

Tyler Independent School District

Travel & Reimbursement Guidelines

Revised September, 2023, Effective 9/1/2023



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EMPLOYEE TRAVEL PAYMENTS AND REIMBURSEMENTS & FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Note: Forms are available on TISD Employee Forms page, available under Forms and Reports from the Financial Services Homepage. A link to the General Services Administration (GSA) website for hotel rates is available on the TISD Travel Guidelines & Procedures page.

Use only **one** travel voucher form to request reimbursement; employees should ask their supervisor **BEFORE** they travel **which meals form to use** –Grant Funds Meals Worksheet OR Per Diem Worksheet. Employees must record actual meals costs on the Grant Funds Meals Worksheet. One trip can be paid from more than one fund. For example, Title I could pay for the hotel and Fund 199 could fund the meals.

Effective 09/01/2013 – All reimbursements (travel & non-travel) must be turned in within 60 days after the travel or purchase was made. Reimbursements submitted (entered into the accounting software) over 60 days after the expenditure occurred will be denied. **The only exceptions are: airfare or registration paid in advance of a trip, requested after the trip OR when the employee submitted the voucher on time but the supervisor did not submit it on time.** Direct Deposit will be used on all Employee reimbursements (not advances), whenever possible.

Travel cards cannot be used with grant funds, with the exception of airfare as described later in this document.

If the District incurs expenditures for travel that an employee registered for, then did not take, the employee will reimburse the District for those costs when there are no extenuating circumstances.

Note: all out of state travel must have prior approval of the Superintendent except for the travel of private and nonprofit schools funded by grants.



I am going to a conference:

How do I register for a conference?

Registrations for a conference can be paid for in advance by Financial Services. A Check Request or Travel Request will need to be entered by the campus/department secretary, approved by the principal or director and then submitted with the appropriate registration forms attached in the accounting software for payment. If the registration is not paid in advance, registration fees can be reimbursed upon presentation of a valid receipt. Cancelled checks, copies of checks, and summary only credit card sales slips are not valid receipts.



I need hotel reservations. When and how much will I be reimbursed?

Advance payment directly to a hotel is allowed for large groups. Otherwise, in general, you will need to use your credit card to reserve a room and pay for your room with your own funds. Hotel expenses will be reimbursed only upon your return. If needed, TISD will advance hotel costs with local funds only. If you receive an advance for your hotel, you must submit your travel voucher within 10 days after your return.

Hotel stays within the State of Texas are exempt from state (not local) occupancy tax upon the presentation of a valid hotel occupancy tax exemption form and an Exemption Letter from the State Comptroller (both are available on TISD's Travel Website). **Hotel reimbursements will be handled according to the funds paying for the travel and whether or not the hotel is a conference hotel, as follows:**

- 1) **Paid with State & Federal Grants:** Hotel expenditures are limited to the amount on the General Services Administration (GSA) website for the city or county (see amount allowed on GSA site for cities not listed) per person per night, plus all city + locally assessed taxes. Because of this limitation, it is imperative to list on each hotel room receipt the occupants staying in the hotel room. There is a list of hotels who have agreed upon a contract rate with the State of Texas and Tyler ISD employees are eligible for those rates when traveling on District business. Look for the link to State Contract Hotels on TISD's Travel Website. Note: this contract rate might be higher than the allowable GSA rate. (With prior approval, employees may be reimbursed for amounts exceeding the GSA rate from local funds if such excess meets the criteria described in item 2 below.)
- 2) **Paid with Local Funds (Funds 161 – 199, 461, 499, & 865):** If staying in a **conference hotel**, the District will pay the cost of the room plus any city + locally assessed taxes, with prior supervisory approval. **Conference literature identifying the specific hotel as designated for participants must be attached to the travel voucher in order to be reimbursed more than the GSA's hotel amount per person per night.** In the absence of this documentation, or if there is no conference hotel, the District will reimburse up to the amount on GSA's website for the city or county (or amount on GSA for cities not listed) per person per night plus all city + locally assessed taxes. Key officials (as determined by and with the approval of the Superintendent) may be reimbursed for rates in excess of the GSA rate when traveling on official District business whether such events are designated as conferences or otherwise. Such reimbursements shall be limited as provided by the annual reimbursement rates for Key Officials published on the Comptroller's website at <https://fm.x.cpa.texas.gov/fmx/travel/texttravel/rates/current.php>.

Here are the hotel charges that you will NOT be reimbursed for: movie rentals, internet charges, phone charges, room service, exercise room, and courtesy bar/snack items. If phone or internet charges are work related, please document that on your voucher, and you may be reimbursed, subject to your supervisor's approval.

Note: With local funds, the District will cover the full cost of a single room for a bus driver on a District trip and for a coach/sponsor traveling with students on a trip.

