WATERTOWN

UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Handbook for Substitute Teachers

2025-2026



- **Educational Service Center - (920) 262-1460**
- **Watertown High School – (920) 262-7500**
- **Riverside Middle School – (920) 262-1480**
- **Douglas Elementary – (920) 262-1495**
- **LEAP Elementary – (920) 925-3712**
- **Lincoln STEM Elementary – (920) 262-1465**
- **Schurz Elementary – (920) 262-1485**
- **Webster Elementary – (920) 262-1490**

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SUBSTITUTE TEACHER HANDBOOK

We are excited that you are interested in substitute teaching in the Watertown Unified School District. We are proud of the quality of education within our schools and know that substitute teachers contribute to that high quality. Thus, it is important for the District to have substitute teachers who are knowledgeable concerning the program of the District as well as the instructional practices that the District expects. For this reason, we have put together this handbook to provide information regarding substitute teaching in our District. If you have questions regarding anything in this handbook or not included in this handbook, please contact Human Resources.

Handbook Uses

This handbook is intended to serve the new or continuing substitute as a source of basic information. The material in the handbook pertains to all substitute teachers in the Watertown Unified School District. Because it is intended to be of use to all substitute teachers serving K-12 in the district, the information found herein is of a general nature. For specific information concerning individual school requirements, a substitute should refer to that school's handbook.

Other Sources

Augmenting the general information in this handbook is information from each school in the district. Each individual school has its own guidelines particular to that building, school hours and time schedules, and procedures to be followed in various situations (e.g., fire and tornado drills, accidents, illness, discipline, etc.). In addition, a directory of faculty members and non-professional staff, a floor plan of the building, and examples of clerical forms used in that building can be obtained from the building administrator.

In addition, Board of Education Policies are available online at the District's website, www.watertown.k12.wi.us

EMPLOYMENT PROCEDURES

Substitute Teacher Employment

Prospective applicants are encouraged to submit application materials through WECAN (https://wecan.education.wisc.edu/#/). Candidates applying through WECAN will be invited to an in-person meeting with a representative from the district office.
Alternatively, candidates for employment as substitute teachers may apply in person at:

Educational Service Center
111 Dodge Street
Watertown, WI 53094

In-person applicants must submit a copy of a current, valid teaching or substitute license, an application form, Forms W-4 and WT-4 for tax withholding, a direct deposit form and Form I-9. Candidates may choose to complete a voluntary ethnicity reporting form. A current passport or two of the following forms of identification are needed to establish eligibility to work: a valid driver's license, birth certificate and/or Social Security card.

EMPLOYMENT PROCEDURES (continued)

How Substitutes Are Contacted

The Watertown Unified School District utilizes Absence Management (Frontline) for substitute placement. Absence Management (Frontline) is an automated substitute calling system. New staff are assigned log-in credentials for the Frontline Absence Management system.

Certification

All substitute teachers in the Watertown Unified School District must hold a current, valid Wisconsin teaching license or a Wisconsin substitute permit. No one will be allowed to substitute if a current license or permit has not been verified and documented at the WUSD Educational Service Center. A substitute license may be obtained from the State of Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) if an applicant has met the requirements. The minimum requirements for a Three-Year Short-Term Substitute license is an associate or higher degree from an accredited college or university and successful completion of an approved substitute training program. More information and license application instructions may be found at the DPI website: https://dpi.wi.gov/tepdl/licensing

Payroll Information

The Watertown Unified School District uses direct deposit for payroll. The first payroll for substitute teachers will be September 12, 2025. Subsequent payments will be issued bi-weekly on Fridays, based on the number of days a substitute has worked. Please refer to the payroll calendar enclosed.

Questions may be answered by calling Jaime Fischer at 920-262-1460, ext. 3210.

