

A dedicated on-site

# Substitute Recruiting Resource



A Kelly® Company



## High referrals drive quality and cost savings through a unique on-site staffing program with a district.

The remote Bemidji Area Schools serve the city of Bemidji, Minnesota, with a population of roughly 13,500, plus its nearby communities and rural areas.

For years, the school system has relied on Kelly Education Staffing, now operating as Teachers On Call (TOC), to deliver an exceptionally unique workforce solution model — featuring a dedicated local resource on-site to manage its substitute teacher pool and to help staff some of the district’s non-instructional roles.

## THE CHALLENGE

Bemidji is deemed the “first city on the Mississippi” and is located on the northernmost lake feeding the Mississippi River, near the Canadian border. The rural school district serves over 5,000 students through 15 schools. Before contracting with TOC, substitute

## Results at a Glance

### CHALLENGE

- District with 15 schools/5,000+ students in a remote regional hub
- 350+ active teachers, but a relatively small pool of talent for the district
- Demand for degreed substitute teachers impacting placement rates

### SOLUTION

- Full-service staffing program to manage
- Dedicated local resource on-site for effective network
- Expansion to staffing for certain non-instructional district employees

### RESULT

- Long standing partnership - 15+ years
- Customized solution to meet the district needs
- Valuable resource in a tight labor market

teacher placement rates across the district were low — leaving some classrooms without teachers and impacting student achievement.

Retaining and managing a reliable workforce was challenging the district, in part due to its remote location in a somewhat economically disadvantaged area, and partially because the state requires that substitute teachers have a bachelor's degree. As a regional hub and the largest commercial center in north central Minnesota, the town is host to Bemidji State University and other institutions, but most of those students are not yet qualified — leaving a comparatively small pool of talent for the district.

## THE SOLUTION

To effectively meet the unique needs of Bemidji schools, Teachers On Call recommended a solution that deployed its quality substitute teacher management program featuring a dedicated resource on-site to drive more efficient operations to the rural system. TOC assigned the job to a proven employee who was also born and raised in the Bemidji area.

A full-service workforce solution was deployed — including recruitment, hiring, payroll, scheduling, on-boarding, and management of HR issues, such as workers' compensation. Personal attention from the On-Site Client Manager and TOC's centralized office, helped to ensure oversight of an ongoing quality solution for the system. The Client Manager's distinctive outlook as a resident, already well-embedded and networked into the small-town culture, allowed TOC to truly customize a program to fit Bemidji's needs and bring day-to-day service excellence.

The program's recruiting tactics are designed to work within its rural community structure. Bemidji Area Schools are already recognized with a great local employment brand, so new sourcing activities have introduced more direct referrals. Referrals from school employees and local businesses account for 60% of the substitutes provided by TOC. More formal relationships were also established with Bemidji State

University and Northwest Technical College to stay better integrated with students seeking a career in education.

## THE RESULT

TOC recognized early that the Bemidji school system would ideally require a specialized solution, so the team implemented a program that capitalized on some of its challenges. By bringing untapped sources of new substitute teachers into its supply, the local TOC on-site manager now oversees a pool of more than 250 available and certified substitute teachers to support a workforce of over 400 active Bemidji teachers.

Each new category of skill sets added has contributed more efficiency to Bemidji school operations and more cost savings to the district's bottom line. Last year, the program covered more than 9,000 absences for Bemidji Area Schools and increased the substitute pool to over 250 active workers. The pool also offers the Bemidji schools an economical way to introduce new full-time talent to the district. It is not uncommon for the district to hire top talent converting a substitute to a full-time employee, saving the district related recruitment costs.

### The Bemidji area school's human resources director noted:

**"Bemidji Area Schools have partnered with Kelly Education Staffing, now operating as Teachers On Call, for substitute resources for over 15 years. The TOC team's on-site presence has been the key to the ongoing success of our collaboration."**

- Jordan Hickman, Director of Human Resources, Bemidji Area Schools

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