

Substitute Handbook



Fairfax County Public Schools • Department of Human Resources
6815 Edsall Road • Springfield, Virginia 22151

Table of Contents

Fairfax County Public Schools Mission	5
Goals and Objectives	5
Important Telephone Numbers	6
Professional Expectations	7
Salary and Payment	8
Procedures	8
Benefits	8
Work Schedules	8
Extra Duties	8
Inclement Weather	8
Changes in Name, Address, Telephone Number	8
Discontinuation of Service	9
Homebound Teachers	9
Certification	9
Introduction to SEMS	10
Using SEMS	10
Substitute Survival Guide	12



Department of Human Resources
6815 Edsall Road
Springfield, VA 22151
(703) 750-8400

Dear Substitute Teachers, Assistants and Attendants:

Welcome to Fairfax County Public Schools as a substitute instructional employee. FCPS is dedicated to “preparing our students for their global future,” and we trust that you will also embrace our goal as our most precious resources are placed in your care. We are confident of your ability to fulfill the required duties and exhibit the level of professionalism expected of all educators, and we view you as a valuable member of our team.

This handbook will acquaint you with substitute instructional employment with the Fairfax County Public Schools. It will answer many commonly asked questions. As you assume your various assigned tasks, be assured that the Office of Employment Services is ready to help you.

The valuable service that you provide each year to our schools is greatly appreciated. I wish each of you a rewarding experience as a substitute with Fairfax County Public Schools.

Brad Draeger, Ed.D.
Assistant Superintendent
Department of Human Resources

Substitute Handbook

Fairfax County Public Schools

YOU ARE ESSENTIAL!

Welcome to Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS). As a substitute teacher, instructional assistant or attendant you are an integral part of the professional team. As such, you are expected to maintain a professional attitude toward your work. By demonstrating self-confidence, initiative, and flexibility, you can have a positive impact on your students while providing an essential service to our schools.

Following the teacher's lesson plan ensures that students are kept busy in meaningful activities. Substitute teachers may request to review the *Program of Studies* (POS) documents, which are available at each school location. The POS outlines the instructional objectives and goals within each subject area for all students.

School Board policies and regulations guide the operation of the school system. These documents are maintained in notebooks and are available for review in public libraries as well as school offices and libraries. Should you wish to review a policy or regulation, just ask to see the "Blue Books".

When you accept an assignment out of your primary competency or training, it is still essential to maintain order and provide appropriate instruction. Questions that arise regarding lesson plans, procedures, or discipline, are to be discussed with a school administrator. You must always keep students under your supervision and plan appropriately for all activities.

Fairfax County Public Schools Mission

The mission of Fairfax County Public Schools is to educate all students to meet high academic standards and to prepare all students for responsible citizenship in the 21st century.

Goals and Objectives

- Provide each student with the academic/professional skills and knowledge needed to be a productive citizen of the 21st century.
- Understand the diverse learning needs of students and provide programs that meet those needs.
- Establish and maintain a technology program that supports teaching, learning, assessment, and the management of schools in a cost-effective manner.
- Create environments that promote respect, self-discipline, citizenship, honesty, and academic effort.
- Provide and manage resources to appropriately support the educational needs of all students.

IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS



You will want to know these telephone numbers and specific times to call an office depending on the type of information you desire:

Substitute Employment general information (703) 750-8590
(Monday - Friday, 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM)

Substitute Employment FAX (703) 813-3522
(24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

Help Desk (703) 914-8131
(Monday - Friday, 6:00 AM - 12:00 noon, when school is in session only)

- Speak with a SEMS Help Desk operator
- Receive SEMS profile information
- Cancel a job the day of an assignment

SEMS (703) 642-3793
(24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

- Hear available jobs
- Review assignments
- Cancel jobs
- Modify date of availability
- Change telephone number SEMS uses to offer you assignments

Questions about paycheck (703) 750-8514
(Monday - Friday, 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM)

Questions about direct deposit of paycheck (703) 750-8527
(Monday - Friday, 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM)

Employment verifications (703) 750-8435
(Monday - Friday, 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM)

General employment information (703) 750-8400
(Monday - Friday, 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM)

PROFESSIONAL EXPECTATIONS

Standards of Conduct

Your continued assignment as a substitute is contingent upon your ability to comply with professional standards of conduct. Our school community is diverse; and sensitivity to racial, ethnic, cultural, and religious differences is required of all employees. Employees must safeguard the privacy of student information kept in schools, whether on paper, in computer, or in oral communications. Conduct that is detrimental to the reputation of the school system, not in the interest of the instructional program, or poses potential harm to students or school employees, will be cause for discontinuation of service as a substitute with Fairfax County Public Schools.

