

# VALDEZ CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT SUBSTITUTE HANDBOOK

2020-2021



## **WELCOME**

We are pleased that you are interested in joining the Valdez City Schools substitute roster. The role of a substitute is an important assignment in the educational program of the Valdez City Schools. It is your responsibility to provide continuity to the regularly planned program. This is indeed a challenging objective.

The Mission of the Valdez City Schools is to educate students in a positive learning environment to be competent and productive citizens. We hope this book will be of some assistance in helping you accomplish this. If there are any other details you need to know, or if you have suggestions for improving this handbook, we welcome your inquiries and comments by contacting the District Office at 907-835-4357.

# General Information

## **Management Rights**

The District reserves exclusive rights to operate and control its schools and maintains the authority to establish policies and regulations. The District, through the Superintendent or designee, may prescribe working rules pertaining to the conduct, discipline, and safety of substitute employees.

## **COVID-19 PROTOCOLS**

**Each school building will have a COVID-19 mitigation plan in place. Please follow the directions provided by the principal of the building where you are working for the day. Teachers will also structure their lesson plans according to their buildings COVID-19 plan; please continue to strictly follow the lesson plans provided to you.**

## **Nondiscrimination in Employment**

**The District and its employees shall not unlawfully discriminate against or harass employees or job applicants on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, changes in marital status, pregnancy, parenthood, physical or mental disability, Vietnam era veteran status, genetic information, or good faith reporting to the Board on a matter of public concern.**

Equal opportunity shall be provided to all employees and applicants in every aspect of personnel policy and practice. The District shall not discriminate against persons with physical or mental disabilities, who, with or without reasonable accommodation, can perform the essential functions of the job in question (BP 4030).

## **COMPENSATION AND LONG TERM SUBBING**

Valdez City Schools is currently paying \$17 an hour for those without a teaching certificate and \$22 for those with a teaching certificate. Substitutes who teach nineteen (19) consecutive school days for the same individual and are Alaska certified will receive on the twentieth (20) day \$33.17 per hour. Each additional consecutive day following the twentieth (20) will also be paid \$33.17 per hour. No other benefits are provided. Additional provisions as provided for in the State Law, 4AAC 18.021. **Official transcripts and verification of certification are required.**

## SUBSTITUTE PAYROLL SCHEDULE

- The pay period for all employees is the 21<sup>st</sup> of the prior month to the 20<sup>th</sup> of the current month.
- All District substitutes are paid **once** a month during the regular payroll period. Payments are deposited on the last working day of the month on the school calendar (e.g., If January has thirty-one days and the last working day falls on Friday, the 29<sup>th</sup>, that is the day that payments will be deposited.)
- If an early payroll is processed due to a holiday or school break, your payment for hours worked will be processed at the same time.
- **VERY IMPORTANT**: You must sign-in on the substitute list at each school each day in which you work. Substitute teachers are not required to process a timesheet.

If you have further questions, please contact the District Office 907-835-4357 between the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

### WORKMAN'S COMPENSATION:

All employees shall be covered by Workman's Compensation as required by the Workmen's Compensation Act.

**All employee injuries occurring while on duty shall be reported immediately. Employees shall complete the section of the Workers' Compensation "Report of Occupational Injury or Illness" form. The "Report of Occupational Injury or Illness" form can be found on the District website under the [Business Services](#) department page. This form should be submitted to the principal who shall forward it to the District Office.**

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE: All employees shall be covered by unemployment insurance as provided by State Law.

# **EXPECTATIONS**

## **Arrival Time**

Substitute teachers are expected to be on duty by the start time for the building they are substituting in unless otherwise indicated by the secretary or AESOP calling system. This will allow time to check-in at the office, find the classroom, locate and read the lesson plans, prepare the room and instructional materials, and otherwise prepare for a successful day of substitute teaching. Before leaving at the end of the day, leave notes on how the day went for the regular classroom teacher.

Substitute aides, secretaries, and custodians should confirm the time they begin with AESOP, the school secretary, or principal.

