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# SUBSTITUTE TEACHER HANDBOOK

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*Syracuse Arts Academy*



*Learning through the Arts*

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## Introduction

### Purpose and Overview of the Substitute Teacher Handbook

The purpose of this handbook is to assist in understanding your duties and responsibilities as a substitute teacher at Syracuse Arts Academy. If you need additional information or assistance, please contact the office staff (number on the front page). They will be happy to answer any questions you have regarding substitute teacher information.

#### This handbook is divided into four sections:

1. The introduction contains the purpose and overview of the Substitute Teacher Handbook and the role of the substitute teacher in the educational process.
2. Responsibilities of a Substitute Teacher contains a list of expectations, general guidelines, responsibilities, classroom management tips and tips on organization.
3. General Substitute Teacher Information contains requirements for substitute teaching, payroll information, terms of employment and frequently asked questions.
4. Safety in Schools contains information on the safety of students and personnel.

### Substitute Teacher Overview

Syracuse Arts Academy considers Substitute Teachers to be an integral part of the educational program. As such, Substitute Teachers are expected to maintain a professional attitude toward their work and always keep in mind the school's goals. We believe that effective Substitute Teachers make a positive impact on students.

Substitute Teachers are assigned on an as needed basis and are temporary employees. Substitute Teachers receive no benefits and are assigned due to teacher absences or position vacancies.

Substitute Teachers should be provided with lesson plans, schedules, and seating charts. You may also notes of specifics about the class and student behavior if needed, which should be kept

private and should not be shared with anyone. Additional information to assist the Substitute Teacher will be provided by school administrators or grade-level team leaders.

Substitute teaching assignments may change based on the needs of the school throughout the day. A Substitute Teacher may be asked to accept assignments outside of his/her background or educational training. They may also be asked to cover classes during a planning period. It is not expected that a Substitute Teacher be able to teach new or unfamiliar material, but rather make every attempt to follow the lesson plan and manage student behavior in the most positive way possible.

## Responsibilities of a Substitute Teacher

Substitute Teachers must sign in at the school office when they arrive for their assignment. The school secretary can answer questions regarding sign-in procedures.

### Substitute Teachers are expected to do the following:

- Follow the lesson plans left by the teacher and ensure students complete all assigned tasks
- Maintain a safe environment
- Keep students under direct supervision always
- Refrain from touching any student for any reason
- Use appropriate language always
- Use materials provided by the teacher or other school personnel
- Avoid engaging in or encouraging discussions of inappropriate or non-school related topics
- Familiarize yourself with the school emergency procedures
- Notify school administration of any unusual incidents which may have occurred during the school day
- Leave information concerning the day's activities for the teacher
- Check out with the office before leaving an assignment at the end of the day
- Refrain from the use of cell phones for making or receiving calls or texting while students are present (except in the case of an emergency)
- Follow school dress code

## Standards of Professional Conduct

Our school community encompasses a wide variety of races, ethnicities, cultures, and religions. Syracuse Arts Academy employees strive to treat each student and staff member with respect. School

personnel performs on two equal levels: as professionals dealing with clients and as adult role models shaping young lives.

## Professional Attire

The school's primary objective is to have employees project a professional image. Proper grooming and attire have a positive impact on the school's image. All clothing should be professional looking. Regardless of the item worn, it is essential to avoid wearing anything to school that is revealing, excessively worn, frayed or wrinkled.

Listed below is a general overview of acceptable school wear as well as a listing of some of the more common items that are not appropriate for the office/school. These items should help set the general parameters for proper school wear and allow you to make intelligent choices about items that are not specifically addressed.

### *Staff Dress and Grooming Guidelines*

- **Slacks and Pants**—Slacks and Pants in a variety of materials are acceptable provided they are clean and wrinkle-free. Inappropriate items include blue denim jeans, sweatpants, short shorts, Bermuda shorts, bib overalls, or spandex. If leggings or jeggings are worn, a knee-length top must be worn over leggings or jeggings.
- **Shirts and Tops**—Casual shirts/polo shirts both with collars, sweaters, and sweatshirts are acceptable. Inappropriate items include tank tops, sleeveless shirts, halter-tops, and t-shirts unless worn under another top.
- **Dresses and Skirts**—Dress and skirt length should be no shorter than two inches above the knee.
- **Footwear**—Flip-flops and slippers are not acceptable.
- **Jewelry**—Jewelry should be conservative and professional looking.

