

Celebrating diversity starts in the classroom

Network of substitute teachers nationwide undergoes training to foster an inclusive classroom and a seamless learning experience

Q&A with **Nikki Soares**, vice president and managing director, Education Practice, Kelly Services



“At Kelly Educational Staffing, we have the ability to do very specialized training—not just for our mainstream teachers in elementary, middle or high school, but also for specialty areas.”

Why is it important that social-emotional issues and unconscious biases are addressed?

All of us have biases. It doesn't matter who you are. But self-awareness becomes critical, particularly in schools. Anybody who interacts with students has responsibilities toward their social and emotional wellness, not only their academic instruction.

There's a lot of power, not only in our actions, but in our words. For example, how we pronounce names, and the misunderstanding or misconceptions of stereotypes that might be linked to culture, ethnicity, religion or sexual orientation. We are always striving to treat all students equally, and be objective, fair and inclusive of all students.

What role do substitute teachers play in addressing these issues?

Substitute teachers are an extension of the education community. They have the same responsibility and accountability in the classroom as full-time teachers. We're always striving to hire the best, most qualified educators and to make sure they are personally invested in each student.

How does KES prepare substitute teachers for diverse classrooms?

Kelly Educational Staffing meets every

candidate before placing them in classrooms. They're credentialed and background screened. We conduct a behavioral analysis interview to ensure we have the most qualified and appropriate candidates in classrooms. We have an online assessment that measures cognitive ability, skill sets and temperament. We provide a minimum of four hours of training and PD. It covers classroom management, bullying intervention, best practice tips, lesson planning, and recognizing unconscious bias. With the full-time teacher shortage, this is a great program for districts.

How can KES support districts by finding subject matter educators?

We're seeing shortages of specialized teachers across the country, particularly in ELL, STEM and special ed. In spite of an upward trend in the number of special needs students, a chronic shortage of teachers with certification in special ed is thwarting the national appetite for inclusive education. At KES, we have the ability to do very specialized training—not just for our mainstream teachers in elementary, middle or high school, but also for specialty areas. Because of this, districts can tap into our talent pool to find subject matter educators that fit the needs of all students.

For more information, please visit kellyeducationalstaffing.us

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