

Substantial's Next Chapter

Reflecting on Accomplishments & Passing the Baton

Almost nine years ago, we co-founded Substantial Classrooms with one overarching question: *how might we get substitute teaching working better for kids and adults?* Equipped with a deep belief in human-centered design and seed money from the Jenesis Foundation and the Long Foundation, we set out to learn forward and figure out what might make a difference.

Today, we are celebrating that our most successful answer to that question - meaningful training in classroom skills - is becoming part of the [National Center for Grow Your Own](#) (NCGYO). As we pass on the stewardship and scaling of SubSchool to our incredible colleagues at NCGYO, we wanted to take the opportunity to reflect on what we've accomplished together and what's next.

What We've Accomplished Together

We've always been a small team with big ambitions. Our journey together had three main chapters:

- **Design Lab + Building SubPlans:** Initially we were a design lab, learning through a large portfolio of experiments, and working alongside school teams to test ideas in the real world. Being selected for the AT&T Aspire EdTech Accelerator enabled us to build our first tech solution, [SubPlans](#). This chapter culminated in writing and publishing [Substantial Classrooms: Reimagining the Substitute Teaching Experience](#).
- **National Thought Leadership + Building SubSchool:** The pandemic amplified the systemic weaknesses in substitute teaching and put a spotlight on the issue. We actively worked to shape the national narrative around substitute teaching to include a sense of possibility for making it work better and were featured in many national publications including [The New York Times](#), [Good Morning America](#), [The Atlantic](#), and [EdWeek](#). In parallel, we started building [SubSchool](#), based on the insight that all of our previous experiments started with training.
- **Scaling SubSchool:** When we built [SubSchool](#), we weren't sure if it was possible to build meaningful, highly scaleable, low-cost training. At each step we received overwhelmingly positive feedback from subs - not just about what they learned but also about how it made them feel. Over the last four years we've seen steep and steady growth in SubSchool, with partners in 10 states and nearly 20,000 course completions by substitute teachers.

What's Next

On July 1st, 2025 SubSchool will become part of NCGYO, fully operated by their team. NCGYO is a non-profit organization that provides technical assistance to state education agencies and school districts that are interested in launching "Grow Your Own" (GYO) programs. After years of advocating for subs to be recognized as a significant teacher pipeline - and creating the largest national survey of subs, verifying that 34% of subs aspire to be teachers - it's exciting to see SubSchool championed by

NCGYO. NCGYO is on a steep growth trajectory, and we've been impressed by how quickly they've become a national thought leader and key advisor to state education teams across the country. They are uniquely positioned to advance the idea that subs deserve training and support that prepares them for their current and future roles in education.

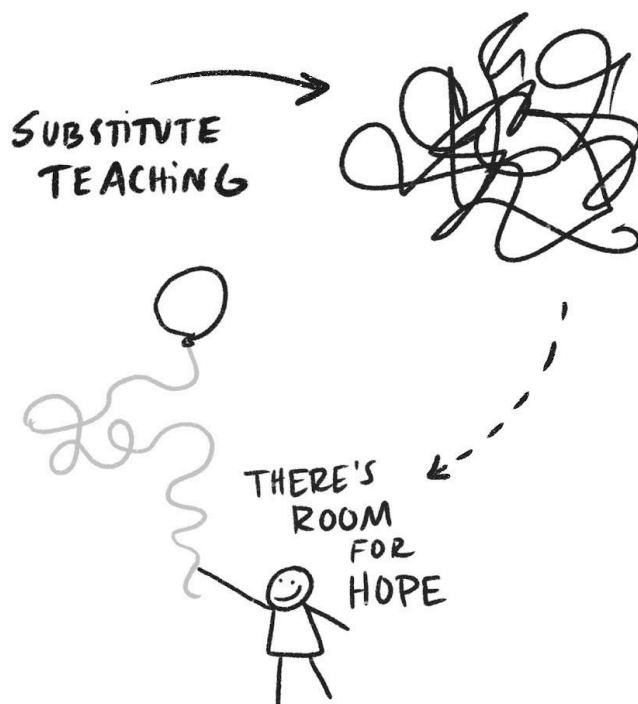
With SubSchool on a path for scale with a trusted team, we will be wrapping up our daily operations at Substantial at the end of this school year. Over the next several months, our team will be working to ensure that we've made our key learnings publicly available on our website, which will remain active for at least three years. We've also learned quite a bit about a strategic nonprofit exit and making an asset transfer to another nonprofit, so will also be sharing new resources related to that part of our journey.

With Gratitude

As nonprofit leaders, we work for impact and always hope that this impact extends beyond the projects we directly touch. There remains so much opportunity to fundamentally redesign how substitute teaching works. We hope that our work at Substantial inspires other people to center the humanity of subs and take up the challenge of making this essential system work better for kids and adults.

We are so grateful for the people and organizations that believed in our work—that *includes many of the people reading this!* Thank you for being part of Substantial's journey, and we look forward to collaborating with you in other ways in the future.

-Amanda von Moos and Jill Vialet, Substantial Co-Founders



Unlocking the potential of substitute teaching.