*NOTE: Exceptions to the Staff Dress Code must have the prior approval of the school administration.*

## Alcohol, Drugs, and Tobacco Use

The use of alcohol, drugs, or tobacco products on school property is strictly prohibited.

## Confidentiality

During your employment with Syracuse Arts Academy, there may be times when you have access to or become aware of information concerning students, families, and/or staff. As a Syracuse Arts Academy temporary employee, you are expected to understand the confidential nature of the information and treat it accordingly. This also includes the school work, grades, and classroom

behavior of a student. Please refrain from sharing any information about a student with others, apart from the classroom teacher and/or school administration.

## Electronic Media/Social Networking

You will be required to sign a Digital Device Acceptable Use Agreement so that you are able to use the in-class technology. The classroom teacher will determine whether you will need to use one or not, which will be indicated in the lesson plans.

Use of cell phones, personal laptops or other personal electronic media is prohibited during your assignment. Under no circumstances can Substitute Teachers take photographs or record images of students or staff or allow themselves to be photographed or recorded. Nothing regarding your employment as a Substitute Teacher should appear on social network pages such as (but not limited to) Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or YouTube. Do not share your personal information with students or receive email addresses or phone numbers from them. Use of social networks to interact with students is prohibited. Keep in mind your social network pages are public and accessible to parents, students, and other members of the community.

## Attendance

Punctual and regular attendance is an essential responsibility of each Substitute Teacher. Tardiness or failure to show up causes problems for students and administrators; it also disrupts the educational process. If you accept an assignment, it is expected that you show up on time. Consistent patterns of excessive cancellations, "no shows", or tardiness may result in removal from the approved Substitute Teacher list.

## Classroom Management Tips

The following tips, if practiced routinely, may help eliminate classroom problems before they begin. Take control early and let students know that rules will be enforced. Explain how you intend to manage the classroom through the instructional period. Help students understand your intentions with a lesson. Making lessons interesting will help you keep students interested. Students are familiar with discipline plans left by their teacher; please try to follow them.

### TIPS TO REMEMBER

- **Ignore behaviors at first.** Students may just be asking a neighbor a simple question. If problems persist, then start with a positive reminder. Making eye contact can sometimes be a reminder to students that you have an idea they are causing a problem.

- **Proximity is a good strategy.** Moving around the room will help keep all students involved in the lesson. Moving to students who are causing problems will sometimes get them to stop acting inappropriately.
- **Relocate students who are disruptive.** This should only be done if other requests to stop the undesired action have failed. Asking students to change seat locations may be disruptive and challenging. *Be sure to leave a note for the teacher if you changed a student's seat for the day.*
- **Private conferences are a good option for disruptive students.** Never degrade or intimidate students when disciplining. Always stick to the rules. If a private conference is needed, pull the student aside or kneel down next to them and whisper. Remember, being fair and consistent is an important feature of working with students.
- **Exercise self-control by always being in control.** As the adult in the classroom, the substitute teacher is expected to be an authority figure. Treat all students with respect. Avoid discussions that contain controversial topics, personal qualities, decisions, opinions or judgments.
- **Gifts or food treats are not to be given to students.** Syracuse Arts Academy is a food free school. If you feel students deserve a reward then leave a note for the teacher and he or she can decide on appropriate rewards.
- **Project a good attitude and a feeling of self-confidence.** If you have a cheerful, confident, enthusiastic feeling about substituting, you can provide a rewarding experience for yourself and for the students involved.
- **Be honest.** Don't be afraid to admit to a student that you do not know the answer to a question, but say that you will try to find an answer for the student.
- **Be positive.** Ensure that you start a class by being positive and convey that you will leave the students something of value. Positive interactions with students far outweigh negative interactions.
- **Build good relationships.** Building a good student/teacher relationship will increase your ability to manage the classroom.
- **Move around the room as you teach.** Avoid sitting in the teacher's chair or standing behind a podium.
- **Expect the unexpected.** Be ready to go to Plan B,...or C,...or D,...etc. Stay in control. Be flexible and demonstrate a sense of humor.
- **Lost students.** Please inform the school office immediately.

