



From Frustration to Function: Red Rover Enhances the Buncombe County Schools Substitute Experience

- 13th largest school system in NC
- 45 campuses
- 23,000 students
- 3,700 staff
- 800 rotating substitutes
- 55 languages spoken
- STEM-based education

About Buncombe County Schools

Buncombe County Schools (BCS), located in Asheville, North Carolina, is committed to providing a personalized learning experience, emphasizing the recruitment of top-tier educators, and fostering an environment of diversity, investment, collaboration, and communication. The district's mission focuses on preparing students to be responsible citizens in a dynamic global society with a strong inclination towards STEM-based education.



Wavering Fill Rates Highlighted the Need for Improvement

Before the pandemic, BCS boasted an impressive 95% fill rate. However, post-pandemic inflation, coupled with a nationwide struggle to attract and keep educators, made it increasingly difficult to fill roles, causing the fill rate to plummet to an unprecedented low of 60%.

“That was a pretty significant hit coming from a district that prided ourselves on our fill rate and doing everything we could to support our substitute teachers,” said Brian Propst, the district’s assistant human resources director.

According to Propst, the district realized that significant changes were necessary to restore their pre-pandemic fill rate, prompting what he describes as a “preemptive strike.” “[We thought] even if something comes back to bite us, we can at least say we tried to do something to correct our fill rate.” This led to the decision to switch to Red Rover, a substitute management system that offered the modern, 21st-century features that would allow them to find and maintain, quality substitutes.

After purchasing Red Rover, the district was assigned an implementation lead, and within three months, they were up and running. The seamless transfer was facilitated by Red Rover checklists, expertise, and excellent customer service. Most staff found the app so intuitive and user-friendly that they didn’t even need to watch a training video. For a large district like BCS, the implementation and training process went, as Propst said, “Off without a hitch ... it was pretty much a piece of cake.”

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Brian Propst

Assistant Human Resources
Director, BCS

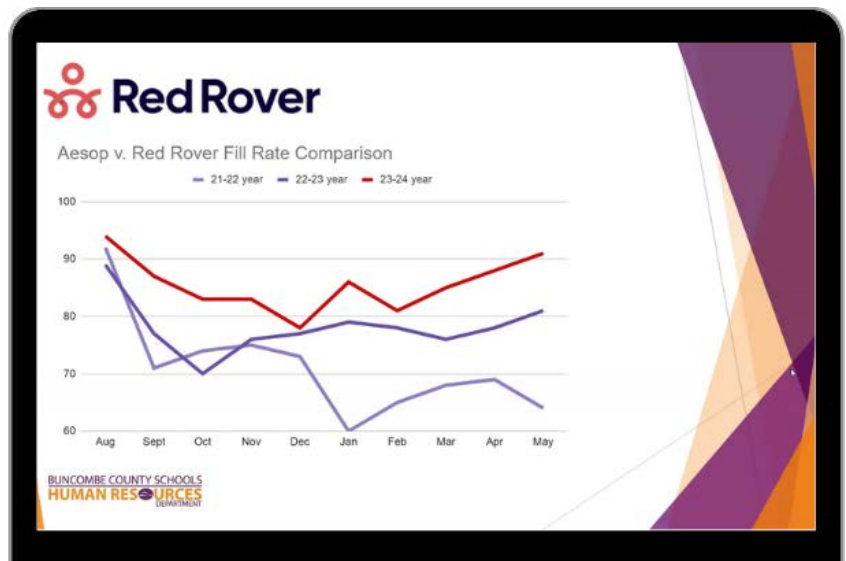
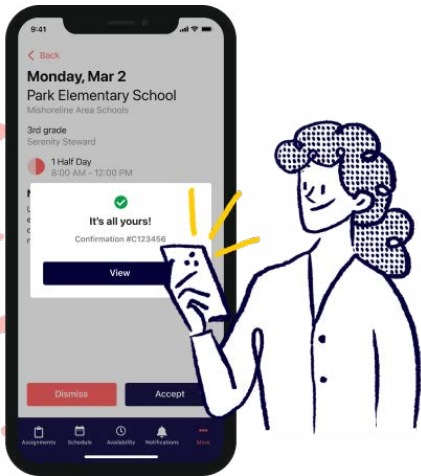
A System That Embraces a 'Teacher First' Mentality

The district prides itself on its 'teacher first' mentality, which made implementing Red Rover a perfect fit. Propst and the HR team were particularly drawn to Red Rover's intuitive interface, including its mobile app.

In today's tech-driven world, many people do not want to be contacted by phone. Propst noted, "Substitutes do not want to get a call from a robot at 5:30 in the morning asking if they want to sub." He often heard this complaint from substitute teachers who called the former system "glitchy" and "clunky." This is why it was no surprise to Propst and his team when BCS substitute teachers responded more consistently to assignments through text messages once Red Rover launched.

And because people live busy lives and often work various jobs, the BCS team embraced Red Rover's capability to allow substitutes to accept partial assignments. It was one more way they felt they could keep up with the shifting trends in absence management.

In the first school year of implementation, BCS experienced significant improvements in multi-day fill rates, nearly doubling in a short period.


