SubJournal

For Personnel Responsible for Substitute Teaching

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SubJournal

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Book Review List

Call For Manuscripts

The *SubJournal* invites you to submit articles for publication

The *SubJournal* is a professional, academic, peer-reviewed publication. The specifically targeted audience for the *SubJournal* includes individuals and organizations that deal with issues germane to substitute teaching. Articles should not exceed 3,000 words and should be submitted both in hard copy, double spaced, using Microsoft Word™. Articles citing references should use APA format with complete bibliographic references. For returns, submissions must include a self-address, stamped envelope. All submitted manuscripts will be acknowledged within two weeks of receipt. Articles selected for review will receive notice in four to six weeks. All manuscripts accepted for publication become the property of STI/USU. The *SubJournal* reserves the right to edit or otherwise modify articles to facilitate formatting and publication requisites. Address manuscripts, books for review, advertising inquiries, and correspondence to: Substitute Teaching Institute, *SubJournal*, 6516 Old Main Hill, Logan, UT 84322-6516.

Upcoming Events

July 14, 2004
   Train-The-Trainers Workshop, Park City, Utah

July 15-17, 2004
   Summer SubSolutions Conference, Park City, Utah

October 20 2004
   Cultivating A Higher Quality Substitute Teacher,
   East Point, Georgia

July 13, 2005
   Train-The-Trainers Workshop, Park City, Utah

July 14-16, 2005
   SubSolutions Conference, Park City, Utah

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Letter from the Editor

Welcome to the first issue of the *SubJournal* for 2004. This issue focuses on the experiences of substitute teachers as represented through individual experience and research. Two articles (Lunay and Cornwall) present the substitute experience in other English-speaking countries (Australia and the United Kingdom).These articles highlight differences and similarities in the way substitute teaching is experienced in different countries.

The Lunay article and an article by Suzie Thorne are reflections on substituting experiences by individuals who are also students seeking degrees in education. Their experiences in the classroom are useful reminders of the difficulties substitute teachers face in the classroom. Ralph and Suzie also provide insight into how valuable substitute teachers can be in providing answers to some of the difficult issues facing managers of substitute teachers.

A report from the House of Commons in the United Kingdom is also presented in this issue to round out the international perspective. The report is a summary of findings and concerns with the status of substitute teaching in Ireland. Permission was granted from the Her Majesty's Stationery Office in Great Britain to publish the report.

Profiling substitute teachers is the focus of work by the Substitute Teaching Institute (STI). STI researchers present the results of a study of substitute teacher demographics in three districts in Colorado, Georgia, and Arizona. This study is an extension of an earlier study conducted in Utah.

The final article in this issue brings insight into culturally sensitive instruction. Dottie LeBeau provides information to help substitutes rise to the opportunities presented by the increase in non-English speaking students in schools and how to include these students in instruction. The more effective such practices are, the more enjoyable the teaching experience is for substitute teachers.

The books reviewed in this issue discuss making instruction fun, how principals can improve staff development, team communication for educational administrators, basic literacy strategies, and basic communication skills for administrators. Each is a timely topic of benefit to submanagers, substitutes, and/or human resource administrators.

Zach Tippetts

A View from Across the Pond: Exploring the Perceptions of Supply (Substitute) Teachers in England

Gareth Cornwall

In 1988, the Conservative government led by Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, introduced legislation in England and Wales that brought markets into education. One of the impacts of this legislation was to create a market for teacher recruitment. Throughout the 1980's and 1990's the gap between the demand for teachers and the supply of teachers grew. This can be attributed to a variety of factors; an ageing teacher population, a reduction of teacher training places, and a rejection of the profession by a cadre of teachers, reacting to policy moves towards a more managerial culture in schools. In response to these factors and further growth in demand for supply cover (substitute teachers) to support a range of initiatives introduced by Prime Minister Tony Blair's Labour government (for example, the National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies) the market for supply teachers has developed into a multi- million pound business.

Indeed, estimates suggest that the market is now worth £600 million ($1,000 million) per annum, accounting for up to 40,000 teachers (approximately 10% of the teaching population). The stipulations and preferences of the education system in England and Wales necessitate that supply teachers are qualified with a teaching degree or teaching diploma. In order to supply this volume of teachers, private recruitment agencies (who account for approximately 70% of the market) have sourced teachers from a variety of countries, particularly Commonwealth countries such as Australia, New Zealand, Canada and South Africa (the sample group for this paper reflected the opinions of teachers representing twenty one different nationalities.)

The data presented here is based on qualitative and quantitative research conducted with a sample of 268 supply teachers working for one of the largest private supply teaching agencies, 'Dialogue Education'. This paper provides insights into the perceptions of supply teachers regarding their treatment by schools and what they like and dislike about supply teaching. What is interesting to note is that many of the management solutions for schools and supply staff

developed by the team at the Substitute Teachin Institute at Utah State University (STI/USU) are relevant to schools and teachers in England.

Experiences of supply teachers in schools

Although supply teachers play a significant role in schools, there is relatively little mandated structure for schools to follow in their management. As the inspectorate for schools in England, the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED), noted in its 2002 report on standards in supply teaching,

> "There is a lack of continuity in the teaching because they have been poorly briefed about what should be taught and the expectations that they should have of the pupils, or because the lesson plans they receive are inadequate" (p. 3)

Supply teachers may be walking into a school just as the day starts, armed only with some basic material and their wits. Schools' treatment of supply teachers does vary. Organized schools will provide a pack of information on the timetable, class, procedures and rules. Some will also provide a supply 'buddy' to support the teachers. Others will leave the supply teacher to it. There is no requirement for schools to behave in a certain way, although the DfES issued best practice guidance in May 2002 to all schools[1].

In the light of this, it is interesting then to observe comments from supply teachers about their treatment by schools.

Supply teacher comments:

- *Some (most) teachers are really nice and concerned and some (few) can be really nasty + unfriendly.*
- *Some schools are extremely unhelpful and provide NO support.*
- *Most schools ignore supply teachers.*
- *I don't expect to be treated like a regular teacher.*
- *Most schools maintain a professional approach.*
- *As a supply I'm often ignored in the staff room.*
- *Just one of the mob. They forget OTT's[2] don't know the system.*
- *Of the 39 schools I've been in since 1999 there are big variations in experiences for me.*

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[1]Using supply teachers to cover short-term absences.
[2]Overseas trained teachers

- *If I'm there more than one or two days, I'm treated more as a regular.*
- *Felt a spare/useless/"not wanted" part.*
- *Totally depends. Usually the attitude of the staff is also reflected by the children.*
- *Here today, gone tomorrow.*
- *If I make the effort I'm always treated well.*

What is most striking about these comments is the range they cover, from acceptance to frustration to resignation. Clearly, there is not a consistency of experience. Equally clear it the implication for pupils in terms of the consistent quality of teaching delivery.

Further questioning of supply teachers experiences in school was built around an attitude scale, with response separate between daily supply teachers and 'long term' teachers (teachers working in a school for more than six weeks). The result are contained in figure 1 and 2 below.

Choose the statement you feel is most accurate based on your supply experiences

Do schools treat you like one of their regular teachers?
(Day to day)

Figure 1

**Do schools treat you like
one of their regular teachers?**
(Long term teachers)
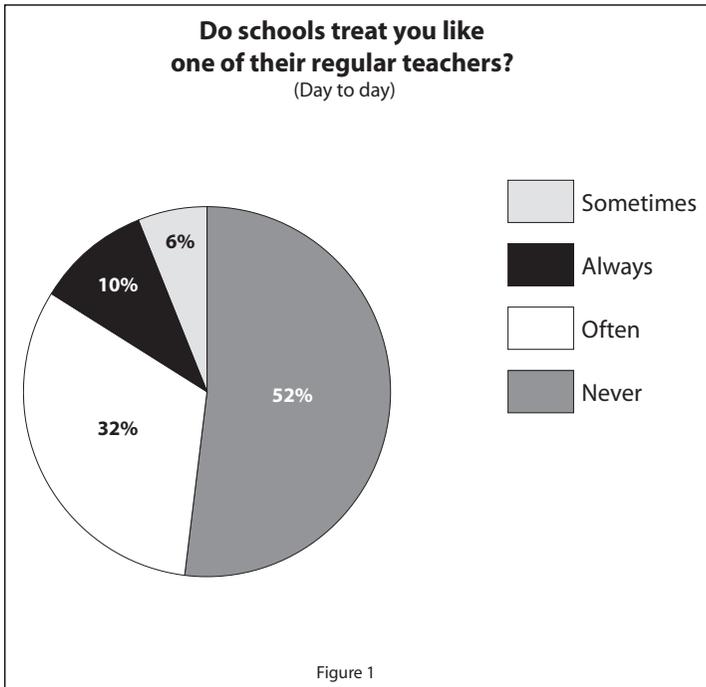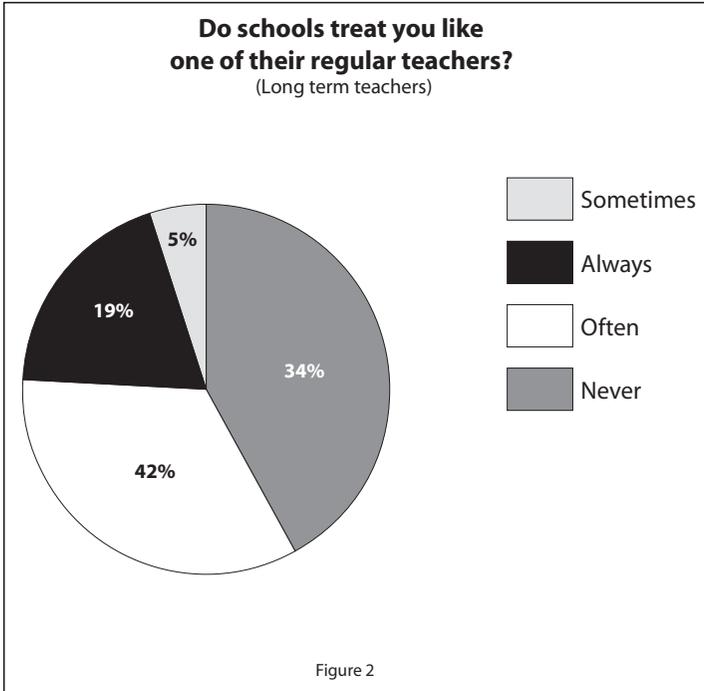
Figure 2

Noteworthy in comparing these two figures, is the higher proportion of those who feel treated like one of the schools regular staff amongst long-term teachers (53% always/often against 42% for day to day). This is understandable given that relationships will build over a period of time. What is concerning though is that 47% of long term teachers still feel that their treatment is sometimes/never like that of a regular teacher. As we shall explore in the next question, one manifestation of this is in potential stresses in the relationship between permanent teachers and supply teachers.

Question: What, if anything, do you dislike about supply teaching?

Three key areas of negative feelings emerge from this question. Firstly, teachers express dislike for the lack of relationship with pupils. One of the impacts of this is problem behaviour from pupils. This was the single biggest factor identified by this cohort as a negative about supply teaching.

Relationships—Teacher comments

• *Not building up long term relationships with staff members/pupils*

- *Children are so disrupted by having so many supply teachers – spend too much time on behaviour management than actual teaching*
- *The children cannot trust you as much*
- *The lack of respect students give you*
- *The pupils don't see you as a proper teacher – disrespectful*
- *Lack of continuity and disrespect from students*
- *Not having time to build rapport with students*
- *Having to break up relationships with students*
- *Not knowing where children's books are, establishing teacher character over and over each lesson*
- *I miss the continuity. Contact with the children. Having a class and place of my own*
- *Teaching subjects that my knowledge is limited. Students think they have a free lesson, lack of respect from students. Isolation in school that is unfamiliar*

A second factor is the insecurity of working as a supply teacher. This manifests itself in the uncertainty of work and the lack of benefits.

Insecurity—Teacher comments

- *Waking up and not knowing where I'm going*
- *Lack of work sometimes when I need it*
- *Not having the status of full time staff in school*
- *Not paid over holidays, less security*
- *Travelling to schools (90 mins +), disrespectful children, work not set out.*
- *No security, no pension*
- *Not knowing where I will be from one day to the next. Waiting for phone calls.*
- *Periods of no work can be demoralising*

A final factor is, as we have already touched on, staff attitude.

