

LEADERSHIP UPDATE

Volume 9

A publication for Alberta's school administrators

Number 2



Preparing for a Substitute Teacher

The information below will help a substitute teacher to handle a class professionally. No teacher will need to address all of these issues, so go through the list and include only the items that are appropriate. Some of this information may be included in the school's information brochure for substitute teachers (if there is one).

Classroom Telephones and Access Codes

- What is the office number?
- Is there anything special that needs to be done in an extreme emergency?



- What is the specific code to reach an outside number? If you are not allowed to disclose this code, provide directions to the closest noncoded phone for the substitute teacher.

Photocopier Number

What is the photocopier number? Although this number can usually be obtained from the office, the substitute teacher will appreciate having easy access to the number if he or she needs to make photocopies quickly.

Parking Stall

Do you have a designated parking stall that the substitute teacher can use? This is especially helpful if the substitute teacher will be filling in for several days.

Map of the School

A map of the school is especially helpful if the substitute teacher will be teaching in more than one classroom during the day.

School Staff List

A complete staff list is not essential, but it is useful for the substitute teacher. However, a list of the school's administrators and office staff is necessary.

Timetable

Many teachers have a computer-generated daily plan sheet that contains routines specific to their class or to each weekday. These are very helpful for a substitute teacher. Indicate the times for period changes, dismissal and aide time, as well as information about resource students (who they are, when they leave, whether they go on their own).

**As we
express our
gratitude, we
must never
forget that
the highest
appreciation
is not to utter
words, but to
live by them.**

**—John
Fitzgerald
Kennedy**



Routines

- What exercises do you open the day with? If you use songs, include music.
- How are the students of the day chosen?
- What attention-getting routines and transition fillers do you use?
- What are the expectations regarding announcements?
- When do the bells ring to indicate breaks and recess?
- What are the procedures and expectations for washroom breaks?
- How are daily messages from the office communicated to staff and students?

Class List

Give extra copies of the class list to the substitute teacher. Often, the only copy gets sent to the office after attendance is taken, but a class list is necessary during a fire drill and handy to have when collecting materials and assignments. For middle and high school, provide a class list for each class, as well as the routine/policy for checking attendance in each class.

Seating Plan

The seating plan should be up to date, easy to read and portable. Some teachers include students' pictures, which is very helpful.

Attendance

- What is the routine as students enter the school?

- What is the procedure for recording attendance?
- What procedure is to be followed for late arrivals?
- How is absenteeism handled?
- What is the sign-out procedure?

School Discipline—Policies and Procedures

- What is the procedure if students are being moderately or excessively disruptive?
- What are the consequences for misbehaviour?
- How is inappropriate behaviour dealt with at the school?
- How can administrative help be enlisted if necessary?
- What are the consequences for obscene language?
- Are there forms to be completed or forms that define the degree of misbehaviour? (Provide samples.)
- What is the policy regarding cell-phones, computers, tablets and so on?
- What is the dress code?
- What is the smoking policy?
- What is the procedure if middle or high school students come to class not prepared or without a textbook?

Exemplary Behaviour

- Are there procedures for special recognition of exemplary behaviour, work or cooperation?

Privileges

- What are the policies regarding bathroom breaks, lockers, pencil

sharpening, gum chewing, beverages, snacks, and use of the telephone during class time and breaks?

Supervision

- Where are the playground areas?
- What are the rules?
- If you are outside and there is an incident, how do you communicate with the office? (For example, cell phone, two-way radios?)

Name Tags

For very young children, easy-to-read name tags that are pinned on or worn on a string are very useful. For upper elementary students, name tags that sit on top of the desks are best.

Study Hall/Lunchroom

- Is there anything the substitute teacher needs to know about study hall and the lunchroom, such as locations and routines?

Agenda/Journals/Link Books

- What do you do?
- What are your expectations?
- What students (if any) require special consideration?
- What rewards are given for agendas returned and signed?

Physical Education

- Is a key required?
- Do the children change for physical education? If so, where?
- What is the routine at the end of the class?

Library

- What is the routine?