For out of state lodging limits, use the GSA site. Key Official exceptions as outlined in item 2 above will apply to out of state lodging.

You will be reimbursed for parking and the taxes on parking. **Hotel parking charges should be included in the lodging amount line on the travel voucher.**

I paid for my hotel using an online service. What receipt do I submit and will I be fully reimbursed?

You can often get sizeable discounts using online services. Be sure that you print a receipt that shows the expenditures have been charged to your credit card, not just a confirmation. The service fee and taxes charged cannot exceed the GSA website amount for that city or county + allowable taxes for the city you are traveling to. See above about conference hotels and the limitation on the amount to be reimbursed.



I need a rental car and/or airline tickets. What do I need to do?

Rental cars will need to be reserved by a Purchase Order or Travel Request. If this cannot be obtained for some reason, the rental car agency used will need to be paid for by your own funds and reimbursed upon presentation of the receipt with the completed travel voucher.

Airline tickets can be reserved by a Purchase Order through “a travel agency”. In the event the travel agency will not accept TISD Purchase Orders, the traveler may secure the airfare through the agency by use of the TISD travel card. In order to secure payment via TISD Travel Card, the traveler must submit the detailed itinerary showing all airline charges and fees to the Accounts Payable Supervisor in person along with the airfare payment authorization form signed by the employee and his/her immediate supervisor. If being paid from grant funds, the authorization form must also be signed by the grant manager for those funds. Upon submission of proper authorization, the Accounts Payable Supervisor will submit payment via TISD travel card directly to the travel agency. Otherwise, any tickets paid for by your own funds will only be reimbursed upon presentation of the receipt with the completed travel voucher after the travel has occurred. If you purchase your tickets from an online service, be sure that you print a receipt that shows the expenditures have been charged to your credit card, not just a confirmation. The District will not pay nor will it reimburse for charges for upgraded seats, early boarding, extra leg room, etc. unless such charges are approved by the Superintendent.

A note on mileage: For those who receive a stipend for travel, mileage within Region 7 will not be reimbursed.

What will I be reimbursed for mileage? Is there a difference if I rent a car versus driving my own vehicle?

Mileage incurred while using a private vehicle for business purposes will be reimbursed at the state reimbursement rate, **up to a maximum of 220 miles**. You may not claim more miles than the listing on the Texas Mileage Reimbursement Table on the TISD Travel website. The mileage is to be reimbursed only to

the employee that owns the car. Mileage will not be paid when a rental car is used.

For trips longer than 220 miles round trip, employees should reserve either a District vehicle from Transportation, or a rental. Upon presentation of a detailed receipt, an employee will be reimbursed for gas that is put into a rental car or District vehicle; please either put the Purchase Order # for the rental car on your voucher or include a copy of it, or include the Trip Request for the District vehicle. Also, be sure to list all occupants of the car on the travel voucher. If an employee uses his/her own car for trips longer than 220 miles, round trip, mileage reimbursement will be limited to 220 miles.

If needed, the District will advance funds to employees for mileage for out of town travel. If an advance is received, the employee must submit the travel voucher within 10 days after return.

My job requires me to travel on a daily basis:

How much will I be reimbursed for mileage?

With prior supervisor approval, mileage incurred while using a private vehicle for business purposes will be reimbursed at the state mileage rate, limited to 220 miles round trip.

I travel from campus to campus as part of my job. How do I request reimbursement? Which forms do I use?

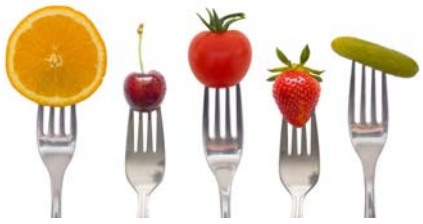
A TISD In-District Travel Voucher with Campuses must be used when traveling from campus to campus (available in DISTRICT FORMS on our website). The mileage from campus to campus has been calculated by the transportation department and is preset in the form. The request will be returned if the proper form is not completed.

Is there a different form to use when I am traveling inside the district, but not going to a campus?

A TISD In-District Travel Voucher without Campuses must be used if you are traveling in-district but not to a campus (available in DISTRICT FORMS on our website). Example: traveling to Office Depot, Brookshire's, etc. Do not use odometer readings – do submit mileage calculation from an internet map program like Google map or MapQuest to verify your mileage reimbursement request.

Is there a deadline for turning my mileage request in?