Staff attitude—Teacher comments

- *Discipline. Non-involvement in school, 3rd rate treatment by most staff*

- *Attitude of some full time staff*
- *The way supply teachers are perceived & treatment by staff & pupils (generally very poorly)*
- *Some full time staff can be snooty and unhelpful*
- *School / teacher attitude towards you when you are visiting*
- *Managing difficult behaviour in classes, being ignored by staff at some schools*
- *Lack of support by Senior managers at school*

Summary:

While the nature of supply teaching is inherently changeable, this appears to be compounded by the supply teachers feelings towards the school and colleagues; the pupils and the broker of employment, the agency. Grimshaw et. al. (2003) suggest that tensions can develop between supply teachers and permanent staff. They quote one permanent teacher who states:

> Most supply teachers come in with their newspaper, their coats, umbrella and expect every lesson to be sorted out…If they arrive at a classroom and there is no work set out they won't do anything. They will come to see (they deputy head) and wait for something to be sorted out for them and then they will go back and child-mind (p. 282)

Having identified a degree of resentment, Grimshaw et al (2003) suggest that,

> This was coupled with many of the supply teachers we interviewed relaying stories of how disillusioned permanent teachers in schools would ask them about supply teaching with the view to taking it up in future. (p. 283)

Clearly, this has implications for the successful management of a school and the collegial dynamic within it. An undercurrent found in this cohort was the feeling that pupils' treatment of supply teachers reflected their teachers (and the schools) feelings. This is an interesting perspective. Research by the Substitute Teaching Institute at Utah State University[3] suggests that greater collegial support is key both to the success of the supply teacher and their retention in the future.

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[3]STI/USU specialises in the development of practical support for substitute teachers and submanagers in US schools.

Finally, concerns about job security, and conditions, are clearly highlighted by this sample. The uncertainty of work, lack of a pension and particularly the unpaid periods during holidays are high up in teachers concerns about supply teaching. This reinforces the findings of Grimshaw et. al. (2003) that, "unpaid holiday was the main reason why those most likely to enjoy the flexibility of supply teaching would consider applying for a permanent post". (p. 281)

The next question explores motivation to supply teach, identifying a clear order winner.

Question: What do you like about supply teaching?

Two major factors emerge in the responses to this question. The single biggest factor is flexibility.

Flexibility—Teacher responses

- *Flexibility, variety, no long term planning or staff meetings!!*
- *Could leave the school if it didn't suit*
- *Variety of work on offer. Flexibility, I am able to take time off to raise my family*
- *Flexibility. All care no responsibility. Seeing more schools*
- *Freedom of choice, less responsibility for marking, preparation, insight into different schools*
- *Freedom to choose. Work at my convenience, when and where I want*
- *It gives me an opportunity to know different schools*
- *Its great and I get to meet so many children and teachers*
- *The flexibility to work when I wish*

This single factor outweighs all others. Flexibility means different things to different people; for some in our sample it is the ability to work around their children; for others the opportunity to earn and travel. What emerges strongly then, is a sense that supply teaching provides an element of personal freedom and choice.

The second major factor is a reduction from the pressures we have identified as being associated with being a teacher. Barlin and Hallgarten (2001) suggest that, "Supply teachers are immune from none of these problems, yet may be more able to filter out their worst effects." (p. 69)

Reduction of pressures associated with teaching—Teacher responses

- *Not too much paperwork, variety. I don't have to face Ofsted during inspections*
- *Less responsibility! No reports to write! Yay!*
- *Shorter hours – you can have a life*
- *Little responsibility for pupils long term progress*
- *I just like teaching*
- *I'm in charge*
- *More time being able to be spent on actual teaching*
- *No staff meetings, no parents evenings, no planning apart from daily, no record keeping, no aggravation from parents freedom to take time off*
- *Feel 'freer'*
- *No preparation (or minimal), no commitment, don't have to return to deal with bad kids*
- *One does not have to do all that Book Work – Planning Assessing etc. No staff evenings and numerous other burdens*

As well as these two major factors, a couple of other factors emerge. The first of these is the ability supply teaching gives a teacher to assess a school before taking a permanent post. Barlin and Hallgarten (2001), suggest this is "largely positive" for both parties (pg. 69). Hutchings also acknowledges this trend, noting that one interviewee described it as a 'suck and see' approach (pg. 4)

Taste it and see—Teacher responses

- *Flexibility and able to see / know school before committing myself*
- *It gives me an opportunity to know different schools*
- *Being able to find out a place before applying permanently*

This 'taste it and see' approach provides a positive opportunity for both the school and the teacher to make sure they are suitable for each other.

The second of the more minor factors to emerge was from overseas candidates who were positive about the opportunity supply teaching provided them to learn from a different system.

Overseas—Teacher responses

- *Seeing how a new education system works*
- *The new ideas of teaching, especially in numeracy and literacy. The use of resources and the flexibility of floating from class to class*
- *Flexibility, meeting new people, exposure to different schools / teaching styles*

To some degree this endorses suggestions that that there is a positive element to the global market in teacher supply, in that new teaching styles and methods will be transmitted overseas when teachers return home.

Summary

Supply teaching offers a degree of flexibility that is clearly welcome to a significant body of teachers. As Barlin and Hallgarten (2001) suggest, "Supply teaching has become a more positive choice for teachers". A variety of motives lie behind the desire for flexibility. It is understandable if the strong notion of personal 'choice' attached to the post modern era has been absorbed into the teaching profession – it is perhaps unrealistic to expect society and education to change while teachers remain attached to restrictive notions of duty and loyalty.

This is equally true when considering the positive feelings supply teachers express about being relieved of some of the full force of duties attached to teaching. As Barlin and Hallgarten (2001) suggest,

> Relative to full-time permanent teachers, many supply teachers spend less of their time on the bureaucratic burdens associated with teaching and working hours are reduced. This provides many individuals the opportunity to teach, without shouldering the heavy burdens associated with being a permanent teacher. (p. 69)

While this may be a positive feature for the teachers themselves, it has profound implications for education. As we have seen, there is evidence to suggest that permanent teachers do not always react positively to their supply teacher colleagues. Is it that the individualism in supply teachers, their willingness to forgo the traditional model of the teacher, presents a challenge to what Grimshaw et. al. (2003) call, "the collegial 'ethos' traditionally associated with the teaching profession"? (p. 284) If this is so, the

impact on the children caught in the middle is potentially significant, especially when one considers the number of supply teachers working.

Conclusions:

The supply teaching market in England is big business. The winners in this business are private sector recruitment companies who generate healthy profits and the Government who are able to conceal the full extent of teacher shortages in part created by their own policies.

Although teachers certainly benefit from the greater flexibility supply teaching provides, it appears that they do so at a certain price. The level of support offered by schools to supply teachers appears to be inconsistent, compounded by a negative attitude amongst some full time.

Ultimately it is the pupils who are most likely to suffer the ill effects of this in the standard of education they receive. Of further concern is that the use of supply teachers in England is highest amongst inner city secondary schools, where socio-economic deprivation is often prevalent. It is the pupils in need of the greatest support who are invariably exposed to lower standards of teaching associated with poor preparation, support and follow up. While the Government, the recruitment agencies and many schools have developed initiatives to tackle this, the data presented here suggests that there is still work to be done.

In the light of the English experience, it is interesting then to observe the on-going work of the Substitute Teaching Institute and the potential crossover solutions for supply teachers and managers that it continues to develop.

Selected references:

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Grimshaw, D., Earnshaw, J., Hebson, G. (2003), Private sector provision of supply teachers: a case of legal swings and professional roundabouts, *Journal of Education Policy*, Vol.18, No.3, 267-288

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This paper is drawn from his MA thesis, "Supply teachers: Soldiers of fortune or foot soldiers? Marketisation, teacher shortages and the rise of private sector teaching agencies".

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Challenges Facing The Relief Teacher And Some Simple Suggestions For Fostering Improvement

Ralph Lunay

The following article was written by a relief (substitute) teacher from Australia. It is illuminating to see how many of the issues faced in that country are the same as those faced by substitute teachers in the United States.

The lot of the relief teacher (in Western Australia [WA] at least), does not on the whole appear to be a happy one. During the past 2 years whilst working as a relief primary teacher, I have taught in a multitude of schools ranging across the whole spectrum of socioeconomic areas, physical resources, class sizes and funding bases. I have taught in a variety of classes and have spoken informally to a fair number of fellow relief and temporary teachers. Over the course of these interactions and as a result of my own experiences, I started to form certain thoughts, opinions and "gut feelings", about the way relief teachers seem to be viewed by other educators and the "establishment" as a whole. The overall picture that I have built up from over time is, unfortunately, far from a pleasant one. Alienation, a sense of feeling devalued as a professional colleague, a general sense of "not belonging", and a sense of being viewed as less important in the provision of educational services to our young by the educational bureaucracy appear to be central themes. This prompted me to write a brief article that ties a few thoughts on this subject together. In doing so, I hope to bring to prominence the problems facing a very valuable educational resource. The second part of this paper puts forward some "common-sense" suggestions that would be relatively easy and inexpensive to implement, and might go some way to reduce the perception that relief teachers are the "poor relations" in the educational system.

Introduction:

Relief teaching is an integral part of our provision of education to our young. Although it is an important and crucial cog in the machinery of this service, it is basically ignored by the "machine" itself, and educational researchers in general. When researching

literature on this topic it took me considerable time to come up with just a few articles that provided some insight into the subject. The scarcity of literature on this subject is confirmed by Crittenden (1994) who stated:

> The initial search and review of relevant literature established right from the start that there is scant published material on the subject of relief teaching. Very little research has been conducted in Australia on the subject, and even less information is available on the West Australian scene.

This finding was also supported by Gill and Hand (1992) and Galloway (1993), (both in Crittenden).

Why the relative scarcity of literature on this subject? One possible reason may be that the whole issue of relief or substitute teaching is not really seen as a "sexy" issue to invest time, money and research into. Relief teachers are often "out of sight and out of mind". As long as a qualified body (that still has a heartbeat) has been inserted into the classroom to replace the "real" teacher for the day, everyone's happy. Or are they?

This paper will briefly discuss relief teacher usage, their perceived importance in the workplace, expectations of relief teachers, relief teachers' views on their jobs and some suggestions for (long overdue) improvement. I will be primarily drawing on information gained in several reference articles, my own thoughts, and anecdotal information.

What is the importance of the relief teacher?

Crittenden (1994) reports that in WA in 1993 a total of 1100 relief teachers were servicing government K-12 schools, representing around 14% of the total teacher population. Abdal-Haqq (1997) stated that studies by Wyld (1995) in the U.S. show that on any given day, the relief teacher (RT) staffing component could be as much as 10% of the total teacher population. Billman, (1994); Nidds and McGerald, (1994); and Ostapczuk, 1994 (in Abdal-Haqq) point to the fact that over the course of a student's K-12 education, between 5% and 10% of their education will be provided by RTs. This is supported by Brace (1990). The data on absenteeism in Western Australia was not available. However, if they are similar (and I suspect they are), our students spend a staggering amount of time being taught by relief teaching staff. Based on the preceding figures, this may be literally months over the course of a student's K-12 "lifetime".

It is likely that the above figure would vary based on the time of year and from school to school, with institutions that cater to students from "rough" socio-economic areas possibly relying on RTs significantly more than other schools. This has certainly been my experience with one of the agencies through which I obtain work. This placement agency virtually "guarantees" placements every week-day in two "schools with a reputation". Such experience leads me to believe that students from these schools might have the curriculum delivered to them by many different teachers, permanent and relief, over the course of their educational lives. This is a significant point.

There is also possible reason to believe that the reliance schools place on RTs has been increasing in recent years and will continue to increase over time. This would in part be due to higher importance being placed on professional development for tenured teaching staff. The oft-documented "staffing crises" reported by the mass media, that seem to be plaguing education systems in much of the "Western World" at present, could also have an impact on relief teaching placement and practices.

Who makes up the relief teacher population?

This question, like many others relating to this field of inquiry reveals no hard and fast data. Certainly, I was unable to find any relevant figures to properly answer this question. A small piece of research in this area might possibly reveal some interesting information. Suffice to say at this stage, that many of the relief teachers in service at any given time are looking for permanent postings, as evidenced by Hemmings (1985) and Clark (1983), (in Crittenden) who both point out that:

> …a large component of the relief teaching population in Australia is made up of newly graduated teachers not yet appointed to full time positions.

One could then include other categories of professionals who for varying lifestyle reasons, opt for this work, in favour of tenured positions.

Expectations of (and on) relief teachers:

What do the staff (and students) of any particular school actually expect from a RT, and how is the RT actually viewed by this community?

> Ask members of the K-12 school community how they regard substitute teachers and, depending on whether the informant is an educator or a student, you might get some of the following answers: baby sitter, fair game, stop-gap, object of pity, warm body… Rarely do students, teachers or administrators regard substitutes as full professionals who meet accepted standards of practice.
>
> –Wyld (1995) and Ostapczuk (1994), in Abdal-Haqq (1997).

This has certainly been the bulk of my experience, as I move from one class to another, one school to another, or one socio-economic area to another. The general feeling that seems to be elicited at my arrival in most schools is along the lines of: "That's one less problem we've now got to deal with today…if we don't hear from him or his class he's doing a decent job of managing the kids…" and so on. This seems to signal a generally low expectation of the RT as a professional educator. The educational content of the day is rarely discussed beyond the point of asking whether I've brought enough material to "keep the kids interested", or (sometimes) an apology for the fact that the teacher's educational plan for the day does not exist. (One notable exception to the above is a private school that I often work for, who make it mandatory for every classroom teacher to list in daily work-pad form, including listed texts etc, and the contents of the next day's planned activities.)