FCPS is committed to the substitute program and recognizes the impact that you as an educational employee will have on our children. The School Board has adopted policies and regulations to ensure your success as an educator while supporting the vision for excellence in education. Highlights from some of the policies and regulations follow:

Human Relations

The School Board recognizes that achievement of its mission for all children depends at least in part on the practice of good human relations and elimination of discrimination, particularly in the areas of race, sex, relation, ethnic origin, and disability, by all members of the school community. The Board, therefore, places responsibility on all personnel for practicing good human relations that provide dignity and respect for everyone in the school community.

Sexual Harassment

It is the intent of the School Board to maintain an environment free from sexual harassment of any kind. Therefore, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature amounting to or constituting harassment are prohibited.

Nondiscrimination

No student or employee in the Fairfax County Public Schools shall, on the basis of race, sex, religion, national origin, marital status, or disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity.

Controversial Issues

Training for effective citizenship includes the study of issues that are controversial. Such studies shall be carried out in an atmosphere of freedom without bias or prejudice. Teachers do not teach controversial issues but rather provide opportunities for their study.

Religion in the School

Religion shall not be regarded as a taboo subject but rather shall be dealt with directly and objectively when and where it is intrinsic to the learning experience. Teachers shall not teach religion but shall teach about religion as it relates to other elements of human culture and as it naturally appears in literature, social studies, the sciences, and the arts.

Corporal Punishment

The School Board views the use of physical contact of any kind as an unacceptable form of discipline and does not authorize its use except as outlined by regulation.

As a substitute employee, your exercise of good judgment is essential to ensure your safety and well being as well as that of other staff members and students. Questions regarding discipline procedures should be discussed with an administrator prior to the beginning of your assignment. Touching a student in any way to control or modify behavior will result in your discontinuation of service as a substitute.

Physical forms of affection are also discouraged. Even though you are an employee of FCPS, students may view you as a stranger. Once again, good judgment is necessary. There are many ways to show positive regard without touching.

Alcohol and Drug-Free Workplace

FCPS is an alcohol and drug-free workplace. The use, manufacture, distribution, or dispensing of alcohol and prescription or illegal drugs in any job-related context is strictly prohibited.

Portable Communication Devices

FCPS prohibits the possession of a cellular telephone, pager, or similar portable communication device on any school property.

Students who are in possession of a cellular telephone, page, or similar portable communication device are to be reported to the school administrator.

SALARY AND PAYMENT PROCEDURES

Substitutes are paid biweekly in accordance with salary schedules set yearly by the School Board. A Time and Attendance Report must be completed at the school location each day. A copy of this report must be secured by the substitute before leaving the school. Your signature, social security number, and job number should appear on the Time and Attendance Report. Payment will be made by direct deposit to your banking institution. Employees will receive a pay notice through the U.S. Mail. Direct deposit is mandatory. Changes can be initiated at any time by calling the Payroll Section, 750-8527, during the hours of 8:00 AM and 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday.

All questions concerning pay for days worked are to be directed to the Payroll Section, 750-8514, during the hours of 8:00 AM and 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday.

BENEFITS

Retirement, hospitalization, and other fringe benefits are not available to substitutes or homebound teachers.

WORK SCHEDULES

Your substitute assignments will reflect the need of the instructional employee. You will be paid for actual hours worked. All assignments will be paid a minimum of 3 hours and will not exceed 7 1/2 hours to include a 30-minute unpaid, duty-free lunch (up to 8 hours if required by the Assistant Superintendent, Department of Human Resources). Substitute employees assigned to Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology will be paid a minimum of 3 hours and will not exceed 8 hours.

Substitutes accepting public health training assistant and public health assistant assignments will be paid a minimum of 3 hours and will not to exceed 7 1/2 hours to include a 30-minute paid lunch for which duties are assigned.

You are to report to the administrative office of the school to which you have been assigned according to the time recorded by SEMS. Substitutes are expected to know the reporting time for assignments and to report promptly. If you are called too late to arrive on time, call SEMS Help Desk.

