

Guest Teacher (GT) FAQ for Principals and School Administrators

STAFFING & RECRUITING

Q. What do I do if I meet someone who wants to be hired as a Guest Teacher (GT)?

A. Schools can communicate the established hiring process posted on the HR Website under job opportunities for Guest Teachers. HR generally conducts 10 monthly Guest Teacher blitzes from July to May. Additionally, Principals can also conduct an interview directly with any individual at any time. Principals should follow the hiring process for guest teachers posted on the Principal Portal:

<https://principal.dpsk12.org/Pages/Landing.aspx>

Q. How do I request a Guest Teacher to cover a classroom?

A. The school (secretary, teacher, etc.) should create an absence in SmartFindExpress with consideration of the three situations described below. Use the SFE Administrator user guide, posted on the guest teacher site at <http://careers.dpsk12.org/substitute-teaching/> or on the Principal and or Secretary portal to obtain instructions on how to enter an absence. Remember that teachers can and should report their own absences in SFE. Administrators only need to do it in an emergency.

1. Job can be created without prearranging a GT or specifying a GT. The system will search for an available GT.
2. Job can be created with a prearranged GT. GT is assigned and the system will not call out to search for an available GT.
3. Job can be created with a specified GT. System will contact the specified GT first. If the specified GT is unavailable, the system will search for an available GT.

Q. How can I add a Guest Teacher to my “preferred list?”

A. Contact Guest Teacher Management, hr_guest_teacher@dpsk12.org, and they will work with you to update your preferred list.

Q. Can Guest Teachers assigned to one geographic area work in a school outside of their specified geographic area – if they are willing and requested?

A. Yes. If a GT works one specific region, and a school wants a GT to be able to also work at their school that is in a different region, the guest teacher can add that school to the location list on their profile. Ask the guest teacher to update their profile on-line.

Q. How can I contact a Guest Teacher available to work at my school?

A. You can now pull reports of available Guest Teachers in SFE. Refer to the User Administration guide located on the Principal / Secretary Portal and the Guest Teacher website. You can also request this same information by emailing the guest teacher program at hr_guest_teacher@dpsk12.org or call the HR Connect main office at 720.423.3900.

Q. What is the maximum number of days that a Guest Teacher can work in the same assignment for the same teacher before effectively becoming a Long Term Substitute?

A. A Guest Teacher can work a maximum of 16 days continuously for the same teacher before becoming a long term substitute. Working 16 days continuously means working in the same assignment, for the same

teacher and not taking any other assignments. These 16 days do not have to be worked consecutively. For instance, a Guest Teacher who works the same assignment for the same teacher on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays for a six week period and does not take any other assignments during this same period. This would be considered to have worked continuously and effectively becomes a Long Term Substitute on the seventeenth day.

Q. It has been brought to my attention that a Guest Teacher has been teaching in the same assignment past 16 days, what should I do?

A. Bring this matter to your School Partner's attention and the Guest Teacher Program. Effective on the 17th day of the assignment, a Guest Teacher effectively becomes a Long Term Substitute. The School Partner should work with the Principal to decide to either; 1) create a job change from a Guest Teacher to a Long Term Substitute if the Guest Teacher is highly qualified, 2) remove the Guest Teacher from the assignment if the person is not highly qualified and work with the Principal to post a Long Term Substitute position, or 3) take into consideration if another Guest Teacher is needed to teach in the position for a few more days and then create a new job for the short time that is needed.

Q. If a Guest Teacher falls into a Long Term Substitute assignment and the Guest Teacher is not highly qualified to be a Long Term Substitute, then do we have to pay them at the Long Term Substitute rate for any time that meets the criteria of a Long Term Substitute?

A. Yes. Any individual who has worked in an assignment that meets the Long Term Substitute policy must be paid at the Long Term Substitute rate.

Q. What steps do I take to get a long term substitute teacher?

A. The hiring process is the same for long term substitutes as it is for teachers. If you need assistance, contact your School Partner or HR Connect.

Q. How can schools help network and recruit Guest Teachers?

A. Here are some ideas on how schools can help network and recruit GT's:

- Attend the monthly hiring blitz. If you are unable to attend send a designated representative to attend. (Contact your school partner or HR Connect to provide you date and times)
- Ask School Partner if GT hiring flyers are available to pass out to parents at events in your school such as open houses, parent/teacher conferences, etc;
- Pass out flyers at community events;
- Hand out flyers at professional organization/network meetings attended by school staff;
- Rally your teachers from time to time to recruit individuals whom they feel would make an excellent GT; and
- Contact guest teacher program to help you brainstorm how to build your Guest Teacher pool for your school.