Clearly, if RTs constitute a significant portion of a student's K-12 education, (and it would appear that this is quite possibly the case), these professionals should be expected to offer a little more than simply a behaviour-control service with some "busy-work" thrown in. Brace (1990) contended:

> Studies show that students spend as much as 5-10% of their actual class time with substitute teachers. If substitutes are prepared to function only as baby sitters and law enforcers, then students could be losing a significant amount of instruction. Substitutes should be expected to maintain class continuity and move the curriculum forward. But they should not be expected to walk in, pick up a room key from a secretary, and then feel prepared to make a significant contribution to academic learning.

During my time "on the circuit" I have spoken informally with a good number of RTs, and all hold the common view that the main job-requirement (aside from a teaching qualification) is to "keep the

peace" for the duration of their assignment. Anything extra (like actually *teaching*) is seen by the school as an added bonus. This situation is even more astounding in some parts of the U.S. as cited by Abdal-Haqq (1997):

> Qualifications for substitutes vary considerably among school districts. Credentials may include teacher certification, criminal background checks, college transcripts, health certificates and evidence of first aid training (Snyder 1995). Certification is not required in most states and districts; frequently a high school diploma is the sole academic credential needed (Wyld 1995).

Although this is certainly not the case in Australia, the above seems to reinforce the general notion that RTs are not expected to provide the same quality of educational instruction as "real" teachers do.

Other areas of concern that I have personally encountered to date, centre around the way a RT is looked upon by the school community in general. One issue in particular is a real worry: In every school except two, I have received no information whatsoever, on the general school policies, classroom structure, at-risk children, break times, MSB policies and such like. It has been up to me to make the necessary inquiries. In some schools I have been "meeted and greeted" by no-one other than the registrar / secretary, have often had to find the class on my own, and sometimes do not converse with another member of the teaching staff until recess.

Another worrying issue is "playground duty". Many times, I have found myself standing in an unfamiliar setting, overseeing numerous energetic youngsters who I had absolutely no information about. Because I had received no information about the task when it was presented to me, I was unsure of the specific rules and regulations pertinent to that situation. Yet my legal responsibilities and Duty of Care requirements are exactly the same as a teacher who has been at that school for years, knows most of the children, and essentially has the knowledge needed to stop trouble and injury often before it starts. Often, I know for a fact that the teacher whose duty I am replacing is not the one whose class I am actually teaching for the day, but one who is sitting in the staffroom, drinking coffee with colleagues. Professionally speaking, I find this rather lacking. From a personal point of view, I feel devalued as a professional and can understand why so many other RTs might feel the same way.

Staffroom dynamics is another area that is often less than ideal for the relief teacher. In my own case, I could say that around 60% of my assignments to date, have seen me sitting in staffrooms feeling totally and utterly alone, as regular staff discuss "the usual" issues. Frequently, no attempt by anyone is made to at least try and include the poor RT who is sitting there with a glazed smile firmly pasted on his / her face, making vain attempts to be included on some level, in (any) conversation!

This experience is backed up by other anecdotes, and also by Crittenden (1994) who states:

> The RTs surveyed, reported a high incidence of teacher indifference or unfriendliness. This is substantiated by Mullett (1989) cited by Galloway (1993, p.165). "Fifty eight percent of her respondents had worked in some schools where they found no welcome and no support". Observations of RTs in staffrooms confirms this data. The unknown RT is often left sitting alone and not spoken to. Informal discussions with other RTs has verified this as a not uncommon fact.

What does a "good" relief teacher have to offer?

The short answer to this question should be:

> Everything that the regular teacher does, (and maybe more in some situations).

As Crittenden (1994) states:

> Not only do RTs provide a continuity of service, they also enable regular staff to attend in-service courses, thus facilitating curriculum initiatives and the introduction of new technologies into schools.

[Naturally, the term "good (relief teacher)" is pretty much a value call, and one that I feel a little uncomfortable referring to in such an offhand way. In this paper I am using this term simply as a way of acknowledging that within the education profession there are probably teachers (relief or otherwise) who could be seen as either "good" or "lousy" when judged against certain predetermined criteria].

Relief teachers can contribute in other equally important areas.

- They often bring with them, vast wealths of experiences gained in different school settings, which if properly recognised and valued,

could shed light on new and innovative ways of doing things both within the classroom and in the broader context of the school itself.

- "Good" relief teachers are usually very experienced in effective classroom behaviour-management strategies. Put quite simply, those RTs who do not learn and apply this skill, simply do not survive long-term. Effective behaviour management does not remain static within a particular classroom setting, but instead should be flexible and constantly evolving to meet the changing dynamics of the class. Successful RTs can offer effective new strategies in this area.

- New ways of learning "old" material: RTs often teach the same concepts to large numbers of children with very diverse capabilities in greatly varying circumstances. A good RT can bring with them, innovative new ways for teaching core concepts.

- A "good" relief teacher will develop lessons that fully utilise the two most important (and often, the only two) resources available to him/her: the students' brains and mouths. A relief teacher often has no idea of what physical resources will be available on a day to day basis. This means often having to pitch lessons that need not rely on much "back-up" material. Therefore, RTs need to be *interesting, with an ability to motivate their students*. A relief teacher who cannot master this skill will face misery on a day to day basis.

- Flexibility and adaptability: For very obvious reasons, these skills are an essential component of any "good" relief teacher's repertoire.

One additional point of note: I certainly do not wish to give the impression that the above skills are the sole preserve of the "good" relief teacher. They certainly shouldn't be. "Good" tenured teachers would of course possess exactly the same qualities. It is however, my opinion that an effective relief teacher may be more likely to possess most, or all of these qualities, simply due to the fact that to survive in a professional sense, not having these skills means extinction within a short period of time.

Some suggested improvements to "current practice":

The relief teacher plays a crucial role in the day-to-day education of thousands of K-12 students. It has been suggested that the role of

this professional is decidedly undervalued by a significant proportion of the educational community.

What can be done to address this? Whilst not purporting to have all the answers (I wish I did…), there do appear to be some suggestions that make downright sense, and if implemented in a thoughtful fashion, need not "break the bank", economically speaking.

Professional development:

It has long been argued that relief teachers are "left out in the cold" when it comes to accessing professional development (PD). Tracy (1988) contends that appropriate and ongoing PD is as necessary for substitutes as it is for tenured staff, and this is supported by both Crittenden (1994, p 89) and Abdal-Haqq (1997, p 3) who agree that this ongoing training is essential. Certainly, common sense dictates that if tenured teachers are required to attend programs which keep skills and techniques constantly updated, the same must also be necessary for relief staff (maybe even more so).

It would probably not be practical for individual schools to bear the cost of this, however, the Department of Education, (although as financially "strapped" as any public service department is these days), probably needs to consider this option as a priority. At present, there seems to be a two-tiered level of availability for ongoing PD, yet RTs are bound by the same expectations of up to date practices and professional innovations as their tenured colleagues. (In addition to this, RTs, by the very nature of their work, are often least able to afford PD).

Relief Teacher "survival packs":

These do exist in some schools, and would cost little to produce. The two that I have personally seen, have been no more than 2 A4 pages in length, and include all basic information necessary for the RT to discharge their daily duties according to legal and intra-school protocols. Helpful items such as school mud-maps, contact persons, bell times. MSB policies etc were included.

Class-specific procedures/information:

Formulated and regularly updated by each class teacher, this information would assist the RT in maintaining as normal as possible, the regular "flow" of the class. Information listed here, would include such things as at-risk / problem children, a brief summation of that

teacher's management style, expectations of the children and so on. This information could be kept in the Administration office and be made available to the RT at the start of each day (to be returned at the end of each day).

A school policy which makes it mandatory for every regular teacher to plan (on paper), at least one day ahead:

This is self explanatory, would cost nothing and makes perfect common sense. A simple daily planning diary with proposed next-day lessons (complete with names of accompanying texts) to be maintained by each regular teacher. Correctly followed, this would eliminate overnight, one of the biggest disruptors (apart from the actual presence of an unfamiliar face) to normal classroom functioning.

A "Buddy System" for Relief Teachers:

They do it for young newcomers to the school, so why not for the relief teacher? A simple school protocol could be put into place which would automatically select a regular member of staff (dependent on factors such as year level being taught, proximity to the RT's classroom etc). This staff member would be responsible for the "niceties" of the day, which could include walking the RT to the staffroom, showing where the "relief coffee cups" are hidden, (crucial information for relief staff!), introductions and "ice-breaking" assistance, and generally making the new arrival feel at ease. (Personal experience has shown how much more enjoyable the day becomes when one is actually acknowledged as a professional colleague).

Ceasing the legally dangerous practice assigning RTs with Playground Duty unless necessary:

Granted, there are times when a relief teacher is needed to oversee duty of care requirements in this field. However, the practice of regularly assigning duty responsibilities to RTs simply because the opportunity is available to do so, can be dangerous and could certainly be viewed as irresponsible. With today's society becoming more litigious, and onus of responsibility falling ever increasingly on teachers, RTs are in my opinion, at significantly greater risk of litigation than regular teachers, for fairly obvious reasons.

Proper and professional "meet and greet" procedures:

The creation of a school policy which determines who in the school will officially meet the RT at the start of an assignment. This is backed up by Brace (1990) who contends that assisting the RT in settling into the school / class routine as quickly and "seamlessly" as possible should be an integral component of any support system.

Regular rotation of tenured teachers into the relief pool:

This suggestion although controversial, could provide benefits for all teachers. It is my firm belief, that every tenured government school teacher should be regularly rotated into a relief pool at least once per year, for a period of, say, 5 consecutive days. (Consecutive service is important, as it could allow that regular teacher's class to be serviced by one "new face" only). Obviously, this service should be undertaken with no financial (or other) penalty to the tenured staff member. The benefits to all concerned would be these: Regular rotation into "unpredictable" classroom settings would in my opinion, take the regular teacher out of their "comfort zone" for short periods of time. This would reduce "stagnation", which like it or not, happens to most of us in any particular profession. The results would probably see these teachers returning to their classes feeling more "grounded", maybe in possession of some newly acquired (or re-learned) skills, and possibly feeling quite refreshed. I feel that this type of "role swapping" would also create a broader understanding and feeling of professional collegiality, between tenured staff and their wandering counterparts. Although this would no doubt be disruptive (especially at first), and present logistical problems, the above benefits may well outweigh the detractions.

Teacher education institutions should include coursework which teach relief teaching fundamentals:

Given that large numbers of newly qualified teachers start their careers as relief staff, it would make good sense to equip these individuals with at least the basics needed to ensure success in this field.

This view is backed up by Crittenden (1994):

> RTs need to enter relief teaching "with a clear understanding of what to expect and how to approach difficulties" (Hemmings 1985).

Specific training for relief teaching should be a regular segment of all teacher training.

The personal qualities needed for being a RT (eg. flexibility, adaptability, on the spot lateral thinking) should be recognised as necessary for a job which is unpredictable and extremely challenging.

Conclusion:

It should be an educational right of every student to expect that in their regular teacher's absence, the quality of their education is maintained wherever practically possible, at a level that is not dramatically compromised. This means that the whole educational community needs to take responsibility for this continuity. It is the students' responsibility to view the RT in the same (hopefully positive) light as their regular teacher, which means that school policy needs to reflect this value and to enforce it as needed. Classroom teachers need to be aware that part of their responsibility lies with continuity of instruction, and that means effective forward planning. Principals and administrators need to create a culture of valuing the relief teacher along with the positives that emanate from the contribution that these professionals bring to the education community. Departments of education need to foster the professional status that should be accorded all RTs. Parents and guardians also need to be educated into viewing the RT in the same positive light as the regular teacher of their children, and to expect the best from these individuals.

And, above all, relief teaches need to consider themselves as professionals in every sense of the word. They need to place upon their shoulders, the highest levels of professionalism, dedication and expectations of themselves. They more than anyone else, need to view the job they do and the contribution they make, in the highest possible regard.

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The Day in the Life of a Substitute Teacher

Suzie Thorpe

The purpose of this study is to find out if I could be a more effective substitute teacher by using the classroom teacher's management plan, or by using my personal classroom management style. The data that was gathered was: 1. Personal observations and anecdotal notes; 2. Doing plus/delta T-charts with the classes that were used for this study; and 3. Informal interviews with the classroom teachers that I substituted for. Based on these findings I would then evaluate which management style allows for a substitute teacher to be affective in a classroom so that a learning day is not lost for the students.

I had gone through an intense teacher education program in one year and had received my provisional educators license in elementary education. I was excited to begin my career as a teacher, but was not sure which would be a better fit for me, the primary grades or the intermediate grades. I thought that substituting would be an excellent opportunity for me to explore different grade levels as well as different elementary schools in the district that I hoped to obtain a full-time teaching position next year.