AESOP keeps track of the hours a substitute works, which are confirmed by the building secretaries or administrators.

## **Prep Time**

Substitutes do not need a prep hour to get ready for the next day. This time can be used to correct student work if needed. Otherwise, make yourself available to the office.

## **Dress**

Employees are expected to dress in an appropriate manner according to their job description. Keep in mind that you are a role model for students. Shirts that ride up the mid-riff or are cut low at the neckline are unacceptable. The following chart shows examples of appropriate and inappropriate dress.

<b>Appropriate Dress</b>	<b>Inappropriate Dress</b>
Khaki pants or slacks	Blue Jeans with holes
Button-up/polo shirt or blouse	Tank top or tee-shirt
School Spirit shirt/hoodie	Hooded sweatshirt with a bar logo

## **Unauthorized Release of Confidential Information**

District employees shall maintain the confidentiality of all confidential records until such time as laws, state regulations, and bylaws of this district permit disclosure. Information and records pertaining to executive sessions, negotiations, and student records, including individual test results, are not subject to public disclosure.

Any employee who willfully releases confidential information about students, staff, or any topic properly confined to an executive session shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from District service. Any action by an employee, which inadvertently or carelessly results in the release of confidential information, shall be recorded, and the record shall be placed in the employee's personnel file.

Depending on the circumstances, the Superintendent or designee may deny the employee further access to any privileged information and shall take any steps necessary to prevent any further unauthorized release of such information (BP 4119.23).

## **Prohibition of Harassment**

Valdez City Schools does not tolerate harassment of its employees or any other member of the school community. Harassment on the basis of race, sex, creed, color, national origin, religion, marital status, disability, or sexual orientation is specifically prohibited.

Harassment means intimidation by threats of or actual physical violence; the creation by whatever means of a climate of hostility or intimidation; or the use of language, conduct, or symbols in such a manner as to convey hatred, contempt, or prejudice or to have the effect of insulting or stigmatizing an individual.

To promote an environment free of harassment, the principal or designee shall take appropriate actions such as removing vulgar or offending graffiti, establishing site rules, and providing staff with in-service or student instruction and counseling. Principals shall discuss this policy with their employees and shall assure them that they need not endure any form of harassment. The Board encourages students or staff to report incidences of harassment to the principal or designee immediately. The Superintendent or designee shall promptly investigate each complaint of harassment in a way that ensures the privacy of all parties concerned. In no case shall the student or staff member be required to resolve the complaint directly with the offending person.

The School Board recognizes that harassment can cause embarrassment, feelings of powerlessness, loss of self-confidence, reduced ability to perform school-work, and increased absenteeism or tardiness. The Board shall not tolerate the harassment of any student or employee by any other student or district employee. Any student or employee who is found guilty of harassment shall be subject to disciplinary action (BP 4119.12).

## **Drug and Alcohol-Free Workplace**

The School Board believes that the maintenance of drug-free and alcohol-free workplaces is essential to school and District operations. No employee shall distribute, dispense, possess, use or be under the influence of any alcoholic beverage, drug, or controlled substance before, during or after school hours at school, or in any other District workplace or at any District-sponsored activity.

Any employee who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary sanctions. When required by law, the Superintendent shall terminate an employee. When termination is not required by law, the Superintendent shall (a) take appropriate disciplinary action, including termination when warranted, or (b) require the employee to satisfactorily participate in, and complete, an approved drug assistance or rehabilitation program. The Superintendent's decision shall be made in accordance with relevant state and federal laws, employment contracts, collective bargaining agreements, and District policies and practices (BP 4020).

## **Smoking on School Premises**

In accordance with the law and to promote the health and safety of all students and staff, the School Board prohibits smoking or the use of tobacco or marijuana products anywhere and anytime on District property and in District vehicles, including at athletic events and meetings. This includes while traveling with school activities (BP 3513.3).

