student behavior or performance.

Additional Resources

Refer to the Internet Resources page of the Substitute Teacher web site (www.ousd.k12.ca.us).

Active Involvement

The successful substitute teacher is actively involved with instruction. This includes circulating regularly in the classroom, checking student work and assisting with assignments. The expression, “Be on your feet – not on your seat,” is sage advice to the substitute. Many discipline problems can be avoided by the substitute’s use of proximity to the students.

Seek Help!

At all times, and in all matters related to substitute teaching, the substitutes should never hesitate to seek help when needed. Everyone in the District wants the substitute teacher to be successful—the teachers, administrators, students, and parents. Help is only a few steps or a call away at any time. In addition to the teacher next door or across the hallway, key personnel are always available to assist the substitute with instructional questions or classroom management concerns. These personnel include the administrators, subject area experts, grade level chairpersons, team leaders, and department heads.

PAYROLL AND EMPLOYMENT ISSUES

Terms of Employment

Substitute personnel are employed on an on-call, day-to-day basis. The Board may dismiss a substitute employee at any time at its discretion. (AR 4121: Temporary/ Substitute Personnel and Education Code 44953).

Changes in the Personal Profile Information

Throughout the year, the substitute has the responsibility of keeping current the information that is stored in the Substitute Office. This includes the current address – which is where your paychecks are sent - and your preferences about which types of jobs you would like available to you. If you need to update your contact information please complete a Contact Update Form available from the Substitute Office. **Please keep all information current.**

Rates of Pay

The substitute rate of pay is determined by the total number of days of service during the current academic year. To be eligible for higher rates of pay the substitute must complete a minimum of one half day (4 hours) of District sponsored training or professional development.

- For days 1-30: \$118
- For days 31-60: \$138
- For days 60+: \$152

Substitutes receive the long-term rate of \$138 after the 15th consecutive day assigned to the same classroom for the duration of that assignment.

Payroll Process / Timesheets

The Substitute Work Record (also called the substitute timesheet) must be submitted to the Substitute Office at the end of each work period. The substitute timesheet is a record of the days worked by the substitute during the work period. It is the responsibility of the substitute to ensure that the information on the timesheet is accurate and complete.

There are two work periods in each month. Timesheets must be submitted to the Substitute Office within one business day of the end of the work period.

- 1st – 15th: Timesheet submitted on the 15th or the first working day after the 15th.
- 16th – 31st: Timesheet submitted on the last work day of the month.

After a timesheet is submitted the Substitute Office checks the accuracy of the timesheet, makes a copy to keep on file and forwards the timesheet to Payroll. Payroll then enters the information from the timesheet into the payroll system and generates a check. Checks are mailed to the home address on file two weeks after the timesheet is submitted. This means that substitutes receive payment for timesheets submitted on the 1st of the month at the end of the next pay period, the 15th.

Pay Resolution Process

The Substitute Office strives to ensure that every substitute is paid accurately each pay period. However, occasionally errors occur resulting in inaccurate pay. If you believe there has been an error in your pay please complete the Pay Resolution Form, available at both the Substitute Office and Payroll. This form outlines all of the information we will need to review and if necessary resolve the problem. To ensure your issue is addressed as quickly as possible we recommend that you submit the Pay Resolution Form directly to the Substitute Office.

Ability to Purchase Health Benefits

Substitute teachers may purchase benefits from the Employer's Kaiser Health Plan at their own expense. A substitute teacher must work at least 45 days per year to purchase benefits at the beginning of the month following their forty-fifth (45th) day of service. (OEA Contract 21.18.3)

Closing Comments

Thank you for choosing one of the most challenging jobs in education—that of the **substitute teacher**. Most teachers will tell you that while they could not do their jobs without you, they wouldn't trade with you for a day! In many ways the job of the substitute is much more difficult than that of the classroom teacher. However, your job can be very rewarding as well. You will have the opportunity to meet and work with thousands of children from various campuses. Yours will be a rich and rewarding experience because of its diversity. Remember that everyone wants you to succeed in your endeavors as a substitute teacher. We hope that this Handbook **and the Substitute Teacher web site** will assist you in your successes as well. Welcome to the Oakland Unified School District!