When I entered a classroom on my first day of substituting, I was confident I could teach an Everyday Math lesson and model a Writer's Workshop mini-lesson. I also knew I could model very appropriate reading strategies during read aloud. But because I had focused on these skills, I forgot a major element…classroom management. Once I had my first experience in the classroom, I quickly realized my oversight. I was surprised to discover that I didn't know how to enforce management rules. I was hesitant in trying to adjust student behavior, which resulted in worse behavior. I tried to use the teacher's management plan, but wasn't really familiar with it, so wasn't very consistent, which proved ineffective as well. In a Kappa Delta Pi publication, it is stated, "To be a good substitute teacher, you must be able to manage a classroom filled with unfamiliar, highly diverse, and sometimes disruptive students. A typical day will begin with you alone, in front of a classroom, as the only 'outsider'," (Manera, 1996 p. 11).

An average student spends seven days of every school year with a substitute teacher. Although seven days may not seem significant, over a period of twelve years, a student will put in nearly half a school year with substitute teachers (Petersen, 2003). After this first day, I thought about what management style I would use the next time I went into a classroom. Which management style would be the more productive for a substitute teacher so that a learning day would not be lost and that a day spent with a substitute would be a positive experience for the students? This then led to the question of would it be better to try to effectively use the classroom teacher's management style to maintain consistency, or would it be better to use a separate management system?

The Question:

I am an elementary school teacher first and a substitute second. A driving goal of being a teacher is to make each day a positive learning experience for students whether one day, three weeks, or a school year is spent with the students. Ron Shepard said in an online article, "An overlooked problem in our public schools today is how to maintain continuity of instruction when the teacher is absent from the classroom and a substitute must be hired. Glorified babysitting is the term often used to describe a typical substitute's day in the classroom." (2003). Spending the days in a classroom as a "glorified babysitter" was not my idea of being a teacher. Carol A. Jones states in her book, *Substitute Teacher's Reference Manual*, "As a substitute teacher, our role in the classroom is to maintain order and to have the students complete any lessons that have been assigned. It is not your place, unless you are under long-term assignment, to direct learning. Even if you are a certified teacher, you are not the teacher of the class in which you substitute teach."(1998, p 10). Since students do spend many days with a substitute, I felt that in a substituting role, I could have a positive influence on the students that I come into contact with. Thomas L. Goad and Jere Brophy state in their book, *Looking in Classrooms*, that teachers who approach classroom management as a process of establishing and maintaining effective learning environments tend to be more successful than teachers who place more emphasis on their roles a authority figures or disciplinarians (as cited in Jones & Jones, 2001. p. 3). An important key to creating a productive day for students would begin with the management of the classroom.

My question evolved to which would be the best classroom management style, the classroom teacher's or a separate method. If the separate method were chosen, which method would be the best for me? After some research, it was decided to implement this basic method. I would focus on reinforcing the positive behaviors that I saw in the classroom. At the beginning of each class, I would explain to the students that I would write down the names of the students I saw doing the right thing at the right time in the right place and give the names to their classroom teacher. This method is based on the Behaviorist method developed by Lee Cantor in the 1970's. Fredric Jones also presented this method in 1987 (as cited in Jones & Jones, 2001 p. 19).

The specific question that would be answered with this research project is this: Which management style would most provide a positive learning environment for the students, the classroom teacher's or a separate management style which positive reinforcements is used?

Demographics:

Douglas County School District, located just to the south of Denver, Colorado was used for this study. The district consists of 38 elementary schools with grades kindergarten through sixth grade. Most of these schools are on a four-track system where the students go to school year round.

Methodology:

I chose a second grade, a third grade, and a sixth grade in three different schools that I knew I would be substitute teaching in more than once for this study. This way I could make observational notes about how effective each management styles would be. A sample of the notes I took is found in Appendix A.

Personal Observations:

The first time I taught in the second grade class, I tried to use the teacher's behavior program and then three weeks later I was back in the classroom and I used my own plan. The teacher's behavior plan was a flip chart, where the cards would turn from white, to yellow, to blue, to red. Each stage had a more serious consequence. When I had to ask a student to change their behavior more than once I had him or her change their card. I found I was uncomfortable doing this because I wasn't sure I was being consistent with the way the

classroom teacher uses this behavioral plan. Maybe I was being too firm, or what I found was disrupting to classroom learning, did not agree with what the classroom teacher thought was disruptive behavior. I felt I was confusing the students. I also noticed that I was looking for negative behavior and that seemed to promote a negative atmosphere in the classroom. I still felt learning took place, but not in a comforting environment.

Three weeks later, when I returned to this class, I used my management plan. I felt a positive learning environment was established because I focused on looking for students who were doing the right thing, at the right time, in the right place. Since I was looking for that, I was able to immediately reinforce positive behavior. I was also required to learn the student's name so that I could write it down. I made the connection that I didn't need to learn a student's name to tell him or her to flip a behavior card. On this day, learning took place, but in a more positive and comfortable environment. I felt better about how the day went.

The first time I taught in the third grade class, I used my management behavior plan. I explained at the beginning of class that I would be looking for positive behaviors and writing their names down to pass along to the teacher. I found the results to be similar to that of the second grade class. Because I needed to know the student's names to write them down, I was able to quickly learn their names, which is a tremendous help in getting individual student's attention. Since I was looking for positive behavior, I felt more positive and excited about being with this class. This generated positive energy in the classroom, which in turn was felt by the children. They were energized and more motivated to engage in learning. As a result, disruptive behavior was minimized.

The second time in this class, I used the classroom teacher's method, which is taking recess minutes away for disruptive behavior. Once again, I found that learning took place, but the atmosphere was sort of chaotic. I didn't want to take recess away so I kept giving the students chances, which created more disruptive behavior. I wasn't confident that I was taking away minutes for the same reasons the teacher would, so I was hesitant to enforce the consequence. Being as smart as children are, the students quickly caught on to my hesitation and took full advantage of me. Another factor was that after the morning recess, I didn't have any more recesses to hold over them and they knew it.

The first day in the sixth grade class, I used the teacher's classroom behavior plan. She had copies of trains on each student's desk and if the student was not making good choices, the teacher would write on the train what the disruptive behavior was. If the student had three notes on the train, a call would be made to the parents. For positive behaviors, the teacher would give the student chance cards to be added to a jar for a drawing each Friday for a prize.

As with the other two classes, I wasn't comfortable using this method, because I didn't want to be inconsistent with the teacher. I didn't want to confuse the students, so I gave the them too many chances and once again, they quickly caught on. I wasn't consistent in encouraging them to make better behavior choices. Some of the students seemed disappointed when I didn't give out chance cards when they thought they had earned one. The morning was fine, but as the students realized my hesitation in enforcing the trains, the day quickly progressed to a very chatty class and not much learning took place that day. I found it difficult to keep the students on task. I also noticed that the students became increasingly disrespectful to their classmates.

The next time in the class, I used my classroom management plan. I explained at the beginning of the class what I would be doing. I was surprised to see how quickly the students responded to the consistent positive reinforcements and the disruptive behaviors dwindled. The students were motivated to be singled out and complimented on the good choices they were making. Once again, because I was motivated to learn the names so that I could take note, a positive relationship with individual students as well as with the whole class quickly developed. I found it very much easier to implement the lessons the teacher had left for me, and I felt learning took place in a positive and energized manner. I also noted that the students treated each other in a better manner.

What the Students Thought:

To find out what the students thought about their days spent with me as their substitute teacher, I did a plus/delta T-chart at the end of each day. The following tables are their thoughts:

Second Grade Teacher's Management Style	
🙂	☹️
Recess Read Aloud Lunch P.E. Liked the movie	Some kids had to flip their card Didn't earn any marbles Noisy during writing Math was slow because of all of the talking

Second Grade My Management Style	
🙂	☹️
Recess Read Aloud Lunch P.E. Liked the movie Reading was quiet We earned marbles We were good listeners	Noisy during writing Didn't walk in the halls quietly Weren't respectful of classmates

Third Grade Teacher's Management Style	
🙂	☹️
Lunch Spelling Math Literacy – quiet during literacy Recess Read Aloud Library P.E.	P.E. – injuries Math – too loud Lunch recess – inappropriate conversation Too loud in the halls Not respectful of the rain stick (the rain stick was a way that students could ask for quiet in the classroom)

Third Grade My Management Style	
☺	☹
Worked on being quiet in halls First recess was fun P.E. – liked the game Reading – it was quiet Writing – got to share work Mrs. Thorpe's magic tricks	First recess – mean impolite words were used P.E. – kids not being respectful of their learning or of each other Injuries – P.E. and recess Not being respectful of each other in class – talking while others are talking Writing – hard to get started and it was too noisy

Sixth Grade Teacher's Management Style	
☺	☹
Quiet in beginning Students didn't have to leave room Read aloud – like the book Lunch Recess – like playing soccer Liked playing multiplication fact game Liked playing multiplication bingo	Not quiet at the end of the day Some students had to go to Jamaica (timeout desk) Substitute had to ask for quiet several times Not quiet walking in halls

Sixth Grade My Management Style	
☺	☹
Quiet in beginning Didn't have to leave room Extra Recess Daybook time went well Followed instructions for the most part Got work done	Not quiet at the end of the day Substitute asked for quiet a lot Lost recess Math time got noisy

I found it very interesting to see that each class's two plus/delta charts were very similar. The students didn't seem to connect the type of management style I was using to how they thought their day was. I found this to be an interesting insight to see how self-centered children are even in the sixth grade. They don't seem to connect short-term outside influences to how it affects their day.

The Teachers' Thoughts:

Another part of my research was to get the classroom teachers opinions about substitute teachers and classroom management. Generally, the teachers seemed not to have a preference of the management style of the substitute as long as the substitute teacher was respectful of the students, kept the students safe, and some semblance of order was maintained. Also they felt it important that the substitute's management style aligned with the school's philosophy so that a mixed message wasn't sent to the students. For example, if the school's philosophy was to focus on intrinsic rewards rather than extrinsic rewards, it was the hope that the substitute would not give candy or food to the students to get them motivated to do their learning activities.

Findings:

Based on the responses from the classes' plus/delta charts, and the response from the teachers, only I am concerned about which management style to use. The management style, although

important, is a behind-the-scene factor to how I establish a relationship with each classroom I am in.

A specific management style does not always result in a positive change in behavior of a student. I observed that the positive comments didn't always result in a change in behavior; it only seemed to reinforce what the student was doing. Because the student wasn't familiar with such positive reinforcement as a request for a behavior change, perhaps the comments made were too subtle and the student didn't understand that I wanted a change in behavior.

When the students were asked to evaluate how their day went, the fact that they had a substitute didn't affect how they behaved throughout the day or affect how they felt their learning went that day. They were very centered on themselves.

The teachers I talked to hadn't really thought about how a substitute teacher can influence a class. They just hope that the students behave reasonably well, no one gets hurt and the students don't scare the substitute away.

Discovery:

Through this journey of research, it was discovered that the original question I had would not be answered: Which management style is better for a substitute teacher? It was realized that it wasn't the management style that made a difference in each class that is visited; it is the relationship that is established with the students that makes the difference. In a recent online article, Robert and Jana Marzano reported that the quality of teacher-student relationships is the keystone for all other aspects of classroom management. In fact, his data indicates that on average, teachers who had high-quality relationships with their students had 31 percent fewer discipline problems, rule violations, and related problems over a year's time than did teachers who did not have high-quality relationships with their students (2003).

There are so many varying factors that can affect the management of the class. Is it the beginning of the year and are the students still learning about how to be second, third, sixth graders? Is this their first day from being off-track for three weeks? Is it their last week before tracking off? How many days have they had a substitute? Are the lessons the teacher left too hard, too easy, or too long for the students?

I realized that the way I approach each class, by having a positive attitude, by being motivated to see each student as an individual and

to learn their names quickly could be consistent. Once a rapport has been established with a class, then an assessment of which type of management style can be made to decide which will work best for that class on that particular day. Maybe the next time a different management style will be needed.

Another discovery that was made by talking to the teachers is that a teacher plans for a substitute differently if she knows who the substitute will be and if she knows what the substitute's qualifications are. It has been my experience that the teachers with whom a relationship has been established, the plans are more of a normal routine for the class. The substitute is asked to do a math lesson from the curriculum, and do reading groups and writers' workshop. The teachers that aren't using a substitute that they know, use a lot of worksheets, ask for more silent reading than is normal for the class, and have the students play games that don't always hold the students' attention for the amount of time the teacher thinks. It is on these days that a classroom management method is most needed.

As a substitute, I can impact a student's learning either in a positive way, neutral way or negative way. Since students are spending up to 10 days each year with a substitute (Shepard, 2003), it is important that those days are not wasted. The days can be productive if the substitute is qualified, has established a relationship with the teacher, gained the teacher's confidence and has worked to establish a positive relationship with the students.