Q. Are guest teacher-ECE and guest teacher Special Education paraprofessionals able to accept teaching jobs as well?

A. If an individual has been hired by the District as both a guest teacher ECE and or guest teacher Special Education paraprofessional and as a daily guest teacher, that individual can accept jobs in both roles.

Q. Retired teachers are limited to 110 work days per calendar year. Is there a way this can be modified?

A. The maximum work days per calendar year for retirees are set by PERA and DPS does not have authority to change this.

Q. Can I talk to the Guest Teacher before they come to my school? How is this done?

A. Yes. Schools can access SmartFindExpress, open the job that the GT is assigned to and find the GT's name and contact information. The school can also add notes in the comment box when creating the job requesting the guest teacher arrive early to meet with the school secretary.

PERFORMANCE

Q. Who should I contact if I have a guest teacher performance issue of any kind?

A. Principals should contact their school partner and e-mail the guest teacher program. Secretaries, teachers and Guest Teachers should ensure the principal is aware of the performance issue and then e-mail the guest teacher program.

Q. Does the District review expectations for GT's during orientation?

A. Yes. GT's are given the board policies and the guest teacher handbook – both are reviewed heavily during orientation. Schools are responsible for providing their specific school policies and procedures (i.e. Fire Drills, Lock Down procedures...etc) in the GT folder.

Q. When a Guest Teacher is blocked from a school for a valid reason, how many “Do Not Uses” (DNU) is that GT allowed to receive before they are terminated from the District?

A. There is not a set number of DNUs that a GT receives before they are terminated from the District. Each request is handled case by case. The guest teacher program partners with the school partner and investigates the concerns of the DNU request and determines the type of discipline (up to termination) that will be given.

Q. As a principal, can we refer a GT to the District classroom management sessions?

A. Yes. GT's are given professional development opportunities through the curriculum department. You can refer them to the curriculum department using the attached link: <http://curriculum.dpsk12.org/> GTs are not paid for participating and attendance is at their discretion. As a principal, if you feel there is a GT who would benefit from additional training, you can refer them to the link. Note: If your school has the budget, a guest teacher can attend one of the school's professional development training. (Confirm with your school partner and budget analyst for further guidance.)

Q. Will GTs be held accountable for same day cancellations?

A. Yes. The Guest Teacher Program is monitoring same day cancellations on a monthly basis and will be managing out any GTs that show an unacceptable pattern of same day cancellations. Schools are encouraged to e-mail the Guest Teacher Program with these types of concerns.

Q. Is there an effort to notify our GTs that if they need to cancel a same-day job that they call the school to let us know?

A. Currently, the guest teacher program sets same day cancellation expectations with our GTs during orientation. We explain to GTs that they must first cancel their assignment in the System, then contact the school and leave a message. As a courtesy, we also ask our schools to reach out to the guest teacher as well when cancelling the same-day job.

Q. Is there a way to view which GTs have been blocked from our school?

A. Yes. Access SmartFindExpress at: <https://denverps.eschoolsolutions.com> click on PRIORITY LISTS on the left-hand side, Choose Do Not Use (DNU), populate your location, click SEARCH. All GTs on your DNU list will appear below. (Refer to the SFE Administrator User Guide located on the Principal/Secretary Portal.)

OTHER INFORMATION

Q. Who can I contact if I have any kind of questions pertaining to Guest Teachers?

A. Principals, secretaries and teachers should e-mail the guest teach program at hr_guest_teacher@dpsk12.org.

Q. For those current GTs that do not have regular access to the online system – how is the District communicating with them?

A. Information is communicated heavily to new/re-hire GTs during orientation. It is recognize that not everyone has access to a computer, so it has been advised GTs go to their local library, a family or friend and use a computer, or use a DPS computer during free time when working assignments. Guest Teachers can also visit the HR main office at Emily Griffith Campus located at 1860 Lincoln Street and use one of the kiosks.

Q. Will we be given new GT folders every year?

A. Contact the guest teacher program if you need replacement folders for any folders that need to be completely overhauled or have hired a new teacher. If a folder only needs minor adjustments, please use the online template posted on the admin portal.

Q. Is there a plan to address schools that have low fill rates over time?

A. Yes. HR is continually hiring to increase the districts guest teacher pool in order to meet our Guest Teacher demand. Furthermore, your school partner is available to support you with best practices on how at the school level, you can also make changes to improve your school's fill rate. Schools are also encouraged to attend guest teacher interviews to have first pick on guest teacher new hire.

