

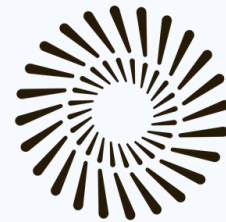
How St. Paul's Episcopal School simplified absence management

The challenge: a tedious process for finding subs

In 2017, Oakland Magazine recognized St. Paul's Episcopal School as the best private elementary and middle school in Oakland. But even with this recognition, St. Paul's was not immune to the nationwide substitute teacher shortage—the school struggled to build and manage a pool of qualified substitute teachers.

To cover teacher absences, St. Paul's relied on a lengthy, involved, and unpredictable process. "It was really hard," recalls Christine Fairless, St. Paul's Middle School Director. "It was difficult. It was time consuming. And it was stressful."

"We basically posted on Craigslist and tapped into our individual networks and created a substitute teacher list," Fairless says. "And then when I would get a text or a call from a teacher who was going to be out, I would just start at the top of the list, texting people and waiting to hear back from somebody."



ST. PAUL'S
EPISCOPAL SCHOOL

- Independent, K-8 day school serves 375 students in Oakland, California
- Specialized programs include Spanish, Service Learning, Choral, and Percussion
- Filled 667 teacher absence days with a 92% fill rate with Swing

“We’re just super thankful. Swing takes so much stress away in terms of finding substitute teachers,” Fairless says.



Building an absence management program with Swing

With the costs and stress of managing absences mounting, St. Paul’s partnered with Swing Education in March, 2016. Because Swing Education charges only for absences filled, St. Paul’s viewed the partnership as a risk-free alternative to its existing absence management program.

St. Paul’s also turned to Swing to manage their substitute teacher recruiting, screening, background checks, and training. While St. Paul’s did have some early reservations about relying on an external pool of subs, the quality of Swing’s substitute teachers has met their high standards.

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The benefits of outsourcing your sub pool

Now, instead of spending anxious mornings waiting to get a return call or text from someone in its internal substitute teacher pool, St. Paul’s administrators are free to support the school’s full-time educators, manage curriculum, communicate with families, develop after-school programs, and more.

“I don’t have to engage with finding substitute teachers as much as I did before when we just had a list I had to go through,” Fairless says.

Ultimately, partnering with Swing has created noticeable time savings for Fairless and her colleagues. “There are definitely time savings,” Fairless says. “In peak times when there are a lot of teachers sick or out for different reasons, we’re saving a few hours a week managing substitute teachers with Swing as opposed to when we used to have to do it.”