

PERSONNEL

Travel Allowances/Expenses

The purpose of this policy is to inform employees of state travel regulations for reimbursement of reasonable and necessary expenditures to individuals traveling on official business for the school division. Travel expense accounts are open to the public; therefore, individuals are expected to exercise prudent judgment and be able to sustain the test of public review. The use of state funds to accommodate personal comfort, convenience and taste is not permitted.

Travel at Board expense by employees shall be confined to such activities, and for official business, as dictated by the employee job description. The Board has further ordered in case of emergencies or special travel requirements, the superintendent shall authorize the travel.

To ensure all travel meets the test of necessity, travel involving more than three (3) employees to a single travel destination must be approved **in advance** of the travel. Where it is determined that a seminar, workshop, or training program is essential to staff development for five (5) or more employees, the division shall investigate the option of bringing the trainer on-site instead of authorizing employees to travel to an off-site location.

Travel allowance for employees of the school system shall be paid at the current rate approved by the School Board. Requests for reimbursement should be submitted to the Deputy Superintendent for Instruction/Administration.

Out-of-county trips must have prior approval of the Superintendent through regular administrative channels.

Regulations governing travel expenses submitted for reimbursement:

1. Mileage shall be based upon actual miles traveled by the employee.
2. Travel reimbursements must be submitted monthly. Requests received after ten (10) days of the close of the month will not be processed for payment.
3. Mileage traveled routinely and directly by the employee between residence and base point occurred on a scheduled work day is considered commuting mileage. An employee can have only one assigned base point. **Commuting mileage and other commuting costs incurred on normal work days are considered a personal expense and are not reimbursable.**
4. An employee can have only one base point, even if the employee has multiple work locations. It is the agency supervisor's responsibility to assign the base point to be used for reimbursement purposes. Central Office employees that visit schools located less miles from their home than the Central Office shall be allowed to claim mileage from their home to the school only. Example 1: Supervisor/Director X begins the day at Richlands High School and comes to Central Office. Supervisor/Director lives four miles from the school. For that day, four miles may be claimed for reimbursement. Example 2: Supervisor/Director X leaves Central Office, visits Dudley Primary and Graham High School on the way home. Mileage between Dudley and Graham may be claimed plus the miles from the last school to the home.

5. Central Office employees attending meetings of the School Board, special committees, or at the direction of the Superintendent, after their normal work schedule, may claim actual mileage from their home to their work site.
6. School principals will be reimbursed for travel expenses for school related duties. The following annual limits shall apply to high school principals \$965; middle school principals \$645; elementary school principals \$480; assistant principals \$398.
7. Itinerant teachers and school nurses may claim actual miles from their home school to other assigned schools.
8. Teachers who visit two or more schools may claim mileage between the first and last school site, but only the mileage in excess of round trip from home to school.
9. The standard mileage reimbursement rate will be \$0.67 per mile and subject to mileage limits as prescribed in school board policy.

Allowances for out-of-state trips to points served by commercial airlines will be made on the basis of air fare. If more than one employee of the school board travels in a car, the owner of the car will be reimbursed.

Meals Per Diem Rate

IRS regulations require only meals for overnight travel shall be reimbursed. Reimbursement of meals for day trips shall not be submitted for compensation. When meals are provided at no cost in conjunction with travel events, the applicable meal per diem rate shall be reduced from the standard rate.

The meal per diem must correspond to the location specified for the overnight lodging. The in-state meal rate, per diem, including incidentals, shall follow the General Services Administration (GSA) per diems by state.

On a travel departure or return day, only 75% of the meals per diem is reimbursed. The 75% rule is necessary to meet IRS regulations on taxable fringe benefits.

The standard out-of-state meal rate, per diem, including incidentals, shall follow the General Services Administration (GSA) per diems by state.

The standard out-of-state maximum lodging rate, excluding taxes and surcharges, shall follow the General Services Administration (GSA) per diems by state. Minimum requirements for expense claims to be submitted to the school board office:

1. Expenses are to be itemized on a daily basis, except hotel bills which should be listed on the date paid.

2. Expenses for hotel, airline tickets, turnpike tickets, meals, and conference or convention fees must be substantiated by receipts. Travel reimbursements will not be made from travel charge card statements. Each day's receipts should be shown separately on the reimbursement form. Tolls and parking fees are reimbursable in the course of conducting official school business. A receipt is required for reimbursement claims where each individual claim is greater than \$10.00. Reimbursement must be claimed as an "other expense" on the travel reimbursement form.
3. For professional development activities, the in-state lodging rate per day, excluding taxes and surcharges, will be the negotiated rate by the sponsoring organization offering the staff development activity. In the event the sponsoring organization does not negotiate a lodging rate, established rates contained in this policy are applicable.
4. Communicate travel plan changes to the hotel as soon as possible when a confirmed reservation is being held. Since hotels can charge for non-canceled reservations, these charges will not be reimbursed if the employee is negligent in canceling reservations. The standard in-state rate for lodging shall follow the General Service Administration (GSA) per diems by state.
5. Purpose of out-of-county trips must be stated.
6. All administrative and supervisory personnel will be allocated \$430.00 per year for educational meetings and conferences.

Non-Reimbursable Items (not all inclusive)

- Loss of funds or personal belongings while traveling is the responsibility of the employee and will not be reimbursed.
- Entertainment expenses
- Alcoholic beverages
- Damage to personal vehicle, clothing, or other items
- Towing related to improper parking
- All expenses related to the negligence of the employee; for example: fines, speeding, or parking tickets
- Spouse or other companion travel expenses
- Expenses not accompanied by an itemized list

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