Because of this research project, more questions were created. How can I establish a positive relationship in a short time? What are some techniques to use? How can I establish a relationship with a teacher so that the teacher feels confident that I can carry on in her class so learning isn't lost and kids aren't wasting their time?

My focus when I enter a new classroom is to quickly establish a positive relationship with the students. In trying to develop good teacher habits, I continue to ask questions, to try new methods, and to reflect on each day's events so that a positive relationship can be quickly establish with each class in which I come in to contact.

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A native Coloradoan, Suzie lives in Lone Tree, Colorado with her husband of 18 years, her three sons and various critter pets: hermit crabs, toads, lizards, turtles, and garter snakes. After being a stay-at-home-mom for eight years, she decided to go back to school to get her teaching license for elementary education. While pursuing a teaching position, she substituted full-time. This allowed her to experience the challenges and rewards of the different grade levels. She had the opportunity to sub day-to-day, as well as having three long-term substitute positions. During this year, she continued on in her education to obtain her Masters in Curriculum and Instruction with an emphasis in Elementary Mathematics from the University of Colorado at Denver, which she will receive this summer. She has accepted a full-time teaching position in fifth grade in Douglas County School District, Colorado.

Appendix A

Questions that were asked teachers:

1. Does it matter to you if a substitute uses her personal classroom management style?
2. Did you notice a difference between the two times I substitute taught in your class?
3. Do you think that a substitute day is a wasted day?
4. Do you plan differently if you know the substitute that will be in your classroom?

The Management of Substitution Cover for Teachers

A Report from the House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts

Recently the House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts commissioned a report on the status of substitute teachers in Northern Ireland in 2002-2003. This is a summary of the report and its findings. It is reprinted with permission. The URL for the report can be found at the end of the article.

The education system depends heavily on substitute teachers providing cover for the absence of colleagues to maintain the smooth running of its schools. This dependence has been increasing in recent years. On average, pupils in Northern Ireland's schools spend approximately 10% of their school year being taught by teachers providing substitution cover.

In 2000–01 substitution cover in Northern Ireland cost £38 million and equated to an additional 1,735 full-time teachers. £24 million was paid by schools, principally on shortterm sickness absences, maternity cover and cover for vacant posts. The remaining £14 million, met by the Boards and the Department, was for long-term sickness and absences due to teacher training. Expenditure on teaching staff providing substitution cover has risen rapidly over recent years, increasing by 29% in real terms since 1996–97. In addition just over £1 million was spent in 2000–01 on temporary teachers sourced through employment agencies.

On the basis of a Report by the Comptroller and Auditor General[1] the Committee took evidence from the Department of Education (Northern Ireland), the Education and Library Boards and the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools on three main issues: assuring the quality of substitute teaching; the re-employment of prematurely retired teachers; and the management of teacher attendance at school.

The over-riding impression the Committee formed about the management of teacher substitution and sickness absence in Northern Ireland is one of complacency. While the need for substitution cover has been growing steadily over recent years and sickness absence is currently running at alarmingly high levels among teachers, we found

that sufficient attention has not been given to these issues as key management priorities. There are three areas which we consider require particular attention.

Lack of review of substitute teaching.

The central concern about the use of substitution cover is how such teaching will affect the quality of pupils' education. In view of this, the Committee found it surprising that the Department's School Inspectorate had not undertaken an evaluation of the management and effectiveness of substitute teaching. We consider that the lack of attention to these issues could compromise the quality of experience which pupils have in the classroom. We note that the Inspectorate intends to carry out a review of substitute teaching during the 2003–04 school year and we wish to be kept informed of the outcome of this exercise.

Inadequate control over the premature retirement of teachers

The Committee is disturbed that the Department's failure to live up to undertakings given to our predecessor Committee in 1992 may have led to substantial resources being unnecessarily committed. Given the high level of redundancies in recent years, a requirement that retraining and redeployment of teachers should always be considered before redundancy decisions are finalised, appears to have been largely ignored. In response to our questions, it has been estimated, using what we regard as conservative assumptions, that the establishment of a redeployment "pool" of teachers instead of approving their redundancies could have yielded savings in the order of £3.6 million in 1999–2000. In addition to this, despite an assurance that the re-employment of prematurely retired teachers would be limited to exceptional cases, we found that the practice had actually increased during the same four-year period.

Ineffective management of sickness absence.

The health record of teachers can have an important influence on the behaviour and performance of children. The reasons for this range from the ability of teachers to provide positive role models for their pupils to the potentially serious impact on a child's education, if continuity in teaching and learning is broken. Teachers in Northern Ireland took on average 10 working days sickness absence in 2000–01, ranging from 6.8 working days' to 14.7 across regions and school sectors. This compares with an average sickness absence rate

of 6 days per teacher in England. The Committee believes that these statistics indicate that the management of sickness absence among teachers has not been accorded sufficient priority within the education system. For instance, no targets have been set to bring sickness levels down or into line with England. It is essential that teachers' health problems are identified and acted upon and that greater commitment is shown towards managing sickness absence more effectively. Strategies that have a clear impact on reducing teacher absences have the potential to save millions of pounds in salaries paid to absent teachers and to reduce the costs of substitute cover.

Assuring the quality of substitute teaching

1. We were surprised to find that the Department's Education and Training Inspectorate had not undertaken a separate review of the quality of substitute teaching within Northern Ireland schools. Instead, the Department told us that if substitute teachers were in a school at the time of an inspection their teaching would be inspected as part of that process. The evidence from the annual inspection programme was that substitute teaching was not identified as a particular problem area.[2] By contrast, we note that a recent report by the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED)[3] has focussed attention on the question of the quality of supply teachers in England; for example, it found that the quality of some pupils' work had declined in approximately half of the secondary schools it inspected as a result of being taught by temporary teachers for a significant period of time. Moreover, it found that temporary teachers teach a higher proportion of unsatisfactory or poor lessons than permanent teachers; twice as many in primary schools and four times as many in secondary schools.

2. There also appears to be some divergence between the view of the Inspectorate on the quality of substitute teachers and that of schools. Half of the schools surveyed for the Comptroller and Auditor General's report felt that there were usually not enough or never enough good quality substitute teachers available.[4] Similarly, the Committee noted the statistical analysis carried out by the Department for the C&AG's Report which indicates some link between the use of substitute teachers and reduced pupil attainment levels.[5]

3. The Committee notes that school inspection in Northern Ireland has less independence than its counterparts in England and Wales where it is carried out by OFSTED—a nonministerial government department. In Scotland also, the Inspectorate has been established as an executive agency. We are concerned that in Northern Ireland, the Inspectorate's status may mean that its relationship with the Department has become too cozy which may have implications for how it approaches issues such as substitute teaching.

4. While the shortage of good substitute teachers was seen by many schools to be a problem, we note from the Comptroller and Auditor General's Report that there are weaknesses in what is offered to substitute teachers in order to improve their performance in terms of induction, training and performance appraisal.[6] Furthermore, we consider it a serious shortcoming that few schools carry out a formal evaluation of the performance of substitute teachers.[7]

5. The C&AG's Report draws attention to a marked increase in the use of recruitment agencies as a source of teachers to provide substitution cover. The regulation of those agencies needs to be rigorous. Recent research in England has raised concern over the failure of some agencies to carry out basic checks on teachers.[8] In the Committee's view the use of agencies simply mirrors the centralised "pooling" system operated by the Boards prior to the introduction of local management arrangements. We were told that the Department and the Boards intend to use new technology with a view to piloting the establishment of a Substitute Teachers' Register which schools could access to meet their substitution needs.[9]

Re-employment of retired teachers

6. We pressed the Department on the high level of premature retirements among teachers—70% of all retirements in 1999–2000—and whether it was convinced that these were all justifiable. The Department pointed to a reduction in the percentage of teachers who retired early in the interests of the efficient discharge of the employer's function, but said that significant numbers of teachers were now being affected by redundancy as a result of a number of factors such as falling school rolls and movements of population.[10] We found the

Department's explanation unconvincing. We note with some concern that the statistics suggest that efficient discharge cases may have simply been re-categorized as redundancy cases over the course of recent years;[11] moreover, the Department's explanation that high levels of early retirement among teachers are forced on employers by falling school roles does not stand up to close scrutiny. The statistics presented in the C&AG's Report clearly indicate that the number of permanent teachers within the system has remained constant during recent years.[12]

7. We also find it difficult to accept that the 50% of teachers who retire early for reasons other than infirmity are not needed in the education system. The C&AG's Report shows that the need for substitute teachers has been growing significantly.[13] Redundancies among teachers between 1996–97 and 2000–01 have meant that the taxpayer has paid expensive enhancements to dispose of a quarter of a million teaching days, only to see many of these teachers re-engaged by schools as substitutes.[14] In view of the savings made by some English education authorities that have established redeployment "pools" of teachers on which schools can draw to meet their substitution needs, we asked the Department and the C&AG whether any costing of such an option had been attempted.[15] According to figures supplied by the Department,[16] a typical enhancement could comprise the following elements:

	£
Pension enhancement	2,455
Lump Sum	7,367
Statutory redundancy payment	15,317
	25,139

During 1999–2000, 286 redundancies were approved, however, the Department pointed out that it was very unlikely that all of these redundant teachers could have been redeployed. For instance, due to family circumstances, it would be unreasonable to expect some teachers proposed for redundancy to relocate, while it is unlikely that there would be an exact match between teachers' qualifications/experience and available posts. Moreover, the Department also said that potential savings from redeployment would be offset to some extent by the cost differential of retaining older teachers on higher salaries and the administrative costs of

managing a redeployment pool. However, as a broad indicator of potential savings, if it is assumed that 50 % of the teachers made redundant in 1999–2000 would be redeployed, then annual savings would be around £3.6 million.[17]

8. The Department also indicated that to introduce such a system would require legislative change. The Committee takes the view that the potential savings which a re-deployment pool could generate far outweigh cost offsets and we consider that a legislative barrier should not be an impediment to bringing arrangements into line with Great Britain.

9. We are incredulous at the Department's suggestion that redundancies in schools are fuelled by a need to protect young teachers from compulsory redundancy. We find it hard to see how strategic planning can be at all effective if older teachers have to be given expensive redundancy packages in order that younger teachers can be employed. In our view operating such a system amounts to little more than throwing taxpayers' money down the drain and demonstrates that the whole process of managing teachers totally lacks a proper strategic overview.[18]

10. In redundancy cases the decision to retire a teacher proposed by a school rests with the employing authorities—the Boards and the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools, the Boards being responsible for meeting the additional compensation costs. Following a Report by this Committee in 1992,[19] the Department reminded employers that re-training and redeployment options should always be considered before decisions on redundancy are finalized. Moreover, it also gave an undertaking that that the School Inspectorate would monitor and evaluate the assessment by schools of teachers proposed for redundancy.[20] Given the high level of teaching redundancies in recent years, the Committee finds it difficult to believe that the feasibility of redeployment has been adequately assessed as part of the necessary only for the teacher to be almost immediately re-employed as a substitute.[21]

11. The Department advised employers in 1984 and 1988 that teachers who had been retired prematurely should be re-employed only in exceptional circumstances. The Report by our predecessor Committee in 1992 also called on the Department to ensure that this guidance was observed. The C&AG found that as a proportion of all temporary days, those worked by prematurely

retired teachers have actually risen from 10% to over 13% between 1996–97 and 2000–01.[22] We are concerned that this may indicate that young teachers are being squeezed out of permanent employment opportunities. Statistics produced for the Committee by the Department show that three years after graduation two-thirds of newly qualified teachers have secured permanent positions, leaving one-third on temporary contracts.[23]

The management of sickness absence

12. Teachers in Northern Ireland took on average 10 working days sickness absence in 2000–01. There is also a wide variation in teacher absence between regions and sectors within Northern Ireland ranging from 6.8 working days to 14.7.[24] In general, sickness absence in Northern Ireland is significantly higher than the average 6 days taken by teachers in England. In particular, the Committee found it difficult to understand why the number of sick days per teacher in Northern Ireland should be double that in London. The main explanation offered by the Department centered on the sick leave taken by female teachers as a result of childbirth and the fact that, in Northern Ireland, females make up a higher proportion of the teaching workforce. However, when we explored this issue in more depth with the Department it was accepted that extended maternity leave was only one of many factors involved.[25] What those other factors are was not explained to the Committee's satisfaction.

13. There are big financial gains to be made by reducing the high level of sickness absence among teachers. For instance, if sickness absence was reduced to the equivalent levels in Great Britain, pro rata savings on substitute teachers would be approximately £4 million, while the teaching and learning benefits of £6 million worth of permanent teachers' time would not be lost to the classroom. The Department has yet to set targets for reducing sickness absence among teachers in order to try and bring it into line with levels in England.[26]

14. We questioned the extent to which the variations in sick leave within the Northern Ireland school system had been investigated by the Department. The Department has not undertaken any specific investigation of this but told the Committee that it had carried out a survey into the health and well-being of teachers in Northern Ireland.[27] We welcome the fact that through this exercise

the Department has identified some effective practices for managing sickness absence which it considers it can learn from.