EXTRA DUTIES

Substitutes are not required to assume extracurricular duties after regular teacher hours. Substitutes are required to perform other duties during the day, deemed by the principal to be necessary for successful and safe operation of the school.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

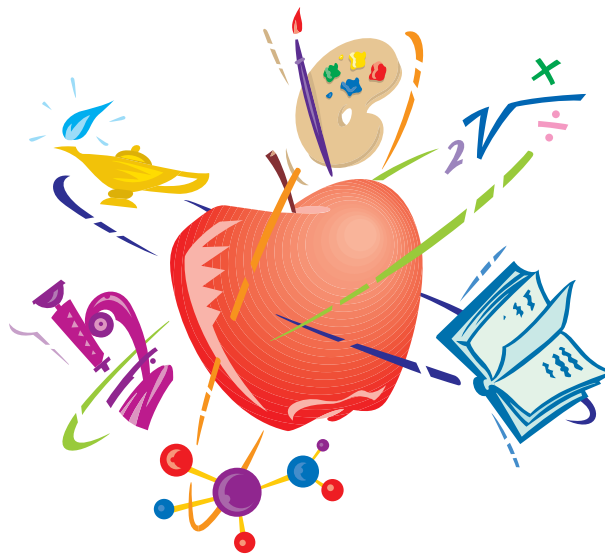
During inclement weather, the School Board hotline, 246-2500, will announce school closings and delayed openings. When school openings are delayed, you are to confirm your assignment by calling SEMS. Reporting times are to be verified by calling the school for confirmed assignments that are less

than 7 1/2 hours. If you have questions, call SEMS Help Desk.

When schools are closed early due to inclement weather, substitutes will be paid for hours worked. On days when schools are closed, previously accepted assignments will be listed on SEMS job review. Substitutes are not to report to school when schools are closed. Assigned substitutes will not be paid.

CHANGES IN NAME, ADDRESS, TELEPHONE NUMBER

You are responsible for keeping the Department of Human Resources fully informed, in writing, of all changes in name, address, and telephone number. A change in name request must include a copy of your social security card reflecting the name requested.



DISCONTINUATION OF SERVICE

By employee

Employees, who no longer desire employment as a substitute employee, must notify Substitute Employment in writing. After separation, those who wish to work again as instructional substitutes must reapply. To receive current application information call 750-8590.

By FCPS

Any substitute employee who has not generated payroll for six months will be discontinued from employment without notification from FCPS.

“Do Not Send” Requests

Administrators are responsible for the educational program at their school locations and have full authority regarding substitute assignments. In accordance with regulations governing substitutes, a school administrator may request that a substitute employee not be assigned to the school, with or without cause. When possible, the substitute will be informed of this action by an administrator, with written confirmation submitted to the Substitute Employment supervisor.

In the event that the school administrator does not inform the substitute, the Substitute Employment supervisor will inform the substitute that he or she is ineligible for future assignments at that location.

Three “Do Not Send” requests will result in discontinuation as a substitute with FCPS. One “Do Not Send” request may result in discontinuation, provided the reason is determined to be sufficient by the Substitute Employment supervisor.

Substitutes who are ineligible to continue employment shall be notified in writing by the Substitute Employment supervisor.

HOMEBOUND TEACHERS

Teachers for homebound students are employed on a temporary basis to provide services to students who are unable to attend school regularly.

Homebound teachers must hold a Virginia Teaching Certificate or be able to be certified and be recommended for employment by the directors of Student Services in the area offices.

The Substitute Employment supervisor must approve homebound teachers for placement on the approved list. Once eligibility has been determined, the homebound teacher is referred to the directors of Student Services in the area offices. The area directors determine assignments. Teachers for homebound students are noncontracted and are paid on an hourly basis according to salary schedules set annually by the School Board.

CERTIFICATION

Substitutes are not required by the Commonwealth of Virginia to be certified as teachers. Questions regarding teacher certification may be addressed by writing to the State Department of Education, P.O. Box 6Q, Richmond, Virginia 23216.



INTRODUCTION TO SEMS

The centralized Substitute Employee Management System (SEMS) is an interactive voice response system designed to provide efficient assignment of substitute teachers, instructional assistants, and public health training assistants and attendants.

The employee, administrator, or the administrator's designee, using a touch-tone telephone, registers with SEMS all impending instructional absences requiring a substitute.

School, subject, and grade-level preferences of administrators and substitute employees are honored whenever possible through the use of priority lists submitted by school administrators and by the substitute during the employment orientation. Substitutes may work in any school location.

