

SPED SUB BINDER

The 64-page sub binder with every line a type-in field: schedules, snapshots, behavior, three emergency days. Type once, print, hand it to any sub. Fillable PDF.

1. READ THIS FIRST Welcome, Substitute

Read this page first. It takes twenty seconds.

Thank you for being here today. This room may look different from a general education classroom, and that is on purpose. Everything you need is in this binder. You are not expected to know our students — you are expected to keep them safe, keep the routine going, and write down what happened.

The three things that matter most

- Safety first, academics second.** If you have to choose, choose safety. Nobody will be upset that a worksheet did not get finished.
- Follow the paraprofessionals' lead.** They know these students. If a para tells you how a student is usually supported, believe them.
- Keep the schedule.** Predictability prevents most behavior. Section 2 has the schedule.

Please do not

- ☐ Physically block, guide, or restrain a student. Call for help instead — contacts are in Section 3.
- ☐ Withhold food, water, or a scheduled bathroom break as a consequence.
- ☐ Change a student's schedule, seating, or supports without asking a para first.
- ☐ Discuss any student by name outside this room.
- ☐ Give any food or drink until you have checked the allergy page in Section 4.

Before students arrive

- ☐ Read this page and Section 2 (schedules).
- ☐ Check the medical and allergy page in Section 4.
- ☐ Introduce yourself to the paraprofessionals.
- ☐ Find the visual schedule and update it for today.
- ☐ Locate the nearest restroom and the office.

A note from the teacher

3. STAFF & PARAS Coverage Plan

Write the plan while you are calm, not at 6:40 a.m. when you are sick.

Staffing is the first thing to fall apart on a substitute day. Decide now what happens, so nobody has to improvise.

If a paraprofessional is absent

Who picks up their students, and what gets dropped first?

If we are short two or more adults

The minimum staffing plan. Which activities are canceled, who gets called?

Students who must have 1:1 coverage at all times

STUDENT	WHY	BACKUP ADULT

Activities that can be cut without harm

Give the substitute permission to drop these:

5. BEHAVIOR De-escalation: Do This, Not That

Print this one and tape it inside the binder's front cover.

None of these are about being nice. They are about not adding fuel. A substitute who does only these ten things will handle almost any hard moment better than instinct would.

INSTEAD OF THIS	TRY THIS
Raising your voice to be heard over a student	Lowering your voice and slowing down. Volume is contagious in both directions.
Repeating the direction louder and faster	Giving the direction once, then waiting ten full seconds without talking.
Standing over a seated student	Getting to their eye level or slightly below, at an angle rather than face-on.
Asking "why did you do that?"	Saying what you see: "Your body looks tense. Do you want a break or a drink?"
Arguing, bargaining, or explaining the rule again	Stating the choice once, then stepping back and letting it land.
Blocking a doorway or grabbing an arm	Clearing the path, keeping eyes on them, and calling for help immediately.
Crowding the student with several adults	One adult talks. Everyone else moves back and stays quiet.
Taking away earned points or a scheduled break	Keeping every earned thing. Consequences here are never retroactive.

6. BEHAVIOR Elopement & Safety Protocol

The situation substitutes fear most. Six steps, in order:

If a student leaves the room

- Say it out loud.** "Name is out of the room." Every adult should hear you.
- Send one adult, keep the rest with the class.** Never leave the remaining students unsupervised.
- Call the office immediately.** Do not wait to see if the student comes back on their own.
- Follow at a distance. Do not chase.** Chasing turns walking into running, and running toward a parking lot is the real danger.
- Do not grab or block.** Stay with them, stay calm, keep them in sight, wait for trained staff.
- Write & down on the incident log** while it is fresh, including the exact time.

Students who elope, and where they usually go

STUDENT	USUALLY GOES TO	WHAT HELPS

Our building's protocol

Fill in the code word, radio channel, or phone number your building uses.

7. EMERGENCY SUB PLANS Read-Aloud Discussion Frame

Twenty questions that fit every book. Print several copies.

Works with any picture book on the classroom shelf. A substitute does not need to have read it first.

Before reading

- ☐ Show the cover. "What do you think this book is about?"
- ☐ Read the title and the author's name.
- ☐ "Have you read this one before?"
- ☐ Give a job: "Listen for the part where someone feels sad."