15. There is a need for the Northern Ireland teachers' employers to explore the potential for making counselling services available to teachers as a way of tackling sickness absence.[28] The Department told the Committee that the survey of teachers' health and well being had supported its approach of trying to develop new practices and methodologies through schools in order to address the problems of teacher sickness and absence.[29]

Availability and reliability of management information

16. The primary source of information about substitute cover and sickness absence is derived from the Department's payroll and personnel system. However, the system was not specifically designed to support the management of these two elements. The C&AG's Report points out that, while the Department has set up an extensive menu of reports which can be accessed to explore aspects of sickness absence, employers had expressed a need for greater access and the ability to use information to provide more meaningful monitoring reports.[30]

17. We noted that, where a school does not provide the Department with a reason for the absence of a permanent teacher, the related period of substitution is classified on the system as being cover for a vacant post. Recognising the limitations of the payroll and personnel system as a tool for managing substitution, the Department told us that it is currently looking at implementing a new management information system to take account of such deficiencies.31

Conclusions and recommendations

Assuring the quality of substitute teaching

1. Given that substitute teachers constitute a much larger proportion of the teaching workforce in Northern Ireland than England, the Committee is surprised that the Inspectorate has not addressed the issue of substitute teaching earlier. The Department has assured us that it has now commissioned the Inspectorate to undertake a review and this will take place during the 2003–04 academic year.

2. We believe that greater independence from the Department would improve the Northern Ireland Inspectorate's standing both within and beyond the education community.

3. There should be better mechanisms in place to support substitute teachers. We find it remarkable that substitute teachers can be put in regular charge of classes without proper induction, training and performance evaluation. We are pleased that the Department is to give serious consideration to formalizing the evaluation of substitute teachers and we look forward to it taking prompt action on the outcome of its deliberations.

4. The Committee stresses that the regulation of employment agencies supplying teachers needs to be robust. We also welcome the fact that the Boards will be establishing a pilot scheme to examine the cost/benefits of setting up their own "pooling" arrangements whereby head teachers could access a centralised database to book substitute teachers on-line.

Re-employment of retired teachers

5. The manner in which the Department has operated the Teachers' Premature Retirement Scheme has led to a massive drain on educational resources. There must be higher priority uses for this money in a region such as Northern Ireland rather than handing out bounties to teachers who still have a contribution to make to the schooling system. In allowing teachers to pursue an early retirement strategy which is lucrative to them but at the expense of the taxpayer, the Department is failing in its duty as a custodian of the public purse. The Committee pointed out to the Department the savings made by some English education authorities that have established redeployment "pools" of teachers. We recommend, therefore, that the Department should examine thoroughly the cost/benefits of establishing redeployment " pools" of teachers in order to decide whether to take powers to facilitate their introduction within the Boards.

6. We are concerned that the Department is failing to adequately assess its teaching requirements. The witnesses did not convince us that they had the strategic overview which we believe is essential for effective planning of teacher numbers and the proper management of substitution and absenteeism. We recommend that the Department comes to an early decision about the teaching workforce it needs and takes urgent action to strengthen its strategic planning to achieve it.

7. One of the most disturbing features to emerge from this session is that the Department has not been successful in complying with

undertakings it gave to this Committee in 1992 that strict controls would be exercised over the re-employment of teachers who had benefited from premature terms and that the process for approving redundancies would be suitably policed. We do not expect to revisit these issues eleven years later only to find that the situation has actually deteriorated. We expect the Department to take firm steps to ensure that employers give the proper degree of preference to unemployed teachers before considering re-employing those who have been retired with enhanced terms. We acknowledge that two-thirds of newly qualified teachers achieve permanent posts within three years of graduation. However, for the remainder, there remains a strong suspicion that their permanent employment is being displaced by long-term substitution among prematurely retired teachers. In this regard, we recommend that the Inspectorate re-establishes its role in the monitoring and evaluation of the premature retirement of teachers. In view of the Department's poor record of action, we are asking the C&AG to give particular attention to monitoring these issues.

Managing sickness absence

8. Sickness absence rates among teachers in Northern Ireland are much higher than their counterparts in England and the Committee is disturbed that the Department has failed to set targets for their reduction. We recommend that the Department develops an action plan and establishes sickness reduction targets aimed at achieving the savings identified in the C&AG's Report.

9. In the Committee's view, reducing sickness absence is not rocket science. The Department needs to explore with the employers and schools the reasons for high sickness absence rates and ensure that Boards and schools benchmark their management practices against those with better records, both within Northern Ireland and across Great Britain, in order to identify and remedy their deficiencies.

10. The Committee agrees that teachers' employers should pilot the use of counseling services in schools. We recommend that they and the Department should promptly review the results of the pilots and expand the provision of these services where there is a clear business case for doing so.

11. It appears that a culture of high absenteeism may have been allowed to develop in some parts of the teaching workforce in Northern Ireland, which gives rise to a particular concern about how this will impact on pupils' learning. Even if teacher absenteeism does not induce similar behaviour among pupils, it is clear that schools and the education system in general have a key role to play if this culture is to be changed.

12. We were told by the Treasury Officer of Accounts that the high rates of sickness absence among teachers are mirrored throughout the public sector in Northern Ireland. This is an obvious concern to us and we have asked that the C&AG reports back to the Committee on this in due course.

Availability and reliability of management information

13. A basic step in managing both teacher substitution cover and sickness absence would be to establish accurate and comprehensive information on their levels, patterns and costs. The Department needs to take urgent action to ensure that improved recording arrangements are introduced so that reliable and easily accessible data is available on the use of substitution cover and the nature of sickness absence.

References

[1] C&AG's Report, The Management of Substitution Cover for Teachers (NIA 53/02, Session 2002–03)

[2] C&AG's Report, para 2.42; Qq 2–4

[3] OFSTED Report, Schools' use of temporary teachers (HMI 503, December 2002)

[4] C&AG's Report, para 2.40; Qq 4–5

[5] C&AG's Report, para 2.53 and Appendix 3

[6] ibid, paras 2.25, 2.35, 2.46

[7] Q 6

[8] C&AG's Report, paras 2.18–2.19

[9] Q 101

[10] Qq 7–8

[11] Q22; C&AG's Report, Appendix 4

[12] C&AG's Report, para 2.1, Figure 3; Qq 102–105

[13] C&AG's Report, para 1.4, Figure 1; Q 23

[14] Qq 104–105

[15] Qq 33–41

[16] Ev 14

[17] Ev 16

[18] Qq 24–27, 104–105

[19] 17th Report from the Committee of Public Accounts, Department of Education Northern Ireland: Premature Retirement of Teachers (HC 84, Session 1992–93)

[20] Department of Finance and Personnel, Memorandum on the 17th and 18th Reports from the Committee of Public Accounts, (Cm 226, Session 1992–93), paras 10–11

[21] Q 57

[22] C&AG's Report, paras 3.6–3.8

[23] Ev 15–16

[24] C&AG's Report, paras 4.4–4.5

[25] Qq 10, 46, 67–77

[26] C&AG's Report, paras 4.7, 4.14–4.23; Q 53

[27] Qq 44–45; Department of Education, The Northern Ireland Teachers' Health and Wellbeing Survey (PriceWaterhouseCoopers, December 2002)

[28] C&AG's Report, para 4.28

[29] Q 53

[30] C&AG's Report, paras 4.15–4.16

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Substitute Teacher Demographics, Perceptions, and Attitudes: A Survey of Substitute Teachers in Three Districts

Zachary Tippetts

Substitute Teacher attitudes and demographics are important information for school district administrators and substitute teacher managers. In areas where substitute teachers are in high demand, it is important to understand what motivates substitute teachers in order to recruit and retain them. In districts where there is low demand, it is important to understand how to support the best substitute teachers in order to maintain a high level of quality in the substitute teacher pool. This study is an extension of a study performed in Utah, taking the results of a survey performed for the Utah State Legislature and applying it a similar survey given to districts outside the state of Utah: Fulton County School System in Atlanta, Georgia, Denver Public Schools in Denver, Colorado, and Kayenta School District in Kayenta, Arizona. The results of the study show interesting data in terms of substitute demographics, education, and motivational factors.

Introduction

In some school districts, any available person with a high school diploma is put to work in the classrooms. In other districts, highly educated individuals looking to contribute to the community form the majority of individuals in the substitute teaching pool. The purpose of this study was to take the data found in the Utah study of substitute teachers' perceptions reported by Smith et al (Smith, Cardon, Tippetts, Rodgers, and Taylor, 2002) and compare it to results obtained in districts outside the state of Utah using the same data collection instrument.

Method

Districts desiring to participate in the study were drawn from participants at the annual SubSolutions conference put on by the Substitute Teaching Institute at Utah State University. Following a presentation on research, participants were asked if they would be

willing to participate in a follow-up study. Of the seven districts willing to participate at that time, three were still available to participate when the study was initiated.

The following information represents the demographic data of the school districts who participated in the study.

Fulton County School District is located in Atlanta, GA. There are:

78,906 students in the district
1,392 substitute teachers in their pool
8,852 teachers in the district

Denver Public Schools is located in Denver, CO. There are
72,195 students in the district
2,200 substitute teachers in their pool
4,204 teachers in the district.

Kayenta Unified School District is located in Kayenta, Arizona. There are
2,577 students in the district
67 substitute teachers in their pool
164 teachers

Each district was sent a set of 50 surveys and postage-paid response envelopes, a random number list, and a demographics instrument.

Instrument

The instrument included the following questions:

1. What age group are you in?

2. What is your highest level of education?

3. How many years have you worked as a substitute teacher (including this school year)?

4. After this school year, how many more years do you plan to substitute teach?

5. Are you currently a licensed teacher or have been a licensed teacher in the past?

6. What are your future employment goals?

7. Do you have children attending school in the school district you substitute teach in?

8. Are you working on a teaching degree?

9. On average, how many days per week do you substitute teach?

10. How many days per week would you like to substitute teach?

11. How many districts do you currently substitute teach in?

12. Rank-order the top reasons why you substitute teach: Pay, Interaction with students, Interaction with professional staff, Stability, Flexibility, Opportunity to continue learning. Advance professional career, Involvement at my child's school, Other.

13. What is your preference for accepting substitute teaching assignments? Elementary, Middle School, High School.

14. Which subjects do you feel most qualified to teach? Science, Social Studies, English, Foreign Language, P.E./Health, Math, Special Education, Art/Music, Business, Computer, Other.

15. Rank-order the three resources that would help you most in your role as a substitute teacher (mark the top three, with 1 being the greatest): Orientation to district policies and procedures; Classroom management training; Organization of a substitute teacher support group; Increased recognition/respect of substitute teachers; District policy manual; Substitute teacher handbook with teaching suggestions and activity ideas; Teaching strategies training; Fill-in activity training; Increased pay; Non-salary compensation or perks; Other.

The following questions were asked with a scale of strongly agree, agree, neither agree or disagree, disagree, strongly disagree.

16. I feel the school district places a high priority on substitute teachers.

17. I feel welcome and appreciated while substituting at most schools I substitute teach in.

18. I feel that I have access to adequate resources to complete my educational tasks.

19. I feel safe at school sites.

20. I feel that I can appropriately manage student behavior in the classrooms I teach in.

21. I feel that teachers leave adequate (instructional vs. busy work) lesson plans for me.

22. I feel that teachers set expectations and prepare students for my arrival.

23. I feel that school personnel support me throughout the day.

24. I know where to park at school sites.

25. I am satisfied with my position as a substitute teacher.

Short Answer Questions

- What are your top three concerns about substitute teaching?

- What can school districts do to make substitute teachers more satisfied?

- What can school districts do to make substitute teachers more effective?

Other questions were asked regarding skills training and orientation which were not included in this report.

Subjects

Districts were given instructions to take an alphabetized list of substitute teachers and use it in combination with the random number list to create a random sample of substitute teachers to be surveyed. Except for one case where a substitute apparently received two surveys, the sample appeared to be sound. Of the surveys that were distributed, we received back 22 from Fulton County, 12 from Kayenta Unified, and 26 from the Denver School District. 6 unidentified surveys were also returned. Overall response rate was 44%.

Procedures

Substitutes were requested to fill out the survey and return it in the post-paid envelope.

Results

The following data are in percentages unless otherwise noted.

Age –Most substitute teachers are over 40. In Denver and Georgia, most are over 50.