Travel reimbursements for all employees must be requested within **30 days** after the travel occurs (**10 days if funds were advanced to you**) in order to comply with IRS regulations. If the travel takes place in August, it must be submitted immediately upon your return. **Requests submitted 60 days after the travel will be denied.**



Meal Reimbursements for Overnight Travel

Meal reimbursements will be handled according to the funds paying for the travel. Meals will be reimbursed only when an overnight stay is required or a meal meets I.R.S. criteria for treatment as a business meal (refer to the business meal guidelines). Maximum meal rates are listed on the Meal Worksheets and are updated in accordance with the GSA per diem rates.

Breakfast	left before 6 a.m.
Lunch	Left before 12 noon or returned after 12 noon
Dinner	Left before 6 p.m. or returned after 6 p.m.

State and Federal Grants: Meals will be reimbursed at actual costs, not to exceed the State maximum allowable. You must submit your itemized meal receipts in order to be reimbursed. Time of departure and return (above) will be used to determine if a meal is eligible for reimbursement. Note that tips are not reimbursable; neither are snacks. Here are some other examples of what will not be reimbursed: cookies purchased mid-morning, ice cream (or anything) for a mid-afternoon snack, dessert purchased at a different location after the evening meal, a late night snack, cookies and drinks purchased on the way home. **In other words, meals are reimbursed, not snacks.**

Local Funds (Funds 161 – 199, 461, 499, & 865): Meals for overnight stay will be reimbursed at the daily per diem rates listed above and not to exceed the State maximum allowable per current publication.

Meal reimbursements are the **same for in state and out of state travel**. Some modifications may be available for travel outside the country.

When traveling with students, receipts may be required. See section below on traveling with students.

Which travel reimbursement voucher do I use? There is now only one Tyler ISD Staff and Student Travel Voucher, for use with all funding sources. All travel requests with the original receipts must be turned in attached to that voucher (available in DISTRICT FORMS on our website). All employee reimbursements must have the original voucher and the original receipts (where required) turned in along with the original signature of the employee requesting reimbursement. There are two meal worksheets – one for per diem (local funds) and one for actual meal costs (grant funds).

I need to be reimbursed for a business meal:

What is required in order to receive reimbursement?

Meals will be reimbursed only when an overnight stay is required, or a meal meets I.R.S. criteria for treatment as a business meal. A business meal is defined as a **meal during which substantive business discussion took place**. Actual **original** detailed meal receipts are required for reimbursement for a non-overnight meal. Credit card summary receipts alone are not sufficient for receiving a reimbursement. They do not reflect what is being purchased and therefore will not be accepted without the accompanying detailed meal receipt.

Reasonable tips may be reimbursed from local funds.

Which reimbursement form do I use?

Along with the detailed receipt, the second page of the Staff Non-Travel Expense Voucher (available in DISTRICT FORMS on our website) must be completed stating the following information:

Names of others present
Business relationship to others present
Subject matters discussed
Signature & date

If this information is not complete, your request will be denied. All employee reimbursements must have the **original** voucher and the **original** receipts turned in along with the **original** signature of the employee requesting reimbursement.

I do not have the actual detailed meal ticket, but I have the credit card statement. Will that be sufficient?

No, credit card receipts alone are not sufficient for receiving a reimbursement. They do not reflect what is being purchased and therefore will not be accepted without the accompanying detailed meal receipt.

What happens if my principal or department head is not available to approve my reimbursement request?

If the principal or department head will be unavailable for a certain period of time, then he/she will need to submit a request in Eduphoria to designate someone else to approve the requests during the specific dates of absence.

I purchased supplies, books, etc. for my classroom:

How do I request reimbursement and which form do I use?

First, you must have prior supervisor approval. In order to request reimbursement for items purchased for school classrooms and/or school functions, a Staff Non-Travel Expense Voucher must be completed (available on our website in DISTRICT FORMS). An Employee Reimbursement will need to be entered by the campus/department secretary, approved by the principal or director and then submitted with the voucher and receipts in the accounting software for payment. **Note that, whenever possible, employee reimbursements are paid by Direct Deposit.**

All employee reimbursements must have the **original** voucher and the **original** receipts turned in along with the **original** signature of the person requesting reimbursement.

Are there limits on the amount that may be claimed for reimbursement?

Effective 9/1/18, non-travel employee reimbursements are limited to \$100 per event. If there is some reason a purchase exceeding \$100 cannot be made with the use of a District requisition, then the campus must request permission to exceed the limit PRIOR to making the purchase (the request should be sent via e-mail to Tosha Bjork and copied to Kasey Russell). Permission, if granted, will be given via e-mail reply and that e-mail MUST be attached to the reimbursement request or the reimbursement will be **Reimbursements for receipts dated prior to the e-mail approval will be denied.**

What is acceptable documentation for getting reimbursed?