During reading

- ☐ Stop every two pages, not every page.
- ☐ "What is happening here?"
- ☐ "How do you think she feels? How can you tell?"
- ☐ "What do you think happens next?"
- ☐ Point at the picture. Let students point too.

After reading

- ☐ "What was your favorite part?"
- ☐ "Was there a problem? How was it fixed?"
- ☐ "Has anything like that happened to you?"
- ☐ "Would you want to read it again?"

Make it easier or harder

Easier: Offer two answers to choose between instead of an open question. Accept pointing, a device, or a nod.

Harder: Ask students to retell the story in order, or to write one sentence about the character's problem.

Record it here

BOOK TITLE _____ READ BY _____ DATE _____

Which students participated, and how?

8. SUB FEEDBACK End-of-Day Substitute Report

Please fill this out before you leave, even if the day was uneventful. Five minutes here saves the teacher an hour tomorrow.

SUBSTITUTE NAME _____ DATE _____ PHONE OR EMAIL (OPTIONAL) _____

How the day went overall

Great Fine Rough Very hard

What we actually got done

Which activities happened, which did not.

Anything that went wrong

Incidents, injuries, calls to the office, missing students. Include times.

Anything that went right

Wish worth knowing about. Teachers rarely hear these, and they matter.

Adults who were in the room

What would have helped me most today

Be honest — this is how the binder gets better.

Eight tabbed sections, 65 pages, every line a type-in field. Print the whole thing or just the pages your room needs.

01**Read This First**

Welcome letter, room at a glance, ten non-negotiables

4 pages**02****Schedules**

Daily, weekly, related services, specials and lunch

4 pages**03****Staff & Paras**

Roster, duty grid, building contacts, coverage plan

5 pages**04****Students at a Glance**

Snapshots, accommodations, communication, medical, dismissal

7 pages**05****Behavior**

Expectations, BIP summary, de-escalation, point sheet, ABC log

8 pages**06****Visual Supports**

Schedule cards, first/then, break cards, choice board, feelings

7 pages**07****Emergency Sub Plans**

Three no-prep days plus a menu of independent work

11 pages**08****Sub Feedback**

End-of-day report, student notes, supplies restock

4 pages**Also included**

- Two binder cover designs
- Eight tabbed section dividers
- How the type-in fields work (page 5)
- Spine labels in two widths
- Setup guide and priority checklist

How the Type-In Fields Work

Ninety seconds of reading. Type the binder once in August, print it, and the sub still writes on paper.

- 1 **Open this file in a PDF reader**, not a browser preview pane. Adobe Acrobat Reader is free and behaves best; Preview on a Mac works. Some browsers fill the fields but do not save them.
- 2 **Click any dotted rule, shaded box or empty table cell and type.** Tab moves to the next field. Long entries scroll inside the box; keep them short, the way a substitute needs them.
- 3 **Save As with the school year in the name** before you type anything, so the blank original stays blank for next year.
- 4 **Type the pages that change once a year** (schedules, roster, snapshots, contacts, emergency plans) and print them. Leave the pages a sub writes on (feedback, point sheet, ABC log) blank and print a stack.
- 5 **Print at Actual size**, not Fit to page, single-sided. The covers, spine labels and dividers are still print-and-cut.

What this file is

A fillable PDF. The fields are built into the document itself, so it works offline with no account or subscription and looks the same on every machine that opens it.

What this file is not

It is not a Google Slides deck, a Google Doc, or a PowerPoint file. You can type in it and print it; you cannot drag the boxes around, add pages or restyle the page. The print version of this binder is sold separately and is the same 64 pages without the fields.

Confidentiality, in one paragraph

Once the student pages are typed, this file is a set of student records. Keep it on a district device or drive, not a personal cloud account; use first names or initials on any page that leaves the room; and follow your district's records policy for the medical and dismissal pages in particular.

If something does not work

The text disappears when I close it. It was opened in something that fills fields but does not save them. Download it, open it in Acrobat Reader, use Save As.

A field is too small for what I want to say. The sub needs the short version. Put the long one on the Welcome letter page, which has room.

Anything else — use the **Ask a Question** tab on the product page. I answer quickly, I will fix it, and the update is free.

Our Daily Schedule

This is the most important page in the binder after the non-negotiables. Fill it in first.

Write the schedule in pencil, or slide this page into a sheet protector and use a dry-erase marker. Update it any time the routine changes.