Substitute Teacher Pay Rates:

Daily rate of pay for substitute teachers:

- 1-29 days in the same assignment - $140.00 per day
- 1-29 days in the same assignment (WUSD Retired) - $165.00 per day
- 30 or more days in the same assignment - $215.00 per day
- 30 or more days in the same assignment (WUSD Retired) - $240.00 per day

Cell Phones - Smart phones – Other Media:

Substitute teachers are not to call or text during student contact times or between classes. Likewise, personal email accounts and other social media such as Facebook, TikTok, etc. should not be used during work hours. The primary purpose and focus of our substitute staff is to be engaged with students. Therefore, cell phones, smart phones, and other media should only be accessed before school hours, after school hours, and during lunch breaks.

Crisis Response Flip Charts

All substitute teachers should be familiar with different types of emergencies that may occur during a school day. Each classroom in the District has a Crisis Response flip chart hanging in the room - most often close to the door. Substitutes are to be familiar with its content.

THE SCHOOL DAY

Times and Hours

The school hours for the 2025-2026 school year are:

Elementary
- Teacher hours: 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. (w/30 minute duty-free lunch)
- Student hours: 7:55 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. **(Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday)**
- Student hours: 7:55 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. **(Wednesday)**

Riverside Middle School
- Teacher hours: 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. (w/30 minute duty-free lunch)
- Student hours: 7:45 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. **(Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday)**
- Student hours: 7:45 a.m. to 2:10 p.m. **(Wednesday)**

Watertown High School
- Teacher hours: 7:45 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. (w/30 minute duty-free lunch)
- Student hours: 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. **(Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday)**
- Student hours: 8:00 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. **(Wednesday)**

Substitutes are expected to arrive at school at least **fifteen minutes** before students arrive. At the high school, substitutes should park in the visitor parking lot and register the vehicle at the receptionist desk. Parking in a non-visitor section may result in a parking citation.

Duty-free lunches: Teachers have a 30-minute duty-free lunch period each day. Teachers are not required to supervise the students or perform teaching duties during this time. Teachers may either stay in the building or leave during the lunch period. Substitute teachers may be assigned by a building administrator to other student related duties during any "prep" periods that are part of an absent teacher's schedule.

Unless otherwise approved by the building administrator, substitute teachers are expected to remain on school grounds until the end of the teacher's work day. If applicable, substitute teachers should review and correct student work, complete documentation for the regular teacher and perform other related duties.

Arrival

Upon arrival at a school, a substitute is to report to the main office. A substitute working in a school for the first time should ask for a copy of the building handbook or the publication of rules and guidelines. These documents are important resources during the day. The principal or secretary will provide the substitute whatever keys are necessary and a substitute I.D. badge. The mailbox of the regular teacher and the office bulletin board should be checked for any announcements that may affect the day's schedule.

The individual building handbooks provide instructions for recording absences, as well as copies of all office forms used, and explanations (tardy slips, excused absence slips, library passes, etc.). In addition, procedures are spelled out for handling different kinds of situations, such as emergency drills, accidents (faculty and student), illness (faculty and student), notes from parents, discipline, homework, unusual occurrences, health items, and the use of aides and special teachers.

THE SCHOOL DAY (continued)

Duties and Responsibilities

Substitutes are expected to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the regular teacher. The substitute folder in the principal's office will carry this information. These duties and responsibilities might include hall duty, recess, care of equipment and housekeeping duties.

In the classroom, texts and lesson plan books can be found. The substitute is expected to follow the lesson plans left by the regular teacher as closely as possible.

A student with an obvious health problem should be referred to the building office. Lynn Gilbert is the school district nurse for the Watertown Unified School District and can be reached at the ESC (Educational Service Center), at 920-262-1460, ext. 3219.

Substitutes may attend building meetings when they are in the building as well as any special orientation meetings called for substitutes.

DISTRICT STAFF DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Professional Growth

Courses are offered within the District on occasion for graduate credit or local credit. Substitute teachers are welcome to enroll in any of these courses, but must pay whatever fees are charged to others who are taking the course.

Supervision

The Watertown Unified School District has a highly developed supervision system designed to increase instructional effectiveness. All professional staff are regularly supervised and given feedback concerning their performance.

Since administrators have a heavy supervision schedule, substitute teachers will not receive a formal or regular observation. However, if a substitute wishes to receive feedback concerning teaching performance, please contact the building principal.

