

Savagery towards teachers substitute

words | Kennedy Stone layout | Kathryn Ikeda

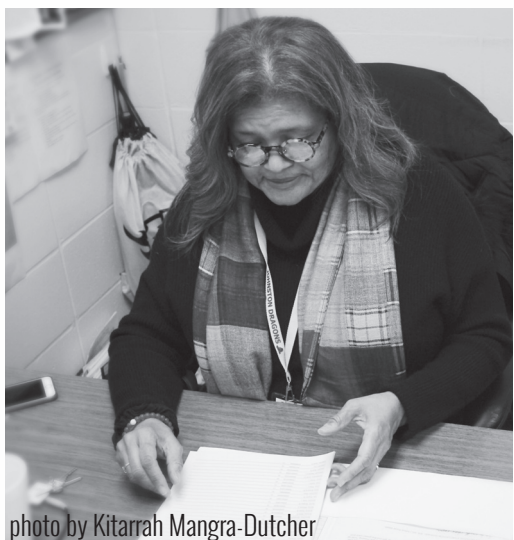


photo by Kitarrah Mangra-Dutcher

Substitute Billy Stone looks at an attendance sheet while subbing for Jason Herran. Students have disrespected Stone in the past.

Substitute teachers

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Estimated employment nationwide:

626,750

Average hourly wage:

\$14.50

Average annual salary:

\$29,630

Iowa's average annual salary:

\$28,280

Sometimes I like to remember my elementary school days. Way back then, students would have genuine interest in learning, enjoy gym class and be quiet on a moment's notice. Yet one thing has always stayed the same from those days: the stupidly desperate, unspoken rule that means everyone has to give substitutes a hard time. "It's very frustrating when I read the instructions, and instead of following them, students go straight to their phones," substitute teacher Kyle Martin said.

So many students refuse to let go of this trend and it just plays into our severe case of denial.

Whenever there has been a sub, I have heard nothing but sarcasm, empty threats and racial slurs.

My mother, Billy Jean Jackson Stone, is a substitute teacher as well.

In all her years of teaching, she has caught the absolute worst of Johnston has to offer. Students treat subs like they are not even human.

Last year, there were kids who would ask ridiculous questions to my mom just to waste time. Many people only seem to like my mother because she will be easy to mess around with and rarely gets upset. Then, they cross the line between laughing with her, and laughing at her, and she doesn't realize it.

When she does realize it, she gets heart broken. She has come home crying because of how ridiculously rude they can be. I have watched kids take advantage of her friendly demeanor even when I am in the room with them. She insists to me

that she can handle them on her own but it is still hard for me to watch.

I have seen an Hispanic sub come in, and students do not care to communicate with anyone who does not speak with an American accent. The time it happened, kids would smirk at each other from across the room. When the sub would try to talk to somebody individually, they would either make fun of the sub or not respond at all.

Even then, there are some substitute teachers who have managed to keep a positive outlook of the students. "I have not felt disrespected here at Johnston,"

substitute Phyllis Caswell said. "Maybe it's because of my teaching background here."

This may make some people feel better about the situation, but it should not. Is it still alright to be a jerk to someone, even though

the person does not know about it? The answer should be no.

At the end of the day, most subs want the same thing we do: to get through the teacher's absence as painlessly as possible. I think when students have a substitute, they should try and help the substitute understand what the class is supposed to be doing instead of sitting there on their phones or making fun of them. "It is different when subbing for younger kids," Kenton Tennal said. "While with high school, you're not able to teach everything because you may not know it. We don't talk for long. Just give five minutes of your time at most, then the rest is up to you."

"I think I have the right to demand respect, because that is the position that has been given to me."

-Billy Stone