USING SEMS

Assigning a Substitute

Fairfax County Public Schools utilizes SEMS to process incoming requests from schools to fill teacher, instructional assistant, and public health training assistant and attendant absences and to call out to substitutes to fill daily classroom absences. The system is accessed by a touch-tone telephone by both school instructional staff and substitute employees. This is how the system works:

- An employee calls SEMS and reports the absence, recording the subject, time of assignment, and any special instructions. The employee receives a unique job number for this assignment.
- SEMS searches its database to find a qualified substitute for the job.
- SEMS calls the qualified substitute to offer the job.
- The substitute accepts the job and receives the unique job number. **If you do not receive a job number, you did not accept the job.**
- If you have not received a call from SEMS by 5:15 AM and want to work that day, start calling SEMS

continuously until 6:00 AM. Same-day jobs can be assigned by the Help Desk between 6:00 AM and 8:00 AM.

- The substitute provides the office staff the job number when reporting to the school.

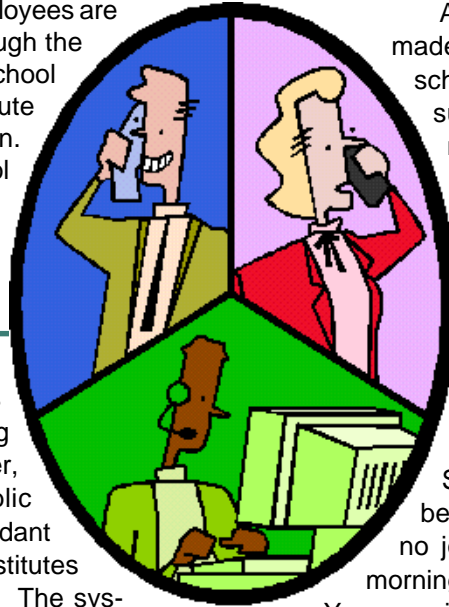
As a substitute, you will be assigned your own Personal Identification Number (PIN) to access the system. With your PIN, you will be able to hear information 24 hours a day on jobs which match your profile.

All substitute assignment offers are made by SEMS or prearranged by the school having direct contact with the substitute. A prearranged assignment is one made directly with the substitute by the school employee or administrator. When this occurs, a teacher or administrator calls SEMS, records the prearrangement, and receives a job number. This procedure establishes an assignment record and prevents duplicate offers. As a substitute, you are required to call SEMS the morning the assignment begins to confirm the job. If there is no job number listed with SEMS the morning of the assignment, there is no job.

You may either accept another job when SEMS calls you during the AM call out or call into SEMS to review assignments that are available for you to accept.

SEMS will establish a calling history record for each employee and will document the disposition of each assignment offer. Calls from SEMS that are answered by a machine or answering service will be recorded in the calling history as a hang-up. Because SEMS call out periods are preestablished and the employee is informed at the time of orientation of the calling periods, a hang-up is viewed as an assignment declined by the employee.

To the extent possible, you are required to substitute on those days that you have indicated availability. In accordance with Regulation 4311.6, inactivity for a six-month period will result in your discontinuation of service as a substitute with FCPS. To be considered for future employment, it will be necessary to reapply following the current employment process.



Confirming the Assignment

As a substitute, it is your responsibility, on the morning of the assignment, to confirm your assignment by calling SEMS and reviewing your job number. If the job has been cancelled, the job number will not be listed during the assignment review. SEMS will call you for another assignment, or you may call to review jobs that are available for that day. No pay compensation is granted when you report for a cancelled assignment.

If, upon arrival at an assigned school, you discover that you are not needed, **do not leave the school!** The school administrator will contact the SEMS Help Desk immediately. An effort will be made to reassign you. Substitutes that decline an alternate assignment will leave the school and will not receive payment for that day.

When an error in reporting the job is documented and authorized by the Substitute Employment supervisor and there is no alternate assignment available, you may remain at the school location for three hours and be paid. An administrator or designee may assign some work to you during the three hours.

Long-term Assignments

Long-term assignments are usually offered by school administrators. Because long-term assignments require additional duties and responsibilities, such as student grading and parent conferences, substitute teachers on these assignments receive a higher rate of pay. Long-term assignments are those of 11+ days in duration.

