



## Operational efficiency for added value

A new solution from Kelly Educational Staffing® helps the Jackson County Public Schools manage the district’s substitute teacher program with less administration, for much more value

The Jackson County Public Schools (JCPS) comprise a district serving Jackson County, located on the southwest edge of North Carolina. The district is fairly unique in that it features a K – 8 system with combined elementary and middle schools, one central high school, one early college, one combined K –12 school that includes an early college, and one alternative school. Spaced across a rural county, the system totals nine schools that serve about 3,600 students. After deploying a substitute management program that’s administered by a local Kelly Educational Staffing (KES®) team, the district has alleviated much of its own administrative burden, while realizing other great benefits along the way. 

### The challenge

The Jackson County Public Schools had successfully developed a system for managing a qualified pool of substitute teachers, which totaled about 85 – 90 substitutes to cover a population of 300 teachers. The district had already invested in automating the process by using Aesop® scheduling technology. But despite these efficiency improvements, the full scope of operating the program was still a burden on its administrative staff. Ongoing activities such as advertising, recruiting, screening, interviewing, and orienting every new substitute took a lot of time, which took each of them away from other core work within their schools. Secondary tasks were often overlooked as well—such as reporting, retention, or keeping the pool engaged over summer and other school breaks.

Another challenge that JCPS faced was compliance with the Affordable Care Act (ACA). The district planned to limit the hours that its substitute teacher pool could work to reduce the administrative burden of tracking hours in compliance with ACA insurance obligations. This restriction would have had an impact on the quality and reach of its substitute program. The same number of substitutes would no longer cover the same volume of absences, causing a risk of decline in classroom placement rates. In addition, substitutes would no longer be able to fill long-term assignments, which provide consistency in the classroom. Schools in the district’s Blue Ridge area are more remote, therefore harder to fill or replace with new candidates. Substitute teachers would

### Results at a Glance

#### CHALLENGE

- Recruit and retain a sufficient pool of qualified substitute teachers
- Automated, centralized Aesop system already in place for substitute teachers; operating the program still a large burden on HR administrative staff
- Tracking hours that substitute teachers could work to be compliant with ACA

#### SOLUTION

- Comprehensive set of tools, strategies, and best practices for recruiting/hiring
- No limit or cap on how many hours substitutes can work, but compliant to ACA
- Dedicated implementation team to deploy across the district within 4 – 5 weeks

#### RESULT

- Enhanced configuration of Aesop system for better data capture and reporting
- Improved placement rates to 99% over an average of 18 – 22 absences per day
- Proactive substitute teacher pool management for added value with lower cost

also have been less satisfied by limited opportunity to earn a full week’s pay, or to contribute on a more full-time basis to the district.

Finally, although the district had previously installed Aesop to facilitate its scheduling activity, it was not leveraging the tool for more advanced automated reporting and tracking functions. Because KES uses the same technology as the basis for its standard program, the team was in a good position to enhance how JCPS was integrating the tool in its process.



## The solution

The KES solution included all of the help that JCPS needed and more. First, the district's existing pool of substitutes was transitioned over to the Kelly® payroll. KES is fully compliant with all legal and employment regulations, but does not cap or limit its substitutes from working as many hours as they'd like. So the district's best and most active candidates were allowed to work without restriction or worries about tracking employee hours to be compliant with ACA regulation. KES absorbed the ongoing expense of ensuring that all those employees remain covered by insurance.

A team of experienced implementation professionals was brought in to help deploy the program across the district in just 4 – 5 weeks, with minimal disruption. A local KES team now manages the process, people, and paperwork associated with teacher absences, allowing the JCPS administrative team to focus on its core responsibilities. KES features a centralized customer support team in place that helps to constantly monitor Jackson County district absences—especially for same-day or last-minute needs—and make contact with available staff to fill absences before the bell rings.

KES also relies on a comprehensive set of recruiting tools, strategies, and best practices designed to identify and attract the most qualified talent to Jackson County Public Schools. The team advertised locally to add about 25 – 30 substitutes to the pool for better coverage in remote areas. They also partnered with a local college, West Carolina University, for new candidates. KES offers all its substitute teachers weekly pay, which has helped to retain more of the district's existing and new candidates.

## The result

As a consultative partner to the Jackson County Schools, the KES team continues to offer a great deal of industry knowledge and analytics that help the district to operate more efficiently. For instance, because the KES absence management platform uses the same Aesop technology the district had in place, Kelly experts were able to configure the tool for better data capture and reporting by using different accounting codes—all without any extra charges for an implementation or “technology” fee.

KES knows that a scheduling tool or payroll management solution alone will not solve the problem of unfilled classrooms. Without a local partner to provide ongoing administration and service, in either case, the burden of filling classrooms falls on the district. KES delivers proactive substitute pool management. After a short time, the comprehensive solution improved classroom placement rates in Jackson County Schools to 99 percent, over an average of 18 – 22 absences per school day. Other value that the district enjoys is best described by its own end users:



*“I am very pleased with our partnership with Kelly Educational Staffing. When personnel concerns arise, I simply make a phone call and our local KES team handles the situation. We had a minor classroom management issue with a Kelly employee earlier this school year. KES was able to remove the substitute from active status immediately. They required and provided additional training in the area of concern before allowing the substitute to return to the classroom. The employee has returned as a successful substitute teacher.”*

—Dr. Kim Elliott, assistant superintendent, JCPS

*“We are a small district with one HR coordinator and one payroll/benefits specialist. The time saved in recruiting, training, processing substitute teachers, and tracking hours worked has more than paid for itself in using Kelly Educational Staffing. The Aesop/KES system allows the district to have a paperless leave approval process for all employees. Scheduling substitutes has never been easier for teachers and school administrators. Many of the substitutes have shared how thankful they are being paid weekly rather than once a month.”*

—Lavonda Woodring, HR coordinator, JCPS

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