## Are You An Organized Substitute Teacher?

Keeping track of assignments requires good organizational skills; Keep a personal calendar at home and when on an assignment. An Administrator or teacher may want to book a certain date

during your assignment, and having a calendar of future commitments will make it easy to give an accurate answer.

Keeping a personal calendar is also critical for keeping track of the days worked and days paid. There can be a delay of days or weeks between the date of your assignment and receipt of payment. Taking the initiative to manage your assignments with a personal calendar will help make certain that you are paid correctly.

## Tips for Successful Substitute Teaching

- Arrive at school on time and sign in at the front office.
- Review the school's emergency procedures and become familiar with them beforehand.
- Take attendance and call the office to notify them of missing or tardy students.
- Take lunch count and call the lunch room to notify them with the numbers from your class.
- Follow the lesson plans and have students complete all tasks the teacher has assigned.
- Check with the teacher next to you if you have questions about the lesson plan. (*great strategy*)
- Leave a note for the teacher at the end of the day to inform them of the day's activities.
- Leave the classroom in good order.
- Check out at the office on your way out.
- No sub plans - call the office and talk with the grade level teachers.

# General Substitute Teacher Information

## Work Assignments and Reporting Times

Substitute Teachers are expected to report to the school by 8:00 am (or time assigned) and to remain until students are dismissed. Substitute Teachers are required to assume all the duties of the teacher they are replacing. This may include extra duties performed by the teacher or assigned by the administrator during the school day. Substitute Teachers are not expected to perform duties after student dismissal, such as carpool or teacher committee assignments.

## Cancellation of Assignments

When a Substitute Teacher accepts an assignment, they have made a commitment to the school. If the Substitute Teacher needs to cancel their assignment, please call the office staff at the school as soon as possible to give them enough time to find a replacement Substitute Teacher.

## Payroll

Substitute Teachers are paid on the same bi-weekly schedule as regular hourly school system employees. Substitute Teachers should log in and out of the Substitute Binder in the office. Pay will be received by either mailed check or direct deposit into the Substitute Teacher's bank account; whichever was indicated upon initial hire paperwork. It is a good idea to keep track of days and hours worked to ensure correct payment is received.

### Pay Rates and Assignment Definitions - Rates of Pay

#### Daily Rate of Pay\*

|                     |          |
|---------------------|----------|
| Non-Degree          | \$75.00  |
| Degree              | \$90.00  |
| Certified Teacher   | \$96.00  |
| Long-Term (20+days) | \$120.00 |

\* Pay is based on an 8-hour workday. Pay will adjust if fewer hours are worked.

## Safety in School

### Infection Control Guidelines

Syracuse Arts Academy recognizes its responsibility to provide educational programs and services for all children who attend the school and further recognizes its responsibility to provide a safe and healthy environment for students, employees, service providers, and volunteers. Because communicable diseases are one of the most common causes of student illness and absenteeism, preventing and reducing transmission of communicable diseases are recognized as one of our essential responsibilities.

#### Infection Control Guidelines for All School Employees

1. **Wash your hands.** Use soap and water and rub your hands for at least ten seconds. Wash your hands after exposure to blood or bodily fluids, after using the bathroom, before handling food, before touching your eyes, nose, mouth, and after you take off gloves.

2. **Try to avoid contact with blood.** If you have cuts on your skin, cover them with a bandage. If someone is bleeding, encourage the person to apply pressure to their own wound, or use a sterile compress. If you find blood on the floor, call the office to have a custodian come to clean it up.
3. **Wear gloves if in contact with blood or body fluids.** If you do come in contact with blood or body fluids, put on vinyl gloves before handling any fluids; however, try to avoid this as much as possible.

*NOTE: In the case of an incident with potential exposure to blood or body fluids, contact the office or custodians in the school building to ensure that the situation is managed appropriately.*

## Emergency Procedures

A critical ingredient in the safe school recipe is the classroom response to an incident at school. Weather events, fire, accidents, intruders and other threats to student safety are scenarios that are planned and trained for by students, teachers, staff, and administration.

Syracuse Arts Academy prepares for emergency situations throughout the school year. The Substitute Teacher should become familiar with all the emergency procedures practiced by the school and how to act appropriately in each situation. A flyer labeled, "IN AN EMERGENCY: When You Hear It, Do It" will be posted near the door with instructions. It is provided below.