Q. Is there a report that shows my regions (schools) fill rate?

A. Yes. An updated excel report by month is available to view via the Principal Portal. You can also have your SFE administrator run a report from the SFE system using the reports tab. Additional instructions of how

to run a report for your school can be found in the SFE administration user guide located on the guest teacher website at: hr_guest_teacher@dpsk12.org.

Q. Does a school get charged for a Guest Teacher when a job goes unfilled?

A. No. A school will not get charged for paying a Guest Teacher when a job is unfilled. Payroll will regularly send school secretaries a payroll report in order to have the school confirm (“verified” job assignment) any Guest Teachers scheduled to be paid for their school. This is an opportunity for the school to make any adjustments needed and prevent schools from being incorrectly charged for a Guest Teacher.

Q. When a teacher is absent and a job is created in SmartFind Express (SFE), is there a quick reference sheet that explains which Absence Reason code should be used?

A. Yes. The best reference sheet is located in the SFE Administrator User Guide located on the Guest Teacher webpage, Principal Portal: <https://principal.dpsk12.org/Pages/Landing.aspx> and or Secretary Portal: <https://collaboration.dpsk12.org/secretary/Pages/default.aspx>

Q. Should a classroom teacher who is going to be absent and they do not need a guest teacher still enter their absence in SmartFind Express?

A. Yes, they should still enter their absence in SFE. SFE is the system of record for classroom teacher absences. They have an option to indicate that “No Sub is Required” during creation of their absence. This also includes Career Tech Instructors.

USING THE SMARTFIND EXPRESS SYSTEM

Q. Where can I find directions for how to use the SmartFind Express system?

A. Instructions for using the SmartFind Express system are located on the Guest Teacher webpage, Principal Portal: <https://principal.dpsk12.org/Pages/Landing.aspx> and or Secretary Portal: <https://collaboration.dpsk12.org/secretary/Pages/default.aspx>

Q. How can I obtain access to SmartFind Express for an administrator at my school (principal, assistant principal or secretary)?

A. It is recommended that at least two individuals at each school have access to SmartFind Express. If you need to enable access for another administrator in your building, send an e-mail to the Guest Teacher Program, hr_guest_teacher@dpsk12.org. Please include the name and the DPS employee ID of the individual that you would like to have access.

Q. A teacher told me that their absence required approval. What does that mean and how do I approve it?

A. Some absence reason codes that can be selected by a teacher or paraprofessional when they request an absence require approval. Examples include a school directed absence, military leave, or personal day.. These types of absences must be entered at least 5 days in advance of the requested absence date. When you or another administrator at your school with SFE access logs into SFE, you will see a message indicating you

Guest Teacher (GT) FAQ for Principals

have absences to approve. Instructions for how to approve absences are included in the SFE administrator user guide.

Q. What happens if a teacher needs to request an absence under the 5 days and I approved the request?

A. The teacher will not be able to initiate the absence on their own. The SFE Administrator for the school should create the absence request for the teacher.

Q. I cannot log into SmartFind Express. What's wrong?

A. You will not be able to log into SmartFind Express until you have registered in the system over the phone. Please see the instructions posted on the guest teacher site at: <http://careers.dpsk12.org/substitute-teaching/> to learn how to register in the system using the phone. If you cannot register over the phone, contact HR Connect.

Q. The classifications assigned to some of my staff appear to be incorrect. How do I correct their classification?

A. If you are the assigned SFE administrator for your school you can correct the classification assigned to your staff. Instructions can be found on the Principal and Secretary Portal as well as on the guest teacher site at: <http://careers.dpsk12.org/substitute-teaching/> , to learn how to correct a staff member's classification in the SFE system.

Q. Some of my teachers work part-time at my school and part-time at another school. How does that affect the process for finding and paying for guest teachers?

A. If a teacher or paraprofessional works at two different schools, they will report an absence at each location. The system will treat this absence as two different jobs and will obtain a guest teacher for each location. Each job will be tracked and paid separately.

Q. When an employee (i.e. Counselor) is not in SFE and is not the designated teacher but teaches a class and needs a guest teacher on a day they are unable to teach, how should this request be tracked in SFE?

A. An employee that is not in SFE and is not the designated teacher but requires a guest teacher on a particular day, the request should be submitted as a Vacancy with added notes in the Administration Comments of who the guest teacher is teaching for.

Q. Does a Long Term Substitute (LTS) absence need to be captured in SFE and Time and Attendance?

A. LTS absences such as an unpaid missed day would need to be captured in Time and Attendance. If the LTS has a missed day due to illness the LTS or SFE Administrator would create the absence request in SFE.