Age (Percentages)	16-20	21-25	25-30	31-40	41-50	51-64	65+
Fulton (Mode 65+)	0%	0%	0%	13.6%	9.1%	27.3%	50%
Denver (Median and Mode: 51-65)	0%	8%	4%	4%	16%	40%	28%
Kayenta (Median and Mode: 41-50)	7.7%	7.7%	23.1%	7.7%	30.8%	15.4%	7.7%
Combined	1.5%	4.4%	7.4%	8.8%	19.1%	26.5%	32.4%
Utah (Median and Mode: 41-50 Years)	1.9%	10.6%	6.5%	19.4%	34.2%	19.4%	7.2%

Education—Educational levels in Denver and Fulton County were high. Kayenta and Utah are more evenly distributed

Education	High School	Some College	Bachelors Degree	Graduate Work/Degree
Fulton	0%	13.6%	36.4%	50%
Denver	0%	0%	20%	80%
Kayenta	7.7%	38.5%	23.1%	30.8%
Combined	1.5%	14.7%	32.4%	51.5%
Utah (Median: Bachelors Mode: Some College)	12.2%	36.5%	32.3%	17.5%

How Long Will Substitutes Continue Substitute Teaching: The following chart shows how long individuals plan to continue substitute teaching.

Continue Substituting	0	1-2 Years	3-5 Years	6+ Years
Fulton	0%	9.1%	45.5%	45.5%
Denver	16%	16%	32%	32%
Kayenta	0%	61.5%	7.7%	30.8%
Combined	5.9%	25%	32.4%	33.8%
Utah	14.8%	25.9%	23.2%	30.4%

Career Goals: The following chart shows what the career goals of the survey respondents are.

Career Goals	Career Outside Education	Permanent Teacher	Other District Position	Continue Substituting	Other
Fulton	4.5%	18.2%	0%	77.3%	0%
Denver	0%	28%	0%	56%	16%
Kayenta	23.1%	7.7%	23.1%	15.4%	0%
Combined	5.9%	22.1%	5.9%	52.1%	5.9%
Utah	14.4%	21.7%	4.9%	44.1%	11%

Experience—These represent the mean and median years experience for the different groups.

Experience	Mean	Median
Fulton	8.9	6
Denver	6.1	4.5
Kayenta	3.8	3
Combined	6.6 Years	5 Years
Utah	4.4 Years	3 Years

Substitutes with Children in School: This chart shows the percentage of substitutes who have children in the schools or districts where they substitute.

Children In Schools	Percentage
Fulton	22.7%
Denver	8%
Kayenta	61.5%
Combined	27.9%
Utah	53.6%%

Working on Teaching Degrees: This chart shows the percentage of individuals working on teaching degrees.

Working on Teaching Degree	Percentage
Fulton	4.5%
Denver	8%
Kayenta	30.8%
Combined	13.2%
Utah	14.8%

Teaching Certificates: This chart shows the number of respondents who have teaching certificates.

Teaching Certificate	Percentage
Fulton	27.3%
Denver	76%
Kayenta	23%
Combined	42.6%
Utah	27.4%

Days Taught/Days Wanted: this chart shows how many days per week substitutes work and how many days they would like to work. The teachers in Fulton are pretty content with the number of days they work. In Denver and Kayenta, substitutes would like to work from a half to a full day more than they do. A simple linear regression was performed for these date. Note the high correlation for the desire for more time. The significance was a simple t-test to determine if the means were significantly different.

Experience	Taught	Wanted	Significance (p)	Correlation (r)
Fulton	3.45	3.5	.747	.749
Denver	2.68	3.08	.002	.942
Kayenta	2.70	4.0	.015	.472
Combined	3.09	3.44	.006	.715
Utah	2.42	3.07	.000	.738

Districts Taught For — Most substitute teachers work for only one district.

Number of Districts	1	2	3	4
Fulton	81.8%	18.2%	0%	0%
Denver	60%	24%	12%	4%
Kayenta	84.6%	7.7%	7.7%	0%
Combined	72.1%	20.6%	5.9%	1.5%
Utah	91.3%	6.8%	.8%	.4%

Reasons for Substitute Teaching: The top reasons for substitute teaching are interest in working with students, flexibility and pay. In Fulton, where the substitutes tend to be older and less interested in pay, working with staff at the schools is a motivator. This same group also listed respect from peers as one of the most important issues they would like to see addressed.

Reasons to Teach	Interest	Flex	Pay	Staff	Stability	Learn	Advancement	Kids	Other
Fulton	77.3%	68.2%	31.8%	40.9%	13.6%	31.8%	4.5%	9.1%	4.5%
Denver	68%	84%	64%	20%	4%	28%	0%	0%	8%
Kayenta	61.5%	69.2%	69.2%	15.4%	0%	30.8%	0%	30.8%	0%
Combined	70.6%	76.5%	52.9%	26.5%	7.4%	29.4%	2.9%	11.8%	5.9%
Utah	70.7%	61.2%	36.5%	14.1%	5.7%	28.5%	11%	23.2%	15.2%

Subjects: Social Studies and English were the two topics substitute teachers felt most adept at teaching. Other topics require more disaggregation of skills. Special Education was higher than one might expect.

Subjects	Science	Social Studies	English	Foreign Language	P.E./ Health	Math	SPED	Art/ Music	Business	Computer	Other
Fulton	32%	64%	50%	4.5%	37%	32%	32%	14%	18%	0%	0%
Denver	28%	60%	60%	4%	28%	28%	36%	16%	16%	4%	12%
Kayenta	39%	8%	39%	0%	54%	31%	15%	31%	8%	15%	0%
Combined	32%	63%	52%	3%	38%	28%	31%	18%	18%	6%	4%
Utah	26%	49%	59%	10%	29%	31%	24%	28%	13%	13%	11%

Most Important Resources: Each district had different important points: Fulton=Recognition and Pay, Denver=Pay non-salary compensation, Kayenta=Handbook.

Most Important Resources	Orientation	CMT	Support Group	More Recognition	District Policy Manual	Substitute Teacher Handbook	Teaching Strategies	Fill-in Activity Training	Increased Pay	Non-Salary Compensating	Other
Fulton	14%	9%	36%	54%	0%	27%	27%	9%	50%	32%	18%
Denver	8%	40%	20%	40%	4%	40%	20%	4%	48%	44%	4%
Kayenta	23%	31%	23%	31%	8%	46%	15%	15%	15%	15%	23%
Combined	15%	29%	24%	46%	3%	35%	24%	7%	44%	34%	7%
Utah	18%	40%	7%	37%	5%	36%	25%	18%	68%	24%	10%

Perceptions of the district: Fulton had some areas that were higher then the median for the other districts: safety and feelings of competence with classroom management. In Denver there is a concern about the how teachers prepare students for substitute teachers.

Perceptions (Median)	High Priority	School Welcome	Adequate Resources	Safety	Classroom Management
Fulton	2	2	2	**1**	**1.5**
Denver	2	2	2	2	2
Kayenta	2	2	2	2	2
Combined	2	2	2	2	2
Utah	**3**	2	2	2	2

Perceptions	Adequate Lesson Material	Teacher/Student Expectations	School Personnel Support	Parking	Overall Satisfaction
Fulton	2	2	2	2	**1.5**
Denver	2	**3**	2	2	2
Kayenta	2	2	2	2	2
Combined	2	2	2	2	2
Utah	2	2	2	2	2

Discussion

There are several important conclusions supported by this research. These include:

• Substitute teachers are for the most part not young individuals. Age differences in rural districts, however (as evidenced by the difference between Kayenta and Fulton and Denver), tend to be less than their more urban counterparts.

• Approximately 20% of substitute teachers are looking for permanent teaching positions in the school district. Substitute teaching thus becomes an important recruiting tool for permanent teachers. It also highlights the importance of noting the ease of transition to permanent teaching as a method of recruiting substitute teachers.

• Substitute teachers typically would like to work more would than they do in an average week. This is important information when looking at issues surrounding retention.

• Interest in working with students and flexibility are typically the most important reasons people become substitute teachers. Pay is typically less important. However, the longer substitute teachers work in the schools, pay, recognition, and other methods of compensation become increasingly important. These factors can influence both recruiting and retention of substitute teachers.

• Fulton County School District has made a marked effort over the past few years to improve the experience of the substitute teachers in its district (Coffey, 2002). The success of those efforts which include comprehensive training and other methods of recognition are indicated by Overall Satisfaction (p. 73) of substitutes in that district.

Conclusion

While the generalizability of these findings is limited, several important insights into substitute teachers can be gleaned from these results. Most important, however, is the fact that it is important that districts understand the demographics and interests of their substitute teaching pool. With that knowledge, recruiting and retention issues which plague districts are more easily addressed.

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Culturally Responsive Teaching: What is it? How do we do it?

Dorothy LeBeau

One of the items frequently left out of substitute teacher training is how to deal with the diversity present in the classroom. Substitutes who understand how to enable their culturally different students to succeed in the classroom create a positive environment for learning and behavior. This article focuses on ways substitute teachers can improve the classroom environment through culturally sensitive instruction.

Introduction

Culture is central to learning. It not only shapes the thinking process, it also defines modes of communicating and receiving information. Culturally Responsive Teaching is a pedagogy that recognizes the importance of including students' cultural references in all aspects of learning (Ladson-Billings, 1994)

Gay (2000) defines culturally responsive teaching as using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, and performance styles of diverse students to make learning more appropriate and effective for them; it teaches to and through the strengths of these students. Gay (2000) also describes culturally responsive teaching as having these characteristics:

- It acknowledges the legitimacy of the cultural heritage of different ethnic groups, both as legacies that affect students' dispositions, attitudes, and approaches to learning and as worthy content to be taught in the formal curriculum.

- It builds bridges of meaningfulness between home and school experiences as well as between academic abstractions and lived sociocultural realities.

- It uses a wide variety of instructional strategies that are connected to different learning styles.

- It teaches students to know and praise their own and each others' cultural heritages.

- It incorporates multicultural information, resources, and materials in all the subjects and skills routinely taught in schools. (p29)

Ladson-Billings (1992) explains that culturally responsive teachers develop intellectual, social, emotional, and political learning by "using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes" (p382). In a sense, culturally responsive teachers teach the whole child (Gay 2000). Hollins (1996) adds that education designed specifically for students of color incorporates "culturally mediated cognition, culturally appropriate social situations for learning, and culturally valued knowledge in curriculum content" (p13). Culturally responsive teachers realize not only the importance of academic achievement, but also the maintaining of cultural identify and heritage (Gay 2000).

Culturally Responsive Teaching is a pedagogy that recognizes the importance of including students' cultural references in all aspects of learning (Ladson- Billings, 1994). The following principles encourage culturally responsive teaching:

1. Positive perspectives on parents and families

2. Communication of high expectations

3. Culture and school learning

4. Student-Centered learning

5. Culturally mediated instruction

6. Reshaping the curriculum

7. Teacher as facilitator

Positive Perspectives on Parents and Families

When substitute teachers receive long-term assignments in the classroom, they need to be aware of the importance of parents to the child's success in the classroom. Parents are the child's first teacher and are critically important partners to students and teachers. Teachers should ask parents about their child's needs, perhaps visiting the parents about the child's strengths and weaknesses. Another question a teacher may ask is, " What is the child's favorite learning style?" Communicating with parents allows home and school connections. If we know what the child brings with him/her to school, then we as teachers can make learning meaningful and relevant. If we don't visit with parents or attempt to find out about the home environment, then we make assumptions that are quite often not true.

• How can we seek to understand parents' hopes, concerns, and suggestions?

- Conduct needs assessments and surveys (In the parents' first language) of what parents expect of the school community.

- Establish parent-teacher organizations or committees to work collaboratively for the benefit of the students.

- Conduct home visits in which parents are able to speak freely about their expectations and concerns for their children.

- Send weekly/monthly newsletters (in the home language) informing parents of school activities

- Host family night at school to introduce parents to concepts and ideas children are learning in their classes.

- Research the cultural background of students' families

- Visit local community centers to find out about the cultural activities and beliefs of the studentsVisit the local communities to identify local resource

Communication of High Expectations

All students should receive the consistent message that they are expected to attain high standards in their schoolwork. Teachers should respect all students as learners with valuable knowledge and experience. Effective and consistent communication of high expectation helps students develop a healthy self-concept (Rist, 1970). It also provides the structure for intrinsic motivation and fosters an environment in which the student can be successful.

- Communicate clear expectations. Be specific in what you expect students to know and to be able to do.

- Create an environment in which there is genuine respect for students and a belief in their capacity. Encourage students and offer praise when standards are met.

Culture and School Learning

Children from homes in which the language and culture is not compatible to that of the school may be at a disadvantage in the learning process. These children often become alienated and feel disengaged from learning. People from different cultures learn in different ways. To maximize learning opportunities, teachers should gain knowledge of the cultures represented in their classrooms and adapt lessons so that they reflect ways of communicating and learning that are familiar to their students.

Children learn about themselves and the world around them within the context of culture. I call these mental models. These mental

models are created from all experiences one has. Students who may not have the same experiences as students in the mainstream culture, may feel that they are different and different is bad. Some students may feel pressure to reject their culture so that they may "fit in". This, however, can interfere with their emotional and cognitive development and result is school failure. (Sheets, 1999).

What can teachers do to make *all* children feel that they belong?

- Vary teaching strategies. Use cooperative learning especially for material new to the students.