### Fire Drills

**Fire drills** will commence once the fire alarm sounds. It is the Substitute Teacher's responsibility to ensure students make it outside in an orderly fashion to their designated place when the alarm sounds. Each classroom will have a designated folder (red/green) with an evacuation route and class list inside posted near the door that indicates where to go. Upon lining up outside at the designated place, the Substitute Teacher should determine whether all the students in their class made it out. They will indicate to administration by holding up a green card if all students are accounted for, or a red card if there are students who are unaccounted for. This card can be found inside their class safety folder. Unaccounted for students should have their names given to an administrator. Classes may re-enter the building once an administrator gives the all clear.

### Earthquake Drills

**Earthquake drills** will commence once an audio recording plays over the intercom or an administrator initiates it. The recording will indicate that it is an Earthquake drill. The Substitute Teacher will announce to the class that an earthquake drill has begun and everyone should *Drop, Cover, and Hold On* until the drill ends. The drill will end once the audio recording finishes or an

administrator designates the drill has ended. The recording will indicate that the drill is over. Once the audio recording has ended, the Substitute Teacher will listen for any directions over the PA. You may escort the class outside the building to the class's designated evacuation location if requested. If evacuated, classes may re-enter the building once an administrator gives the all clear.

## Lock Out

**Lockout** is followed by "Secure the Perimeter" and is the protocol used to safeguard students and staff within the building. A Lockout recovers all students from outside the building, secures the building perimeter and locks all outside doors. This would be implemented when there is a threat or hazard outside of the building. Criminal activity, dangerous events in the community, or even a vicious dog on the playground would be examples of a Lockout response. While the Lockout response encourages greater staff situational awareness, it allows for educational practices to continue with little classroom interruption or distraction.

As a precaution, Syracuse Arts Academy keeps closed and locks all exterior doors to the building, except the two front doors. If you see a door open and unattended, please close it.

## Lock Down

**Lockdown** is followed by "Locks, Lights, Out of Sight" and is the protocol used to secure individual rooms and keep students quiet and in place. A Lockdown is a classroom-based protocol that requires locking the classroom door, turning off the lights, and placing students out of sight of any corridor windows. In most cases, the "out of sight" locations in each classroom is the corner of the room where students cannot be seen from the door window. Student action during a Lockdown is to remain quiet. It does not mandate locking exterior doors. There are several reasons for not locking perimeter doors during a Lockdown. Locking outside doors inhibits entry of first responders and increases risk as responders attempt to breach doors.

## Evacuation

**Evacuate** is followed by "Evacuate!", repeated two times and is called when there is a need to move students from one location to another. If an evacuation order comes over the intercom, instructions will follow. In a police led evacuation, students may be instructed to form a single file line and hold hands front and back. Or students and staff may be asked to put their hands on their heads while evacuating. Other directions may be invoked during an evacuation and student and staff should be prepared to follow specific instructions given by staff or first responders.

## Shelter

**Shelter** is called when the need for personal protection is necessary. The public address will include the hazard and the safety strategy. The public address is repeated twice each time it is performed. The Substitute Teacher should listen carefully to the instructions given during the intercom address for what to do in this situation.

# IN AN EMERGENCY WHEN YOU HEAR IT. DO IT.

## LOCKDOWN! LOCKS, LIGHTS, OUT OF SIGHT.

### STUDENTS

Move away from sight  
Maintain silence  
Do not open the door

### TEACHER

Lock interior doors  
Turn out the lights  
Move away from sight  
Do not open the door  
Maintain silence  
Take attendance



## LOCKOUT! SECURE THE PERIMETER.

### STUDENTS

Return inside  
Business as usual

### TEACHER

Bring everyone indoors  
Lock perimeter doors  
Increase situational awareness  
Business as usual  
Take attendance



## EVACUATE! TO ANNOUNCED LOCATION.

### STUDENTS

Bring your phone  
Leave your stuff behind  
Follow instructions

### TEACHER

Lead evacuation to location  
Take attendance  
Notify if missing, extra or injured students



## SHELTER! HAZARD AND SAFETY STRATEGY.

### STUDENTS

| Hazard     | Safety Strategy          |
|------------|--------------------------|
| Tornado    | Evacuate to shelter area |
| Hazmat     | Seal the room            |
| Earthquake | Drop, cover and hold     |
| Tsunami    | Get to high ground       |

### TEACHER

Lead safety strategy  
Take attendance



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