2011 – 2012 School Calendar

JULY 2011						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
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31						

AUGUST 2011						
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28	29	30	31			

SEPTEMBER 2011						
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- In celebration of Independence Day (Schools/offices closed) July 4
- ◆ District Day (No school for students) Aug. 24
- ◆ Professional Development Day (No school for students) Aug. 25
- ◆ Teacher Planning Day (No school for students) Aug. 26
- ★ First Day of School for Students Aug. 29
- Labor Day (Schools/offices closed) Sept. 5

OCTOBER 2011						
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30	31					

NOVEMBER 2011						
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DECEMBER 2011						
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25	26	27	28	29	30	31

- ◆ Professional Development Day (No school for students) Oct. 7
- Veterans' Day (Schools/offices closed) Nov. 11
- ◆ Thanksgiving Recess (Schools closed) Nov. 21–23
- Thanksgiving Day Holidays (Schools/offices closed) Nov. 24–25
- ◆ Winter Recess (Schools closed) Dec. 19–Jan. 2
- Offices closed Dec. 23, 26, 30, Jan. 2
Child Development Centers and offices closed Dec. 23–Jan. 2

JANUARY 2012						
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29	30	31				

FEBRUARY 2012						
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26	27	28	29			

MARCH 2012						
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25	26	27	28	29	30	31

- New Year's Day Holiday (Schools/offices closed) Jan. 2
- Martin L. King, Jr. Day (Schools/offices closed) Jan. 16
- ◆ Professional Development Day (No school for students) Jan. 27
- Presidents' Day Holiday (Schools/offices closed) Feb. 20
- César Chávez Day (Schools/offices closed) Mar. 30

APRIL 2012						
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29	30					

MAY 2012						
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JUNE 2012						
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24	25	26	27	28	29	30

- ◆ Spring Recess (Schools closed) Apr. 9–13
- In Lieu of Lincoln's Day Holiday (Schools/offices closed) May 25
- Memorial Day Holiday (Schools/offices closed) May 28
- ★ Last Day of School for Students June 15
- ◆ Teacher Planning Day June 18

Report Card Periods (Ending Dates)
Individual student progress reports are sent to parents within one week of the following dates:

Elementary Schools

- First December 2
- Second March 9
- Third June 14

Secondary Schools, Fall Semester

- First October 6
- Second November 18
- Third January 26

Secondary Schools, Spring Semester

- First March 9
- Second April 27
- Third June 14

Key Dates:

- End of First Semester: January 26, 2012
- Beginning of Second Semester: January 30, 2012
- Day of the Teacher: May 4, 2012
- Classified Employees' Week: May 14–18, 2012

Note: Child Development Centers are open 12 months a year. The testing calendar is available in September.

Viewing and Accepting a Substitute Assignment Online

To view a substitute assignment

Step	Action	Notes
1	Access the Substitute System (SmartFindExpress)	<p>Substitute System (SFE) can be accessed through the OUSD public website, www.ousd.k12.ca.us, by clicking on the "Substitute Information" link on the right-hand side of the page</p> <p>You can also access the Substitute System (SFE) directly by typing http://Oakland.eschoolsolutions.com into your browser.</p>
2	Log in to the Substitute System (SmartFindExpress)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your Access ID is your employee ID number with no leading zeros (i.e. 1234). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find your employee ID number on your timesheet or on the statement that is issued with your paycheck. The password is your Substitute System (SFE) PIN. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the same PIN number you use for the phone-based SFE system. New users set up a profile by calling the Substitute System (SFE), (510) 379-9303
3	Search for Available Jobs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select the range of dates you want to view assignments for and click SEARCH. The list of available assignments will change as teachers report new absences and other substitutes accept assignments. To refresh the list of available assignments, click SEARCH.
4	View the list of available assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You will see a list of available assignments that match your profile. Scroll down to see the list of available assignments using the arrows on the right side of the screen.
5	Find out more about an assignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Click DETAILS.

To accept a substitute assignment

Step	Action	Notes
1	Click ACCEPT JOB	
2	Click SUBMIT	A pop-up box tells you that the job was successfully assigned and lists the details of the assignment.
3	Note the job number	You will need it for your timesheet.

To review assignments

You can review both past and future assignments.