TIME	WHAT HAPPENS	WHO LEADS IT	WATCH OUT FOR

If the schedule falls apart

Skip ahead to the next item on the clock rather than trying to catch up. Students track the day by *what comes next*, not by what got missed. Move the visual schedule marker so it matches reality.

Student Snapshot

One page per student. This is the page a substitute will read three times.

Print one page per student. Keep first names or initials only if this binder leaves your classroom.

STUDENT (FIRST NAME OR INITIALS)

READING / WRITING LEVEL IN ONE SENTENCE

GRADE / HOMEROOM

MATH LEVEL IN ONE SENTENCE

PRIMARY ADULT WHO SUPPORTS THIS STUDENT

TOILETING / PERSONAL CARE

HOW THIS STUDENT COMMUNICATES

MOBILITY, SEATING, OR EQUIPMENT

What works with this student

Motivators, preferred activities, phrases that help.

What does NOT work

Triggers, demands to avoid, things that escalate them.

Accommodations a sub must provide today

Safety notes — read before students arrive

Elopement, allergies, seizures, feeding, medical devices.

De-escalation: Do This, Not That

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Arguing, bargaining, or explaining the rule again	Stating the choice once, then stepping back and letting it land.
Blocking a doorway or grabbing an arm	Clearing the path, keeping eyes on them, and calling for help immediately.
Crowding the student with several adults	One adult talks. Everyone else moves back and stays quiet.
Taking away earned points or a scheduled break	Keeping every earned thing. Consequences here are never retroactive.
Making it public — announcing the behavior to the room	Redirecting the rest of the class to their work and dealing with it quietly.
Trying to finish the lesson through the escalation	Dropping the demand entirely. The lesson can wait; regulation cannot.

Slot these into your normal schedule. Keep your times; swap the content.

A low-demand, high-success day. Everything is about the students themselves, which means no student can get it wrong. Good for a substitute the class has never met.

Morning Meeting

Name and one favorite

Go around the circle. Each student says or shows their name and one thing they like. Students who use a device or pictures point or select; that counts.

Easier: hold up two picture options and let the student choose one. **Harder:** the student says their name, one favorite, and asks the next person a question.

Block 1

My Hand Poster

Trace a hand on blank paper. Write or draw one favorite thing on each finger: food, color, animal, activity, person.

Easier: an adult traces the hand and the student draws in one finger. **Harder:** write a full sentence on the palm explaining one of the five choices.

Block 2

Feelings Sort

Use the Feelings Check-In Chart from Section 6. Each student points to how they feel and an adult reads the matching sentence aloud. Then act out each feeling as a group.

Easier: the student points to a feeling on the chart and an adult reads it aloud. **Harder:** draw the face for one feeling, label it, and name a time they felt that way.

Block 3

Read Aloud & Talk

Any picture book from the classroom shelf. Use the Read-Aloud Discussion Frame two pages ahead — it works with any book.

Easier: stop every two pages and ask one yes-or-no question. **Harder:** pause before the ending and have students predict what happens next, then check.

Block 4

Class Book

Each student contributes one page: "In our class, I am the one who ____." Draw or write. Staple the pages together at the end of the day.

Easier: the student dictates the sentence and an adult writes it, then reads it back. **Harder:** the student writes the sentence and adds a second one about why.

Any time

Independent Work Menu

Use the menu two pages ahead for early finishers, waiting time, or a block that ends early.

Easier: offer two tasks from the menu instead of the whole page. **Harder:** let the student pick three and put them in the order they will do them.

Wrap up the day

Read the class book aloud to the whole group before dismissal and leave it on the teacher's desk. It is a genuinely nice thing to come back to, and it gives you something concrete to write about on the feedback form.

End-of-Day Substitute Report

Please fill this out before you leave, even if the day was uneventful. Five minutes here saves the teacher an hour tomorrow.

SUBSTITUTE NAME

DATE

PHONE OR EMAIL (OPTIONAL)

How the day went overall

Great

Fine

Rough

Very hard

What we actually got done

Which activities happened, which did not.

Anything that went wrong

Incidents, injuries, calls to the office, missing students. Include times.

Anything that went right

Wins worth knowing about. Teachers rarely hear these, and they matter.

Adults who were in the room

What would have helped me most today

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