DIRECTORY OF ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL

Administrators:

Superintendent	Jarred Burke, Ed.D.
Director of Curriculum and Instruction	Jennifer Borst
Director of Human Resources	Margaret Brady
Director of Business Services	Sarah Kelly
Director of Special Education	Sarah Springer Oudenhoven
Director of Technology, Innovation, Data and Strategy	Jason Bull
High School Principal	Jason Widiker
Associate Principal/Athletic Director	Justin Crandall
Associate High School Principal	Jennifer Pennington
Associate High School Principal	Justin Diderrich
Riverside Middle School Co-Principal	Michael Cunningham
Riverside Middle School Co-Principal	Leigh Ann Graf
Elementary Principal-Douglas	Emily Lessner
Elementary Principal-Lincoln STEM/LEAP	Kayla Wendt
Elementary Principal-Schurz	Casey Rusch-Weiland
Elementary Principal-Webster	Bradley Clark

Administrative Assistants/Other:

District Accountant	Stacy Riedl
Superintendent	Lynn Linskens
Payroll/Benefits/Frontline	Jaime Fischer
Business Office Assistant	Sara Schmitz
Business Services	Amy Wesemann
Curriculum and Instruction	Cheryl Hollatz
Human Resources	Sarah Miller
Special Education	Jennifer Harris
Technology, Innovation, Data and Strategy	Angel Vander Steeg
Watertown High School	Katie Pirkel
Riverside Middle School	Jennifer McCrory
Douglas Elementary School	Kelly Kwapil/Dawn McBride
LEAP Elementary School	Jennifer Willis/Crystal Stalker
Lincoln STEM Elementary School	Laura Zautner/Jean Vesper
Schurz Elementary School	Amy Liesch/Alex Stankey
Webster Elementary School	Terri Danner/Diane Klemm

EXPECTATIONS

Acceptance of employment as a substitute teacher establishes the right of the school district to expect satisfactory performance of the substitute, and the substitute to expect support and guidance from principals and the regular teaching staff.

From the Administration

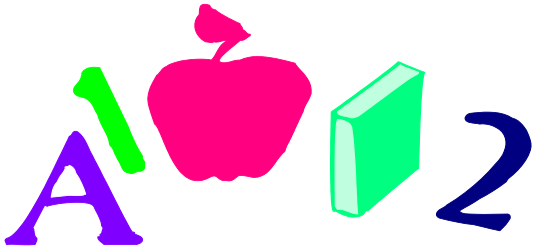
The principal and his/her office staff will make the substitute feel welcome and comfortable. They will see that the substitute has the lesson plans and any necessary reporting forms, as well as noting any changes in the regular schedule for that day.

From the Teaching Staff

The regular teacher will see that the following items are provided:

1. Lesson plans which are specific, easily found and up-to-date.
2. Teaching schedule and times.
3. A substitute's folder. While the items included in this will vary from the elementary to the secondary level, such things as these can be expected:
    - Up-to-date seating charts when possible, and if not provided by the office;
    - List of class rules and privileges allowed within the classroom;
    - Title of text used and copyright date;
    - Location of texts, supplies, records, curriculum guides, supplementary texts, workbooks, etc.;
    - Procedures listed for checking out supplies or books (sign out sheets, etc.)
    - Special information (milk list, names of students who ride buses);
    - Names of reliable students who can help the substitute;
    - Names of pupils who may need special attention (health, emotional or behavioral problems);
    - Lists of groups within the classroom, (i.e. reading) including materials used and time schedules for each group;
    - Regular duties of the teacher;
    - Any special instructions for taking attendance or recording tardiness, etc.;
    - Information and time schedules for special teachers and aides;
    - Special instruction, if any, regarding tests, projects, AV materials, etc.;
    - Location of quizzes or worksheets;
    - Indication of whether or not the room is individualized;
    - Name of a nearby teacher who can help;
    - Location of drawing and writing materials;
    - Note of procedure regular teacher wants followed regarding discipline--indicating whether the sub should handle any problems that day or leave a list of names for the regular teacher;
    - Procedures given for collection of lunch and milk money;
    - Note of any ongoing project;
    - Skills taught and when taught;
    - Notation of time children from another room may come in;
    - Extra seatwork if lesson plans are finished early;
    - Note of kind of behavior to expect from this class.