Music

- Do you take the children to the music room and pick them up, or does the music teacher collect them and bring them back?

To find archived issues of *Leadership Update*, go to www.teachers.ab.ca and click on **Other Publications** (under **Publications**), then go to **School Administrators**.

Feedback is welcome. Please contact Konni deGoeij, associate coordinator, administrator assistance, Member Services, at konni.degoeij@ata.ab.ca.

Assembly

- What are the routines for assemblies, and what is expected of the students? Of the teacher?

Class Sharing

- What are the responsibilities of the substitute teacher?
- What are the routines?

Team Partners and Teacher Assistants

- Who are the partners and teacher assistants?
- How might they help a substitute teacher?

Parent Volunteers

- What do you like the parents to do?

Practicum Students

- What is the substitute teacher's responsibility to your practicum student?

End-of-Day Substitute Teacher Report to Classroom Teacher

- What are the expectations?

Emergency Codes and Procedures

- How would staff be alerted to an emergency, and what would the substitute teacher be expected to do?
- What are the fire drill and lockdown procedures?

Medical Alerts/Children Requiring Special Considerations

- What emergency measures are to be taken for special medical problems?
- What is the policy regarding medications?
- What considerations are needed for physical restrictions?

- What are the special discipline needs? Teachers are hesitant to label children who require special considerations in interactions with adults or other students. However, stating the problems up front lets the substitute teacher know how to approach students to make them feel more comfortable, what behaviours may be exhibited and what consequences have been set out.
- If you have students who are coded for additional help, a brief description will help the substitute teacher make the day easier for those students.

It is good practice to have an updated emergency substitute teacher plan ready in the classroom or with administration. The plan can be kept in a special file for the substitute teacher. This plan is developed at the teacher's leisure, not in a moment of crisis, and gives the substitute teacher a thoughtful and concise collection of all the information (except daily plans)

that you use to build the classroom environment. When a plan is in place, should illness or emergency strike, the teacher needs to be concerned only about getting an outline of daily plans to the substitute teacher. Everything else will already have been documented at a less stressful time. Although some of the information in the plan must be updated regularly, adding most of the information is a one-time task, with only minor modifications required during the school year.

It is important to note that, because this file contains confidential information, it should be kept in a secure location that students cannot access.

General Information

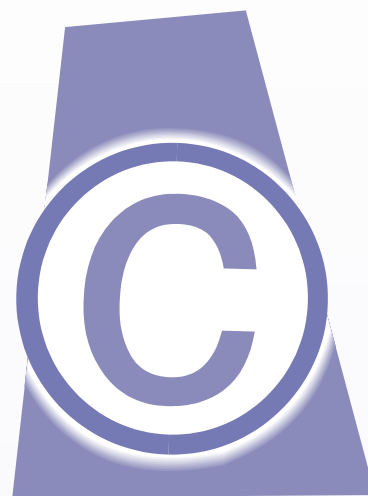
Include any other information that the teacher/school feels is necessary, such as school policies and goals and the information brochure for substitute teachers (if your school has one).

Coping with Copyright Event

On October 4, 2012, Alberta Education and the 2Learn.ca Education Society are hosting a day-long dialogue with Michael Geist, law professor and expert in Canadian copyright. This event will provide an opportunity for school leaders, curriculum consultants, librarians and teachers to engage in discussion on the ever-changing Canadian copyright landscape.

To register for this event, go to www.2learn.ca/geist.

This free event is open to the first 160 registrants.



ULead 2012

In October 2012, a significant professional learning opportunity will take place in Edmonton for district and school leaders from western Canada and around the world.

The goal of this year's conference is to help school leadership teams build capacity to address a variety of emerging areas of focus in education in Alberta. Conference speakers will share their leadership stories and offer thought-provoking ideas for change. The preconference workshop, on Monday, October 22, offers attendees an opportunity to spend the day with Todd Whitaker on "Leading School Change" or with a renowned expert on inclusive education, Mara Sapon-Shevin, on "Strategies for Inclusion—Widening the Circle." This will be an excellent learning opportunity; school and district leaders and school teams of teacher-leaders will experience profound growth in practices for

leadership and inclusion in their learning communities.