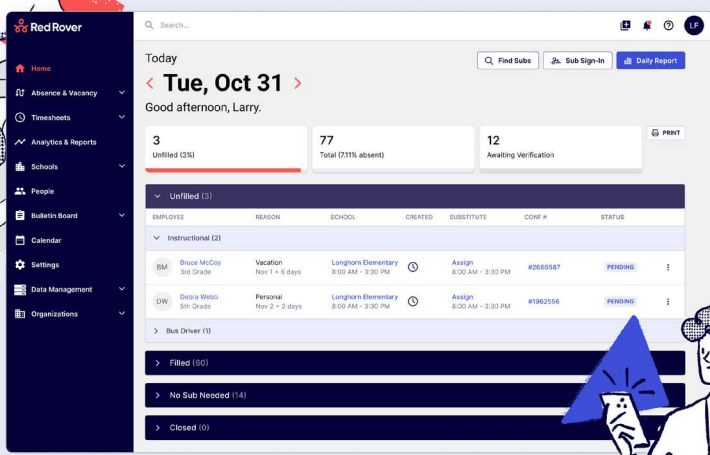
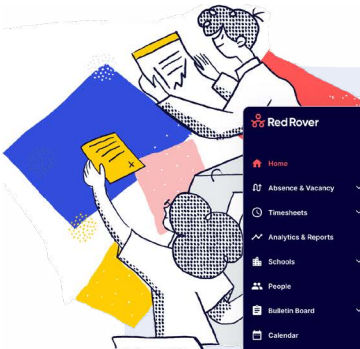


Year-over-year comparison of fill rates from 2021–2024, with notable increases the year Red Rover was implemented.



Transforming Substitute Management by Embracing Digital Habits

In his years of experience in absence management, Propst noticed that substitutes are less likely to accept future assignments if the process of selecting a position is frustrating. He saw many highly qualified staff abandon their search due to technological barriers. Now, with Red Rover, the BCS team monitors detailed reporting on substitute engagement to identify individuals who are not working or haven't accepted an assignment in a certain number of days. They can also see who has used the app, which allows them to target those who may be more likely to accept assignments regularly.



The screenshot displays the Red Rover dashboard for 'Tue, Oct 31'. It includes a navigation sidebar on the left and a main content area with the following data:

Category	Count	Details
Unfilled	3	Unfilled (3)
Total	77	Total (21% absent)
Awaiting Verification	12	Awaiting Verification

EMPLOYEE	REASON	SCHOOL	CREATED	SUBSTITUTE	CONF #	STATUS	
BM Bruce McCoy 3rd Grade	Vacation Nov 1 - 9 days	Longhorn Elementary	8:00 AM - 3:30 PM	Assign	8:00 AM - 3:30 PM	#268587	PENDING
GM Debra Webb 5th Grade	Personal Nov 2 - 2 days	Longhorn Elementary	8:00 AM - 3:30 PM	Assign	8:00 AM - 3:30 PM	#1982556	PENDING

Other categories shown: Filled (20), No Sub Needed (14), Closed (0).



Customer-Centric Innovation with Red Rover

BCS's previous substitute management program became more expensive each year without system enhancements. A major selling point for switching to Red Rover was its "Idea Board," which allows customers like Propst to discuss features and request regular enhancements. "They just listen to their customers—100%!" he said.

Future-Proofing Higher Fill Rates with Modern Features and Streamlined Integrations

As a Google district, the BCS team wanted to make it as easy as possible for staff and substitutes to create and access the absence management platform. With Red Rover's single sign-on capabilities, all staff can authenticate their accounts using their district email addresses, reducing the stress and hassle of forgotten passwords.

Streamlining Payroll with Full Integration

Propst and his team also want to simplify data management for their large district, which is why they are preparing to fully integrate Red Rover with the district's payroll system. Manually entering data for 65,000 absences each year is a significant undertaking, but BCS's HR department is enthusiastic about the future with Red Rover's more modern approach to handling payroll.

The screenshot shows a user interface for payroll management. At the top, there is a header with a user profile picture, the name 'Alec Burks', a date range 'Feb 27 - Mar 29, 2022', and a 'CURRENT' button. Below this is a section titled 'Payroll for this Period (2)'. It contains two columns of payroll data:

SUBMIT BY	PAY DATE	STATUS	TIME ENTRIES
Mar 13, 2022	Mar 22, 2022	PROCESSED	30h 15m 3h 45m
Mar 30, 2022	Apr 5, 2022	ACTIVE	1h 0m 2h 10m 5h 0m

Each payroll entry has a 'DOWNLOAD PDF' button below it.

About Red Rover

Red Rover's modern, intuitive absence management and time tracking solutions simplify and improve life for administrators, employees, substitutes, and students.

To learn more, visit RedRoverK12.com or call us at (717) 897-6837.

Propst, the administrators, and BCS schools as a whole have seamlessly adapted to Red Rover. They look forward to using Red Rover to minimize the stress of unfilled absences, allowing them to focus on more important endeavors. "Our school [communities] are happy because classrooms are consistently filled, ensuring uninterrupted learning."