## **Solicitation and Selling**

Employees shall not solicit District students or their families with the intent to sell general merchandise, books, equipment, or services. Any classroom activity requiring students to bring money to school for any purpose must have the principal's approval.

Staff members shall not use their status as District employees to secure information such as names, addresses, and telephone numbers for use in profit-making ventures (BP 4135).

## **Political Activities of Employees**

The School Board believes that district employees have an obligation to prevent the improper use of school time, materials, or facilities for political campaign purposes. The Superintendent or designee shall regulate political activities on school property. All employees are prohibited from engaging in any activity in the presence of students during the performance of the employee's duties, where the activity is designed or intended to promote, further, or assert a position on any voting issue, board issue, or collective bargaining issue. The Board respects the right of school employees to engage in political activities on their own time. When engaging in political activities, employees shall make it clear that they are acting as individuals and not as representatives of the District. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action (BP 4119.25).

## **Weapons**

Do not bring pocket knives or any other weapon to the school. Weapons on school property are a violation of state law and school board policy.

### **A Note for Classified Substitutes:**

All substitutes, regardless of their daily roles, are expected to follow the above general guidelines and to adhere to the basic expectations outlined in the next section.

## **Roles and Responsibilities of Substitutes**

### **What to Expect from Valdez City Schools**

- A cordial welcome from the school staff.
- Help in locating your assigned room.
- Seating charts, lesson plans, teaching materials, and a detailed schedule for the day.
- Safety information about crisis management/drills and medical alerts for students.
- Information concerning the restrooms, lounges, breaks, lunch assignments, and any other particular procedures for that specific school (i.e., fire drills).
- Cooperation from all school staff and help from the administration in handling disciplinary problems.

### **Basic Expectations**

Accept assignments whenever possible. Continuous refusals will affect the number of assignments offered to you. Once you accept an assignment, be sure to follow through and complete it. Please be sure to arrive at your assignments on time according to the procedures outlined earlier in this handbook.

Valdez City Schools is an environment that supports staff collaboration. Please be receptive to teachers and staff who try to assist you throughout the day. Be positive with students, office personnel, and staff that you interact with.

### **Important Policies of Valdez City Schools**

These general reminders apply to all schools, and it is important that they are followed consistently:

- Building assignments may change upon your arrival at the building, as determined by the administrator, which is based upon the needs of the building.



- All cases of accidents or illnesses of students must be reported to the school office at once.
- Substitute teachers must maintain discipline in the classroom in an appropriate manner. Persistent and extreme behavior problems must be referred to the principal's office. Discipline issues must be documented and left for the regular classroom teacher for their review on the day that they return.
- **Never leave students unattended.**
- Pictures of the students may not be taken.
- You may not touch the students or verbally demean them in any way.
- Do not yell at students or threaten them with punishments.
- Do not criticize students or their work.
- If a student is giving you difficulty, notify the main office via the intercom/phone, and an administrator will assist you.
- Students are never to be released from the building during school hours without permission from the school office.
- **Do not violate the confidentiality of information concerning students or staff members.**
- Any money collected must be deposited in the school office.
- Lesson plans are expected to be carefully adhered to. Students should not be given "free time."
- **Fire Drills:** Fire drill procedures are posted in the VCS District Crisis Response Plan hanging in each classroom next to the door and are to be taken outside during a fire drill. PLEASE READ THE GUIDE BEFORE CLASS BEGINS.

### **Starting the Day**

Arrive early, before school begins and sign in at the main office. Do not leave sooner than students are dismissed. When you have located your classroom, you will need to review all emergency procedure information, including evacuation locations and fire drill and lockdown protocols. All emergency information is located in the VCS District Crisis Response Plan hanging by the door in each classroom. Familiarize yourself with the lesson plan that the teacher left for you.