The conference has been designed to help attendees build the learning communities they are leading. Topics include leadership in inclusive education, how great leaders lead, cognitive coaching and coaching teachers to teaching excellence, strategies for leadership in First Nations schools, engaging teachers and parents in transformational conversations, and innovative approaches to education using technology. The conference will offer delegates the opportunity to learn with six popular keynote workshop presenters: Mara Sapon-Shevin, Todd Whitaker, Spence Rogers, Richard Wagamese, Halley Bock and Michael Furdyk. It promises to be a transformative event.

Delegates will leave ULead 2012 with a well-developed sense of what is needed to ensure successful student learning. We expect this year's ULead 2012 conference to attract more than 500 delegates—district leaders,

principals, assistant principals and teacher-leaders. While most of these delegates will be from Alberta school jurisdictions, there will be a significant number of attendees from elsewhere in Canada.

WHEN

Monday, October 20, 2011—Preconference workshop day, with Mara Sapon-Shevin on strategies for leadership in inclusion *or* Todd Whitaker on leading school change
Tuesday, October 21 and Wednesday, October 22—ULead 2012 conference, with six outstanding keynote speakers presenting workshops on a wide range of leadership topics

WHERE

Fantasyland Hotel—17700 87 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

To register, go to www.wceac.org.

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visionary leadership for today's learner



The following publications are available from the Alberta Teachers' Association. For more information, visit the ATA website (www.teachers.ab.ca) and click on Publications and then on Research Updates, Current.

The New Work of Teaching: A Case Study of the Worklife of Calgary Public Teachers

An ATA Research Update: February 2012

In the spring of 2011, 20 Calgary Public teachers kept detailed diaries for a one-week period on how they spent their time. In addition to reporting on the results of that study, this document includes a review of recent literature on maintaining a work-life balance. (PD-86-23 2012, 24 pages)

Substitute Teachers in Alberta: A Research Report

An ATA Research Update: October 2011

This document analyzes the results of a 2010 online survey of substitute teachers that the ATA undertook with research assistance from the University of Alberta. The study, a follow-up to one conducted in 2008, seeks to identify the unique challenges that substitute teachers encounter on a daily basis and to suggest potential solutions. (PD-86-22 2011, 35 pages)

Impact of Digital Technologies on Teachers Working in Flexible Learning Environments

An ATA Research Update: March 2011

This study, the largest of its kind in Canada to date, explores the ways in which the flexible timing and pacing of instruction affects the conditions of professional practice of teachers. (PD-86-21 2011, 44 pages)

The Future of Teaching in Alberta

An ATA Research Update: March 2011

Based on focus group discussions with teachers and a review of current trends in education, this publication examines the future of teaching in Alberta over the next 20 years in terms of what is possible, what is probable and what is preferred. (PD-86-20 2011, 42 pages)

The Early Years of Practice: Interim Report of a Five-Year Study of Beginning Teachers in Alberta

An ATA Research Update: February 2011

This publication summarizes the findings at the end of year three of a five-year study that is tracking the experiences of a cohort of 135 Alberta teachers who began teaching in 2007. (PD-86-19 2011, 40 pages)

The Courage to Choose: Emerging Trends and Strategic Possibilities for Informed Transformation in Alberta Schools: 2010-2011

An ATA Research Update: Fall 2010

This publication attempts to answer the question, What kind of society do we want to create in Alberta and what kind of teaching and learning will get us there? (PD-86-11c 2010, 56 pages)

Professional Learning for Informed Transformation: The 2010 Professional Development Survey

An ATA Research Update: November 2010

This publication presents the results of a survey that the Association conducted in 2010 on the professional development opportunities available to teachers in Alberta. (PD-86-18 2010, 36 pages)

Using Technology to Support Real Learning First in Alberta Schools

An ATA Research Update: May 2010

This monograph examines the ideologies behind digital technology in schools. It includes a look at the changes that have resulted from the Alberta government's investment of \$1.5 billion in technology over the last fifteen years and identifies ways to transform education. (PD-86-17 2010, 40 pages)