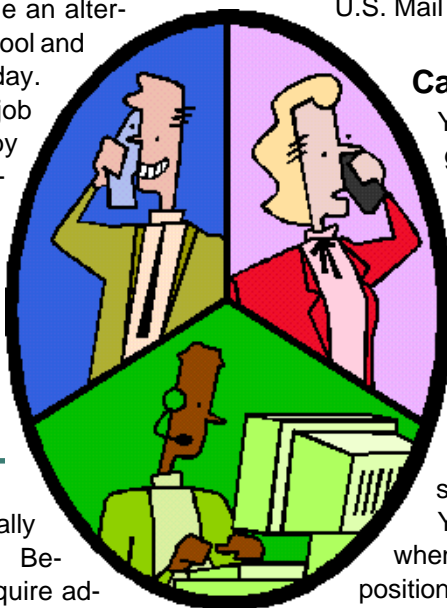
School Priority List

The administrator can place a specific substitute teacher or instructional assistant on a school's priority list. This list also contains the grade level or subject area the school prefers the substitute to be called for. Administrators may have a person added or removed from this list at any time.

Substitute Preferred List

Substitutes complete a SEMS profile at the time of orientation. Substitutes are placed on a school-preferred list by grade level or subject area.

Assignments are offered to a substitute when the school, subject, and day(s) of the assignment match the profile. Changes to a substitute profile may be made at any time by completing an updated SEMS PROFILE form and returning the form to Substitute Employment. First priority is given to the most active substitutes and to new employees who have just completed the substitute orientation. Other profile changes are made in the order they are received. Changes can be sent to Substitute Employment via U.S. Mail or FAX.



Cancellations

You are expected to fulfill your obligation to report when assigned. However, there are times when emergencies occur, and you must cancel assignments. Should this happen, you must call SEMS and cancel the assignment prior to the time of reporting. To cancel an assignment after the reporting time, you must call the SEMS Help Desk. A system operator will assist you in cancelling the position.

Your work history will be reviewed when a cancellation results in an unfilled position. Repeated cancellations will result in your discontinuation of service as a substitute with FCPS.

Substitute Availability Changes

As a substitute employee, you are responsible for modifying the days of the week that you are available for assignments and periods of availability. Calling SEMS can make both changes. This feature is important to substitutes who are only available specific days or times of the year or who will be unavailable for certain periods due to other commitments.

SUBSTITUTE SURVIVAL GUIDE

Starting your day as a substitute will prove to be a unique experience. Being jarred from a sound sleep by SEMS at 5:00 AM is your first challenge. This section will provide you with basic procedures and information that may be helpful when reporting to a school location for the first time. Each school will have a standard substitute procedure tailored to meet the needs of the location. You may choose to keep a procedure file for locations where you are regularly scheduled.

After accepting or verifying an assignment through SEMS, prompt reporting is a must. Always inform the SEMS Help Desk operator when you are unable to meet the assignment reporting time. The Help Desk operator will contact the school's SEMS coordinator for authorization to report late. There may be times during the SEMS morning call out period when you will be offered an opportunity to work after the job has started. You may accept the assignment if you can report to the school in less than 45 minutes. When accepting a job after the reporting time, follow these easy steps:

- Record the job number, location, and teacher's name
- Call the SEMS Help Desk operator with the job information and your estimated time of arrival
- Wait for assignment confirmation from the operator
- Remember to take your job number with you and Have A Great Day

How to Dress

Dress appropriately when teaching. The more like a professional you look, the more the students will treat you as one. Keep in mind the grade level and subject when dressing. Teaching physical education requires that you dress differently than when you are teaching home economics or sixth grade. Be prepared, you may want to carry sneakers and P.E. clothes just in case.

Where to Park

You may be given a parking space number when you accept the job, if not, we recommend that you park in visitor's parking. DO NOT park in a

numbered parking space. Numbered parking spaces are assigned to staff members and students.

Where to Report

When arriving at a school for your assignment you will need to report directly to the main office or to the location specified during SEMS special instructions. Our secondary schools are divided into subschools and you may be asked to report directly to the subschool office.

My job number is...

When reporting to a school for an assignment, have your job number ready. This will speed up check in time. The next steps may vary from school to school.