### **Lesson Plans**

Each teacher is required to leave a detailed lesson plan for their substitutes along with any materials that may be required for the successful execution of the lesson. Carry out to the best of your ability the responsibilities of the person in whose position you are working. This includes following the teacher's plans carefully and completely. You are also expected to cover any other extra duties of the teacher- before school, during lunch, and/or after school. During Prep (free) periods, when there are no students in the class, please go to the front office to ask if they need assistance with anything during that "free period." Remember that you are directly responsible to the principal in the building to which you are assigned. Any questions regarding your duties for the day may be directed to them.

# Classroom Management

## Active Involvement

Substitutes with Valdez City Schools are expected to take an active role in the learning process of students of all grade levels and abilities. The use of personal cell phones, while students are present, is not permitted. Personal reading of a book, magazine, or newspaper is not allowed in the classroom. School property (i.e., computers, phones, gym equipment, etc.) is only to be used for school business.

Instead of disengaging from the students, follow the lesson plan closely and communicate the material to the students. If the students are working silently to themselves or collaborating in groups, circulate around the classroom to monitor students' progress and provide assistance when needed. Engage the student groups in discussion, making sure they stay on the lesson topic. Make yourself available for questions regarding the material.

## Tips for Effective Classroom Management/Discipline

### Take Charge of the Classroom:

1. Start the class decisively.
2. Take roll efficiently.
3. Give directions concisely.

### Clarify Expectations Regarding Student Conduct:

1. Use a classroom discipline plan.
2. Give specific directions about desired behavior.
3. Give specific feedback about actual behavior.

### Communicate the Significance of Learning:

1. Minimize time spent on procedural matters.
2. Require student attention and participation.
3. Provide feedback to students about their work.
4. Provide closure at the end of class.

## End of the Day

Take time at the end of the day to restore the classroom in the neat and orderly condition in which you found it.

Leave a brief report on either the form provided with the lesson plans or on a clean sheet of paper. The report should outline the day's activities for each class for the regular teacher. Appropriate report topics include how the students reacted to the assignment, any behavioral or disciplinary problems, and above all, any positive feedback that you may have regarding your experience with the class.

Do not leave the building without checking out with the main office and clocking out appropriately.

## Appendices

### Principles of Good Classroom Management/Discipline

1. The initial impact of the substitute teacher is the key factor in successful classroom management. Self-confidence, resilience, initiative, and resourcefulness are some necessary prerequisites. If there is time before the class arrives, review the day's schedule and become familiar with related activities. When the class arrives, introduce yourself and write your name on the board. Try to call students by their names. To help you remember their names, you may wish to follow the seating chart.
2. As a substitute teacher, you set the stage for a successful experience by being prompt, neat, patient, honest, flexible, enthusiastic, and accepting. Encourage students to do their best. Commend them on their work as appropriate. BE FIRM, BUT FAIR.
3. Discipline is based on mutual understanding, through honest and open communication. Do not threaten students with a consequence unless you plan to follow through.
4. Problems do not usually develop if the content of instruction is worthwhile, presented in an interesting manner, and if the students are kept busy.

### *Examples of Appropriate Discipline:*

1. Recognize feelings. Example: *"I can see that you are angry because you have to stay after school."*
2. Describe the situation. Example: *"I see coats all over the closet floor. they need to be hung up."*

3. Invite cooperation. Example: *“Let’s all help to be quiet so we can go to the puppet show.”*
4. Be brief. Example: *“We do not throw paper.”*
5. Don’t argue. Stick to a decision, but remain flexible enough to change it if you are wrong. Arguing is always a losing proposition.
6. Model appropriate behavior. Always show through example how you want your students to act.
7. Discourage physical violence.
8. Do not criticize, call names, or insult students.
9. Focus on solutions.
10. Give choices.

**Please, sign and return the following acknowledgment to the district office upon receipt of this handbook.**

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

I acknowledge that I have received the contents of the Valdez City School District's 2020-2021 Substitute Employee Handbook. I understand that I am to adhere to all rules and regulations stated in the handbook, provided that such adherence and/or supervision does not violate any of my other terms and conditions of employment.

If I have any questions or need clarification, I will arrange a meeting with the building administrator.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date