In addition, it can be expected that the regular teacher will make allowances for the substitutes not knowing the regular class routine. Teachers in adjacent rooms will make every effort to answer any questions and to cooperate in every way.



Substitute Teaching Guidance

Perhaps the most important aspect of teacher and administrative expectations of the substitute teacher lies in the realm of ethical values. Professionalism as a teacher or substitute implies holding inviolate any privileged or confidential information concerning the school staff or students, such as pupil records, handling of disciplinary action, teacher discussions, or the confidence of children. Tale-bearing from one school to another, gossiping, or criticism of the regular teacher's methods to others should never occur.

Further, the school district expects important work habits and attitudes including punctuality, loyalty, enthusiasm, a desire to teach and work with children, and a demonstration of courtesy and respect towards students and all staff. A cheerful classroom environment promotes good teaching. An ideal substitute should be able to carry on despite vague lesson plans, continue with projects already begun, use resourcefulness, and help students as the regular teacher would, when teaching within his or her field.

More specifically, the classroom teacher expects the following items and actions of the substitute:

1. Follow lesson plans when possible.
2. Have papers and workbooks corrected, when possible.
3. Assume responsibility for pupil behavior in class.
4. Keep a record of absences according to that building's procedure.
5. Protect any equipment; supervise its distribution, use and collection.
6. See that the students are working.
7. Grade papers; record grades only if substituting on a long-term basis.
8. Leave a full detailed note for the regular teacher including material covered, problems which arose in their classes and how they were handled, students who helped, activities of the class, etc.
9. Leave the room tidy.
10. Stay in the classroom with the students at all times except when a special teacher comes to the classroom; then use this time for preparation.
11. Lock the door when leaving the room in schools where keys are made available to the substitute.
12. Use the WUSD Lesson Design Components (page 10) as an aid and resource for a successful substitute teaching experience.

LESSON GUIDE

Lesson Design Components:

The Watertown Unified School District, as part of the continuing effort to improve instruction and increase learning in students, has implemented a *School Improvement Project* which uses the lesson design model from the effective schools movement.

All teachers in the district are expected to use effective lesson design. Below is a quick synopsis of the basic components that should be included in most lessons at all grade levels, in any subject area.

When implementing a lesson, a teacher is to:

1. **Review and preview:** This means the teacher builds on or refers to previous learning; focuses the students' attention on upcoming learning; and, produces active involvement in all students.
2. **State instructional objectives:** The objective of a lesson is a statement informing the student what he or she will be able to do by the end of the instruction. The purpose of a lesson is an explanation informing the student why the objective is useful, important and relevant.
3. **Provide input related to the objectives:** Input is the dissemination of new information necessary to achieve the stated objectives.
4. **Use activities consistent with the topic being taught**: Modeling is often used in this area. This is a demonstration of an acceptable process or the presentation of an acceptable finished product. This is where a teacher makes judgments concerning what the students will be doing to learn the objectives.
5. **Check for understanding:** Checking for understanding is when the teacher examines the student's understanding of central and essential information that is a part of the objective.
6. **Provide guided practice to reinforce concepts:** Teachers need to plan for time when students can work with the teacher present so the teacher can monitor understanding.
7. **Re-teach as necessary.**
8. **Include independent practice:** This is continued practice of work when the teacher isn't present. This usually is study hall or homework.
9. **Utilize lesson summary techniques:** Teachers ask the students to summarize the learning from the lesson. (Very often teachers tell the students what they thought was learned.) Having the students summarize is an important evaluation tool for the teacher in monitoring what actually was learned from the student's perspective.
10. **Promote active participation during the lesson:** This participation should be viewed as an equity issue. Do all students have the opportunity to participate? Are girls and boys being called on equally often? Are students being given the opportunity to respond in a supportive, warm, non-threatening atmosphere? Are lower achieving students participating as much as higher achieving students?