Evaluating the School Principal: A Professional Model for Enhancing the Leadership Practices of Alberta's School Administrators

An ATA Research Update: February 2010

This publication is the result of a two-year research project that field-tested the ATA's model policy on the professional growth, supervision and evaluation of school administrators. It details the steps taken in the project and describes five general principles that school boards should follow in implementing the Principal Quality Practice Guideline. (PD-86-16 2010, 23 pages)

The Experience of Substitute Teaching in Alberta Schools

An ATA Research Update: February 2010

This document analyzes the results of a 2008 online survey of teachers undertaken by the ATA with research assistance from the University of Alberta. The study identifies and discusses the challenges and rewards of substitute teaching and seeks to instill a deeper appreciation in stakeholders of the vital role played by substitute teachers in Alberta's education system. (PD-86-15 2010, 24 pages)

Seeking Principals to Serve as Cognitive Coaches

Pilot Project

Cognitive Coaching: Building School Leadership Capacity in Alberta's Education System

A project organized by the Alberta Teachers' Association and funded by Alberta Education



Principals who have completed the Cognitive Coaching Foundations seminar and would like to coach beginning principals are invited to apply to be a part of a provincial pilot project. The intent of the project is to have experienced principals mentor beginning principals in the development of their leadership practices, using cognitive coaching strategies that will promote self-reflection and professional decision making. The project will start in January 2013 and continue until June 2014. Each principal-coach will be matched with no more than three beginning

principals from a different Alberta school jurisdiction. Collaborative activities will include workshops focused on the Principal Quality Practice Guidelines and opportunities for face-to-face meetings with coaches. Beginning principals in the project will have an opportunity to determine a professional growth focus based on the Principal Quality Practice Guidelines. A variety of technologies may be used to enhance the coaching experiences and limit travel. The 15 principal-coaches selected for this project will be supported in their own professional development through the program activities, have their release time covered and be reimbursed for all applicable expenses. In recognition of the time and professional support that participants will devote to coaching the beginning principals, an honorarium of \$2,000 will be provided.

If you are interested in applying to serve as a principal-coach in this project and have completed a Cognitive Coaching Foundation series, please contact Jacqueline Skytt by e-mail at jacque.skytt@ata.ab.ca. Beginning principals will receive information about this program in the coming weeks.



Q & A

GORDON THOMAS
Executive Secretary

Q: What steps should I take to ensure the most effective and fair use of substitute teachers in my school?

A: Substitute teachers are full, active members of the Association who fill a crucial role in our schools.

Principals can encourage and model best professional practices by setting up a few simple procedures and protocols that help these teachers feel welcome and supported.

These might include making a list of substitute teachers and their assignment for the office staff each day, providing a reusable school handbook specifically for substitute teachers that is available for each assignment and providing keys and directions to the classroom(s) if necessary.

Introducing substitute teachers to the staff and encouraging them to visit the staff room is always appreciated, as is the time to read lesson plans and start the first class with confidence—so having no morning supervision on the first day of an assignment is welcomed.

Substitute teachers always want to be used effectively and fairly in their assignments. Typically the teacher they are replacing has a full schedule for the substitute teacher with teaching, supervision, marking, preparing for the next lesson, making notes and so on. It is usually not appropriate to expect substitute teachers to cover other teachers' classes unless they have completed all the expectations of the teacher they are replacing and they have been able to have their duty-free lunch break.

ATA policy recommends that “substitute teachers be assigned the regularly scheduled supervision duties and workload of the teacher being replaced, excluding the supervision that precedes the first instructional block.”

Another frequent and increasingly crucial need for substitute teachers is a school-based password to access teaching resources. Having a system to provide temporary passwords would be very helpful.

For additional information on substitute teachers as professional replacements, please refer to our monograph *Substitute Teachers: Professional Replacements*. This is available online, along with other resources for substitute teachers—please visit www.ata.ab.ca and select Substitute Teacher Resources under For Members.