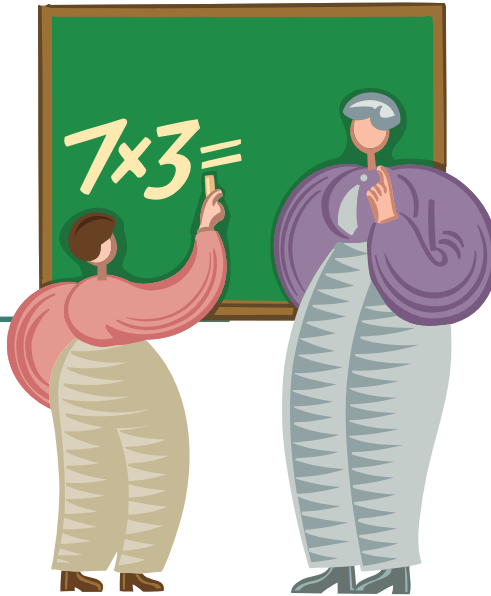
- Complete Time and Attendance report
- Secure a substitute identification badge
- Locate your room assignment
- Review the teacher's lesson plans
- Ask the name of your administrator

Substitutes are required to complete a Time and Attendance report for each day they work. Time is reported from the school location to Payroll. You should always keep your copy of this report.

Questions to ask administrators

- Who is my contact for severe discipline issues?
- What are the procedures for releasing students?
- Do I have other duties such as cafeteria, bus, and playground?
- What are the procedures for dismissal?
- I have a question about the lesson plans
- Do I have students in my class with special medical needs--medications, seizures, allergies?
- Where is the fire escape map?

Familiarize yourself with the setup of the classroom as soon as possible. Review the lesson plans, seating chart and students' names. Follow the lesson plans. Do not deviate from the plans. If you find the lesson plans are inadequate, ask your administrator for direction.



Give them the question to which their answer would be accurate. Then ask or rephrase your question again. ("That would be right if the question were _____. What about _____?")

When class begins

- Greet the students
- Introduce yourself
- Explain what will take place in the classroom and what is expected of students
- Take attendance
- Use the seating chart and address the students by name whenever possible

Your success will depend on your ability to manage a classroom and to motivate students. Keep the students informed and on task. Start each new activity with an outline of what is going to take place and what is expected of the class. You are the teacher--be firm, fair, and consistent. Do not assume that you are alone. There is always an administrator or staff member willing to answer your questions.

Teacher Behaviors that Communicate Positive Expectations

Instructional personnel are relied upon to encourage student learning and active participation. The behaviors listed below will contribute to success for students.

- **Use Wait Time**
After calling on a student, mentally count to eight to give student time to respond and to convey your expectation that she/he has an answer.
- **Use Wrong Answers to Produce Right Answers**
When students give wrong or incomplete answers, probe further with prompts or other questions to help them locate and correct the error themselves.

- **Give Clear Feedback**

When commenting on a student's performance, say specifically what was right or wrong, acceptable or unacceptable, and give specific areas in which improvement is expected. ("You gave all the information needed for the second part. Go back and try to give more for the first part.")

- **Call on All Students**

Devise a system so that you call on all students in the class, not just the ones who raise their hands or are being disruptive.

- **Use Group Work**

Have students work in pairs or trios to check homework or to begin working on an assignment. Put students in small groups for a first round of responses to a "discussion question".

- **Distinguish Clearly When You Give a Choice or a Direction**

Be clear about the difference between situations in which students may have a choice to do something ("Would you like to use this time to start on your work for tomorrow?") and when you are giving a specific direction ("Everyone please do one of the problems for tomorrow before the bell rings.")

- **Demonstrate Respect for All Persons**

Do not make or allow anyone in the class to make remarks that put people down because of race, religion, ethnicity, sex or disability. Do not tell jokes or refer to stereotypes based on such factors.

Lunch Time

Substitute teachers and substitute instructional assistants who work a 7 1/2-hour day are entitled to a 30-minute, unpaid, duty-free lunch. When you substitute as a public health training assistant or attendant, duties are assigned during lunch and you will be paid.

End of Day

It is strongly recommended that you leave a brief account of the day for the returning teacher. Be positive and to the point in your comments. You may want to include your telephone number at this time. Let the teacher know that you can be called directly with questions or for future prearranged assignments.

You must complete your final checkout in the main office. Return all materials that were released to you and secure your copy of your Time and Attendance report. This would be an ideal time to see if you may be needed for future dates.

Substitute teaching is a very demanding and rewarding job. We hope this handbook provides you with the information you need to make your employment with Fairfax County Public Schools successful. Substitute Employment welcomes all suggestions and comments. Please write to:

Department of Human Resources
6815 Edsall Road
Springfield, VA 22151
Attn: Substitute Employment Supervisor

