

Substitute Binder — Special Education

Everything a substitute needs to run this room for one day.

CONFIDENTIAL
Keep in a locked space

TEACHER	ROOM	GRADE / PROGRAM	SCHOOL YEAR
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WELCOME — READ THIS FIRST

Thank you for covering this classroom. This is a special education setting, so a few things will look different from a general education room. Three things matter more than finishing the lesson plan:

- 1. Keep the routine and the schedule. Predictability prevents most problems here.
- 2. The paraprofessionals know these students well — ask them, and follow their lead on student support.
- 3. If a student escalates, do not physically intervene. Follow the behavior page and call for help.

Anything else the sub should know before the day starts:

STAFF IN THIS ROOM TODAY

NAME	ROLE	HOURS IN ROOM	SUPPORTS WHICH STUDENTS

If you need help right now: Main office ext. _____ · Nurse ext. _____ · Case manager / SPED lead _____ ext. _____ ·
Nearest SPED teacher, room _____

Daily Schedule

Follow this even if the academic work does not get finished.

TIME	WHAT HAPPENS	WHERE	WHO LEAVES / ARRIVES

Students leaving the room: some students go to speech, OT, PT, counseling, or an inclusion class during the day. Do not stop a student from going to a scheduled service, and do not send a student anywhere that is not on this schedule.

Student Quick Reference

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Use initials only. Do not leave this page out on a desk.

INITIALS	COMMUNICATES BY	NEEDS HELP WITH	DO NOT DO THIS

"Communicates by" — speech, sign, AAC device, gestures, picture cards. A student who does not answer you may not be refusing; they may not communicate that way.

"Do not do this" — the single most useful column. Example: "do not take the fidget away," "do not raise your voice," "do not touch their shoulder."

Classroom Procedures

How this room actually runs.

ARRIVAL

BATHROOM

SNACK / LUNCH

TRANSITIONS BETWEEN ACTIVITIES

TECHNOLOGY / DEVICES

DISMISSAL

Behavior & Emergencies

Read this before the first transition of the day.

WHAT IS NORMAL IN THIS ROOM (do not treat as misbehavior)

IF A STUDENT ESCALATES

STUDENT (INITIALS)	EARLY WARNING SIGN	WHAT HELPS	WHO TO CALL

Do not: physically block, restrain, or move a student. Do not remove a student from the room alone. Do not argue or negotiate during an escalation. Call the staff member listed above and keep other students safe.

MEDICAL

INITIALS	CONDITION / ALLERGY	WHAT TO WATCH FOR	ACTION

FIRE DRILL / LOCKDOWN

Emergency No-Prep Activities

If the lesson plans are missing or the day falls apart, use these. No materials needed.

1. Read-aloud + 3 questions (15-20 min)

Read any picture book or short passage aloud. Stop three times and ask one question: who is in the story, what happened, what might happen next. Accept any communication mode — pointing and one-word answers count.

2. Sorting / matching (15 min)

Use anything in the room: crayons by color, books by size, cards by number. Sorting is an active IEP goal area for many students here and needs no prep.

3. Movement break circuit (10 min)

5 jumping jacks, 5 wall pushes, 10 seconds of deep breathing, repeat. Use this any time the room gets loud or restless — it is a legitimate activity here, not a reward.

4. Draw and tell (15 min)

Students draw something about their day, then tell you one sentence about it. Write their sentence under the drawing for them if they cannot write it.

5. Independent work boxes (20+ min)

If there are numbered boxes or bins on a shelf, students likely already know this routine. Ask a paraprofessional to start it — students often run it independently.

Finishing the academic work is not the measure of a good day here. A calm, predictable, safe day where every student stayed regulated is a good day. Thank you.

Note Back to the Teacher

Please fill this in before you leave. It genuinely helps.

DATE

SUBSTITUTE NAME

WHAT WENT WELL

WHAT WAS HARD / WHO HAD A ROUGH DAY

ANYTHING THE TEACHER SHOULD FOLLOW UP ON

WHAT WAS NOT COVERED FROM THE PLAN

Tired of rebuilding these forms every year?

IEP Goal Writer saves each student's profile once, then generates goals, PLAAFPs, progress notes, and parent updates from the same data — free to try at iepgoalwriter.pro

Free printable from **IEP Goal Writer** — iepgoalwriter.pro · Free to use and share with your team. Please do not sell or republish.