Step	Action
1	Log on to the Substitute System (SFE)
2	Click REVIEW ASSIGNMENTS
3	Enter the range of dates you want to review
4	Click SUBMIT

My Favorite Trick: The Substitute Teacher Bag

Advice from a retired educator

At root most educators are bag people. Go to any gathering of educators and you will see it. Almost everyone is lugging around a bag. You will find the bag stuffed with things like student work, an interesting article we hope to find time to read, a class set of worksheets just in case and random art supplies. I invite you to join the club and create your own educator bag of tricks. Below is a list of things you might want to have in your bag:

Item	Why you might want it
Overhead markers	Nothing is worse than arriving at a classroom and not being able to find the markers. Hedge your bets and show up prepared. It will save you a lot of stressful scrambling.
Whiteboard markers	See above
Colored markers	Having a set of colored markers can come in handy if you need to improvise because there was no lesson plan or you finished early.
Golf pencils	Students love to use the excuse of no pencil to get out of doing their work. Regular pencils often disappear at the end of the day, but golf pencils usually end up back in your box.
Nice pencils	New pencils can be used as rewards for students doing a good job.
Glue	Just in case. You never know when this one will come in handy.
Paperclips	These can come especially in handy to clip together class sets of worksheets.
Scratch paper	Students frequently ask for a piece of paper and if you are unfamiliar with the classroom you might not know where to look for one. Paper can also come in handy if you need to improvise activities.
Class set of worksheets (writing prompts, math problems, etc)	It is handy to bring a back-up activity in case you finish a lesson early or have no lesson plans. Avoid potential problems with the copier by bringing a class set of worksheets in plastic sheet protectors and having students put answers/responses on blank paper. That way you can collect the worksheets at the end of the period and be prepared for your next assignment. There are many activity sheets for students at different grade levels available on the intranet – just google it.

Classroom Management Tips – Interacting with Middle School Students

Advice from a retired middle school principal and veteran school psychologist

1. **Your mantra: Don't take the bait!** Students at this age are savvy at trying to take the class off task. Acknowledge the comment or behavior and redirect the class back to the task at hand. Do your best not to react emotionally to distractions.
2. **Dress the part.** As a substitute teacher you will be on stage all day long, especially at the secondary level. Be mindful of what you wear and the signal that it sends to students. I recommend "business casual." There is no need to wear a suit, but if you show up dressed in sweats students may think that you are not serious about your work.
3. **Everyone (even adolescents) loves predictability.** At the beginning of the period tell students what to expect from the day. Laying out a road map will help them feel more comfortable about where you are going and will give some structure to the day. Tell them how you would like them to behave and what you would like to accomplish together.
4. **De-personalize.** The strength of every 13 year-old is his/her ability to bring you right back to feeling like a 13 year-old yourself. If someone makes a comment about your clothes or appearance do your best not to let it rattle your confidence. Acknowledge the comment and redirect the student back to the task at hand.
5. **Don't embarrass them.** Students at this age have a constant "imaginary audience" and always feel like they are on stage and everyone is looking at them. If they are embarrassed they think everyone noticed and feel compelled to respond. It is tempting to shame students into completing their work. Pride is very important during adolescence and the minute you embarrass a student you have escalated the situation and lost that student for the day.
6. **Hands off.** At this age the slightest touch can dramatically escalate a situation. Keep your hands off and if you are faced with a situation you can't handle seek help from the school office staff or the neighboring teacher. Never leave the students unattended. Send a student for help.
7. **Orderly environment.** Students respond to the physical environment around them. If you walk into a new classroom and notice the space is particularly disorderly, it is absolutely worth taking the time to do a little straightening. It will go a long way. Be careful not to disturb the teacher's materials, stick to things like straightening the rows of desks.
8. **Focus on the positive.** Even if you are shaking in your boots, put on a big smile and greet students with a positive tone. It will disarm most students and set the tone for a smooth day. Students of all ages feed on positive attention, but adolescents don't receive a lot of praise. In your introduction tell students that you love working with students their age or that you particularly like their school.

Substitute Site Experience Survey

Thank you for the important work that you do to help ensure instruction occurs every day in every classroom. We value your service!

Please provide feedback about your experience at school sites by taking a quick electronic survey! The basic survey takes approximately 3 minutes. If you are willing to provide more in-depth feedback please consider taking the narrative response survey.

- [Basic Substitute Experience Survey](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=o1CQNkCdhedU7hXWMnOx_2bA_3d_3d) This survey asks you to provide feedback on your experience during individual assignments. Please keep one job in mind as you answer this survey. We encourage you to login to take the survey often, providing feedback about as many assignments as possible.
http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=o1CQNkCdhedU7hXWMnOx_2bA_3d_3d
- [Narrative Response Substitute Experience Survey](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=yejElu_2b1ph5_2brEWjr53asQ_3d_3d) This survey asks you to provide narrative responses to a series of questions about a recent substitute experience. We value the input you share with us and will use this information to help us identify characteristics that encourage substitute teachers to work at specific sites.
http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=yejElu_2b1ph5_2brEWjr53asQ_3d_3d