

# SUBSTITUTE STAFF

## Background

The Division wishes to ensure that the schools continue to operate on a daily basis efficiently and effectively and so recognizes that when regular staff are away from normal duties, substitutes must be employed. There are, however, limits to substitution. Student safety is to always be of paramount concern.

In establishing a list of potential candidates, substitute teachers are to be chosen on the basis of the best possible levels of training, experience and competence.

## Procedures

1. The Principal shall ensure that all substitute teachers have, or are in the process of obtaining, at least a probationary certificate before they assume substitute teaching responsibilities in the classroom. In addition, principals shall:
  - 1.1 Set a minimum number of substitutes required based on past needs.
  - 1.2 Advertise in the community for substitute teachers for the school year when required.
  - 1.3 Submit documentation and probationary certificate application forms to Division Office at which time they will be processed and forwarded to Ministry of Education. Division Office personnel will then make arrangements and assign responsibility for paying certification fees as circumstances would dictate.
2. Respecting the Division's concern for student safety, substitute teachers shall generally not be hired for the following specialty positions, unless the Superintendent of Education and Principal are convinced that it is reasonable to believe that the Division's safety concerns will be intact as the result of such a hiring. This prohibition applies to:
  - 2.1 Practical and Applied Arts (PAA) classes which involve specialized equipment.;
  - 2.2 Physical Education;
  - 2.3 Resource Room Teachers (and Student Assistant Workers);
  - 2.4 Kindergarten;
  - 2.5 Second Language Courses – (principals must be sure that engagement of a Second Language substitute will not likely precipitate unfavourable student behaviour. If such a likelihood is germane, then such substitutes are not to be hired, and alternate coverage is to be arranged).

3. Principals shall attempt to follow the substitute utilization guidelines as outlined below:
  - 3.1 The Principal and vice principal shall cover teacher absences as much as possible;
  - 3.2 Should the Principal or vice principal not be able to cover for teacher absences, teachers on instructional spares (prep periods) or other unassigned time shall take over the classroom upon the absence of regular teacher;
  - 3.3 In some situations, teacher-supervised paraprofessionals may assist professionals in covering for an absent teacher;
  - 3.4 Should the above three steps not be possible, then, qualified teacher substitutes may be recruited;
  - 3.5 Should none of the above be possible, the students of the unattended classroom shall be assigned to other classroom(s) if appropriate;
  - 3.6 In all cases, no class shall be cancelled or dismissed because of a teacher absence without the approval of the Superintendent of Education;
  - 3.7 The Principal shall seek approval for employment of substitutes from the Superintendent of Education for periods in excess of three (3) days;
  - 3.8 If substitutes are engaged, appropriate pre-prepared teacher made lesson plans must be available. All staff are to be encouraged to prepare a few plans for future use by a substitute in an unforeseen absence;
  - 3.9 If principals have prior knowledge of the absence of a kindergarten teacher, it may be possible to advise all parents of cancellation of classes. In this case, a substitute may not be required;
  - 3.10 In Practical and Applied Arts and Physical Education classes, a substitute teacher, if hired, must not engage in "high risk" activities. Safety of students must be a priority;
  - 3.11 Absences of a long-term nature of more than three days shall be reported to the Superintendent of Education and a plan for teacher substitution will be prepared and approved.
4. Non-Teaching and Paraprofessional Staff
  - 4.1 Substitutes are to be hired only with approval of Superintendents of Education.
  - 4.2 The following guidelines are to be respected:
    - 4.2.1 Substitutes for teacher assistants are not to be engaged;
    - 4.2.2 Only in instances where children are severely challenged (physically, mentally or multiply) are student assistant worker substitutes to be engaged.

Reference: Sections 85, 87, 108,109, 175, 231 Education Act