- Assign independent work after students are familiar with concept

- Use role-playing strategies

- Assign students research projects that focus on issues or concepts that apply to their own community or cultural group.

- Provide various options for completing an assignment

- Bridge cultural differences through effective communication. Teach and talk to students about differences between individuals. Show how differences among the students make for better learning. Attend community events of the students and discuss the events with the students.

Student-Centered Learning

Student-centered learning differs from the traditional teacher-centered instruction. Learning is cooperative, collaborative, and community-oriented. Students are encouraged to direct their own learning and to work with other students on research projects and assignments that are both culturally and socially relevant to them. Students become self-confident, self-directed, and proactive. At this point I would like to reference Paulo Freire "…the more students work at storing the deposits entrusted to them, the less they develop the critical consciousness which would result from their intervention in the world as transformers of that world." If we continue to use the "Banking Concept" with our children, they will not become the problem-solvers needed to make changes to make their world better for themselves and future generations. Learning is a socially mediated process (Golstein, 1999; Vygotsky, 1978). Children develop cognitively by interacting with both adults and more knowledgeable peers. These interactions allow students to hypothesize, experiment with new ideas, and receive feedback (Darling-Hammond, 1997).

How do we promote student engagement in a student-centered learning environment? Have students generate lists of topics they wish to study and/or research. Allow students to select their own reading materials. Initiate cooperative learning groups (Padron, Waxman, & Rivera, 2002). Have students lead discussion groups or reteach concepts. Create inquiry based/discovery oriented curriculum. This strategy is the one of the most important strategies to engage students and make their learning transformative– *create classroom projects that involve the community*.

Culturally Mediated Instruction

Instruction is culturally mediated when it incorporates and integrates diverse ways of knowing, understanding, and representing information. Instruction and learning take place in an environment that encourages multicultural viewpoints and allows for inclusion of knowledge that is relevant to the students. Learning happens in culturally appropriate social situations; that is, relationships among students and those between teachers and students are congruent with students' cultures. By being allowed to learn in different ways or to share viewpoints and perspectives in a given situation based on their own cultural and social experiences, students become active participants in their learning (Nieto, 1996). Hollins (1996) believes that culturally mediated instruction provides the best learning conditions for students. Create an environment that encourages and embraces culture. For example, employ patterns of management familiar to students. Allow students ample opportunity to share their cultural knowledge. As a teacher, you may ask students about their own beliefs and actions.

Reshaping the Curriculum

The curriculum should be integrated, interdisciplinary, meaningful, and student-centered. It should include issues and topics related to the students' background and culture. It should challenge the students to develop higher-order knowledge and skills (Villegas, 1991). Integrating the various disciplines of a curriculum facilitates the acquisition of new knowledge (Hollins, 1996). Students' strengths in one subject area will support new learning in another. Likewise, by using the students' personal experiences to develop new skills and knowledge, teachers make meaningful connections between school and real-life situations (Padron, Waxman, & Rivera, 2002). How do we do this? Use resources other than textbooks for

study. Develop learning activities that are more reflective of students' backgrounds. Develop integrated units around universal themes. Focusing on the larger concepts.

Teacher as Facilitator

Substitute teachers should develop a learning environment that is relevant to and reflective of the student's social and cultural experiences. They should act as guides, mediators, consultant, instructors, and advocates for the students, helping to effectively connect their culturally-and community-based knowledge to the classroom learning experiences.

Ladson-Billings (1995) notes that a key criterion for culturally relevant teaching is nurturing and supporting cultural competence in both home and school cultures. Teachers should use the students' home cultural experience as a foundation upon which to develop knowledge and skills. Content learned in this way is more significant to the students and facilitates the transfer of what is learned in school to real-life situations (Padron, Waxman, & Rivera, 2002)

Conclusion

In order for learning to be meaningful for our students, we need to activate their prior knowledge. This prior knowledge is all the cultural experiences children bring with them to school. If we do not connect new learning experiences to their prior knowledge is becomes irrelevant and no learning takes places. We as educators, must learn more about our students' cultural knowledge so that connections can be made and the achievement gap is narrowed. Throughout this article I have used the term "teacher"; however, we as educators (substitute teacher, classroom aide etc.) are all educators and thus the teacher is all learning situations.

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Communicating Effectively: Tools for Educational Leaders

By Michael B. Gilbert

Reviewed by STI Staff

Mr. Gilbert approaches a common subject – communication - from a not-so-common perspective –educational leaders - on the basis of two premises; i.e. (1) Leaders are goal-directed people who can influence others to follow a path toward that goal, and (2) Education is organic and dynamic, moving away from parental oversight to shared leadership and participatory decision making. In the author's own words, "The determination of needs and the effective communication used to help people succeed [in these areas] are the focus of this book."

The first two chapters address the need for communication to be learned as any other skill. With a plenitude of references the author maintains that effective leaders will adjust their communication styles to help others meet their needs;

whereas "managers" will use the same style for all.

According to the author, the start of communication is listening, and listening is understanding what others want us to understand. Studies show people spend 45% of the day in listening situations and yet they receive little or no formal training. Meanwhile, learning the skills of other components of communication – writing, reading, and speaking – begins in pre-kindergarten. Mr. Gilbert addresses several pages to "How to Listen Better."

The bulk of the book is devoted to explaining and encouraging the use of the Process Communication Model (PCM) developed by Dr. Taibi Kahler. The author maintains, "We communicate depending on one or several aspects of personality and individual tendencies in life and in professional situations." Almost all personality models show *current* characteristics determined by a person's responses to an instrument or by an observation. The strength of the PCM model is that it indicates the *current* state *and* if an individual has experienced a change in preferences in communications modality. PCM divides communicators into the categories of dreamer, doer, funster, believer, feeler,

and thinker. Whereas some models hold these categories stable within individuals, in PCM people sometimes change their primary modality. As Gilbert works his way through the model, he demonstrates through a number of examples how to communicate effectively with members of each group. Process Communication also shows the potential a person has to interact easily and effectively with others who are different. Shifting into frames of reference other than your own is the key to effective communication and conflict resolution.

The book is designed to be studied, not referenced. The overall size and thickness make it easy to carry with you in order to make the most of unfilled minutes. Mr. Gilbert doesn't just describe the Process Communication Model; he trains you how to use it and succeed as an educational leader. If you aren't willing to invest some time in study and application, this may not be the communications improvement book for you.

Communicating Effectively: Tools for Educational Leaders, Michael B. Gilbert, Scarecrow Education, Lanham, Maryland, 2004

The Threads of Reading: Strategies for Literacy Development

By Karen Tinnersley

Reviewed by STI Staff

Karen Tinnersley's book, *The Threads of Reading*, is an excellent look for the non-reading specialist into the processes and goals of literacy instruction. Its prose is clean and thoughtful, its insights into reading are well-grounded in the current literature about reading, and its descriptions of practical application would be of use to staff-developers and content instructors who need additional insight into how they can improve reading skills in their domains.

The decline in reading and other literacy skills has been noted increasingly in educational literature. Concern over declining skills at the college level has prompted a revision of college curriculum and higher education structure. The fact is that literacy is now at the point where it must be the concern of all educators, not simply those in the primary

grades or those designated "language arts instructors" in the secondary grades. Without continued and constant focus, students who are currently poor readers will continue that trajectory and find themselves ill-prepared for the information-based society in which we currently live.

Structurally, *The Threads of Reading* follows the typical path of reading development through its chapters: Readiness/Phonemic Awareness, Phonics and Decoding, Vocabulary, Fluency, Comprehension, and Higher-Order Thinking. Each of the chapters is divided into the subcategories which compose the particular topic. Each subcategory is presented with its major concepts, relevant literature, and examples. Following the content for each subcategory is a listing of activities which can be used to increase student fluency in that particular area. Here are some examples of activities in the Vacabulary section: Word Play, The Definition Game, I'm thinking of a Word, and Palindromes. Each activity includes instructions for implementing the particular activity in the text.

The final chapter, Frequently Asked Questions About Literacy, is an excellent entrée for those educators new to the demands of literacy instruction. It includes answers to such questions as "How Much Reading Time Is Enough?" and "What About Students Who Can't Read?"

Overall, this text is an excellent examination of how reading and literacy instruction is composed and how it can be implemented. The author begins her introduction with the following passage: *"The art of teaching reading is like weaving a beautiful tapestry. Like every tapestry, reading knowledge is made up of tightly woven, strong foundational threads. Each thread must be present to make the tapestry strong, able to withstand lifelong use, and functional through all seasons."* This text is an important primer to teach how such tapestries are woven in individual learners.

The Threads of Reading: Strategies for Literacy Development, by Karen Tinnersley, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Alexandria, Virginia

Helping Teachers Learn: Principal Leadership for Adult Growth and Development

Eleanor Drago-Severson

Reviewed by STI Staff

Helping Teachers Learn is a great expanse of a book in only 208 pages. Like looking out over the plains, there is fertile ground here for exploration. Unfortunately, like the plains, there are few extraordinary features in this text that stand out as distinctive.

The purpose of this text is to help principals understand "what makes for effective professional development." The means the author uses to accomplish this purpose is to study the actions of 20 principals at a variety of "high quality schools" and examine how they support professional development in the schools.

Providing a frame for this analysis is an adult education concept based upon learner types. According to the author, principals must be aware of the learner orientation of the teachers to understand the effects of professional

development initiatives in the schools. The three types are the Instrumental Way of Knowing, the Socializing Way of Knowing, and the Self-Authoring Way of Knowing. In each section of the book, Drago-Severson shows the impact of ways of knowing on the particular method for development being discussed.

The means of professional development outlined in the book are varied. The methods include standard types of development including inservice, courses, mentoring, and travel and more unconventional types of development including collegial discussion, leadership assignment, and coaching. In describing these methods, Drago-Severson has the unfortunate tendency to cite so many sources that she obscures the characteristics of the method that could make it successful. It is also rare that she distinguishes between the existence of a practice and when and how it should be used. Even the charts which outline how different learner types among the teacher population would respond to the method there is a lack of certainty as to whether there is any empirical example that the author's claims will produce positive results.

Wading through the text to find the distinctive features of this text is not easy. Basically, the author proposes that professional development is based upon four pillars (which can function singly or as a group): Teaming, Providing Leadership Roles, Collegial Inquiry, and Mentoring. If any of these concepts is new to you, then you would benefit from examining that section of the text.

In terms of overall value, this book provides very little that is unique. Save for a student looking for a comprehensive literature review into certain aspects of professional development of teachers, this book has little to offer in the way of new insights into professional development. More damning, however, is the way it hides the power of professional development to instigate change and improve education by its breadth and lack of depth.

Helping Teachers Learn: Principal Leadership for Adult Growth and Development, Eleanor Drago-Severson, Corwin Press, 2455 Teller Rd., Thousand Oaks, CA, Corwinpress.com

Effective Group Facilitation in Education

By John Eller

Reviewed by STI Staff

Facilitation of member groups to create goals, to solve problems or resolve issues, or to identify techniques to accomplish goals can be a daunting task. Anyone who has tried to manage a group of individuals who possess different knowledge, backgrounds, and frames of reference knows how challenging working with these groups can be. Some say it's like herding a group of stray cats.

Drawing on his 25 years of experience in facilitating hundreds of groups and providing training and knowledge development to many facilitators, Mr. Eller has prepared *Effective Group Facilitation in Education, How to Energize Meetings and Manage Difficult Groups.* The book is designed to assist those who have been charged (either voluntarily or involuntarily) to help facilitate groups of individuals be successful in their endeavors.

Topics covered in this book include:

- Why do we have meetings and use teams in the first place.
- How to plan for success.
- How to carry out a successful meeting.
- Connecting the members of the team
- Optimizing strategies for teams.
- How to brainstorm.
- Setting and reaching goals.
- Special functions of the facilitator.
- Working with difficult groups.

Each of the topics is analyzed in depth and helpful hints are given that will aid both experienced and novice facilitators. Coverage of each topic also includes forms and job aids to help both the facilitator in preparing for successful meetings and the team member to accomplish the goals of the meeting.

From beginning to the end nothing is left to the imagination regarding effective facilitator development. The illustrative examples and attention to detail will clearly leave the reader with the knowledge they need to master in order to become an effective facilitator. Besides learning skillfully how to manage groups of individuals the reader will learn personal skills necessary to be successful. It is advisable that one master each skill before moving on to the next skill as there are many skills to understand and master.

Overall, the book has a "One Size Fits All" approach to facilitative applications. Everyone can learn from the information given; from the first time facilitator to the veteran facilitator. Because members from any position within an organization may find themselves from time to time in the role of facilitator Mr. Eller provides strategies and techniques that will meet everyone's expectations within the organization. It is clear the book operates from the premise that the best facilitators are developed by drawing out their individual strengths and building on their base with strategies that match the needs of a particular situation. This fine book can help the reader become one of those "best facilitators."

How to Energize Meetings and Manage Difficult Groups, John Eller, Corwin Press, A Sage Publications Company, Thousand Oaks, California 91320

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