



Article 21 - Replacement of Absent Teachers

As school districts have recently been struggling to find supply teachers, the Federation has received numerous inquiries in regards to this particular article. The most common question asked by teachers is:

“ If a supply teacher cannot be found by the beginning of classes, can I be asked to cover a class during my preparation period? ”

The answer is yes, you can be asked. However, whether you accept or refuse to do so is left solely to your discretion, unless it is an emergency situation.

Sections 21.02 and 21.03 of the article of the collective agreement are clear:

21.01 The Employer will make a reasonable effort to hire certified supply teachers to replace absent teachers.

21.02 A teacher may agree or may refuse to replace an absent teacher.

21.03 Notwithstanding Clause 21.02, if, during the hours of instruction, an emergency situation arises which would result in a class being unattended by a teacher, the Employer may require a teacher to replace the absent teacher until the arrival of a supply teacher. If a teacher is required to replace an absent teacher pursuant to this clause, the teacher must be informed as soon as practicable of the circumstances justifying such requirement.

Not being able to find a supply teacher is not considered an emergency. If a teacher has to leave suddenly during the school day, that would be considered an emergency and a teacher may be asked to cover until someone else can be found to come in. Another popular question is:

“ Can I be recalled from district PL because a supply teacher could not be found? ”

Yes, you could be asked to return to your school in order to teach your classes.

School administrators should inform the district when they are not able to secure a supply teacher.

Should you have any questions concerning the application or interpretation of this article, please contact a Federation staff officer.

FOCUS Express is published as an information bulletin and is intended for guidance; however, before acting on any information contained in Focus Express, teachers should contact a Federation staff officer at 452-1736 or 1-888-679-7044.

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