A receipt from the vendor is deemed acceptable when it contains the following information:

- Date of purchase
- Place of purchase (name of vendor)
- Amount of purchase
- Item(s) being purchased
- How item(s) was paid for (cash / credit card / check)

If you make your purchase online, be sure that you print a receipt that shows the expenditures have been charged to your credit card, along with detail about items purchased.

What is not acceptable documentation?

Credit card summary receipts, copies of checks, order forms, and delivery tickets are not acceptable as receipts.

Is there a deadline for turning my reimbursement request in?

We recommend that all reimbursement requests be turned in within 30 days of purchase. **Requests submitted 60 days after the purchase will be denied (see exceptions on page 3).**

Is there anything that I will not be reimbursed for if I pay for it out of my pocket and why?

Requests submitted 60 days after the expenditure was made will be denied (see exceptions on page 3).

TISD does not pay Texas State sales tax on any purchases. You will not be reimbursed sales tax; therefore, please take a sales tax exemption form with you when making District (not personal) purchases. A copy of the sales tax exemption form can be obtained from your campus/department secretary.

You will not be reimbursed for technology purchases that are required to be purchased by Purchase Order (Administrator's Operating Guide, 7.4). You will not be reimbursed for ink cartridges for printers – these also must be purchased by Purchase Order.

You will NOT be reimbursed if you make payments to non-employees for contracted services. These must be paid through Accounts Payable to be in compliance with IRS regulations (Form 1099 reporting).

You will NOT be reimbursed for purchases made from Amazon. This vendor is an approved TISD vendor and the District has an account with the vendor allowing District purchases to be made via purchase order. The District's account may entitle the District to certain discounts which are not available to individuals. In order to ensure the best price, purchases from Amazon MUST be made using a purchase order on the District's account. **(effective January 1, 2019)**

**STUDENT TRAVEL PAYMENTS AND REIMBURSEMENTS
(NON-ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES)
&
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

Note: all out of state travel must have prior approval of the Superintendent except for the travel of private and nonprofit schools funded by grants.

I am traveling with students for some non-athletic school activity:

Can I get a cash advance or Travel Card? What do I need to do? What's my deadline to account for the advance? How do I do that?

Option 1: The District rarely issues cash advances, but does issue travel procurement cards (credit cards). The supervisor must complete his/her section of the Travel Card Authorization/Agreement (available on TISD Forms). This must be received in Financial Services at least one week before the card is needed.

The Accounts Payable Supervisor will contact the employee to arrange a time to come sign the Travel Card Agreement and pick up the Travel card.

Within five (5) business days after your return, you must turn in the Travel Card to the Accounts Payable Supervisor and report on the expenditures charged to that card. Complete the Staff and Student Travel Voucher attaching the **original** receipts and a Student and/or Sponsor Meals Receipt (if needed). If there were any unapproved purchases charged to the card issued to you, submit a check for those with your voucher. Your supervisor must sign the voucher.

Option 2: A check will be issued to you. (This is generally only used for meal allowances when the group is so large as to prohibit dining together with payment for the entire group in one transaction. See pg. 11) If you need a cash advance instead of a travel card, complete the Staff and Student Travel Voucher (available on our website in DISTRICT FORMS) completing the amount and needed by date in the advance box. Complete all parts of the form except the box labeled "Statement of Expense." Your campus or department secretary will enter an Employee Advance Request for your advance. Please turn in your request at least 2 weeks before you leave for your trip. Planning ahead will ensure that you will have the funds needed to take your students on that trip.

Within ten (10) days after your return, you must report on the funds that were advanced to you. Complete the Staff and Student Travel Voucher attaching the **original** receipts and a Student and/or Sponsor Meals Receipt (if needed). Be sure to deduct the amount of your advance. You may be due some money if your allowable expenditures exceeded your advance or you may owe some money if you had more than enough. Any excess cash should be turned into Financial Services. Be sure to get a receipt for the excess cash you turn in and attach it with your other receipts to the travel voucher.

How do I register students for a conference?

Registrations for a conference can be paid for in advance by Financial Services. A Check Request will need to be entered by the campus or department secretary with the appropriate registration forms in the accounting software. Then it will be approved by the principal or director and submitted for payment.

I need hotel reservations. What's the best way to handle this?

Advance payment directly to a hotel is allowed for large groups. A Check Request will need to be entered by the campus or department secretary, approved by the principal or director and then submitted with the appropriate documentation to Financial Services for payment.

You will have to reserve the rooms using a credit card. You can request an advance or a District Travel Card to pay for the hotel. You will need to keep the original detailed receipt from the hotel and turn it in with your voucher when you return. The District Travel Card or advance check will be issued directly to the employee requesting the funds. Remember, one way to save on your cost is by finding a hotel that serves continental breakfasts.

Hotel stays within the State of Texas are exempt from state (not local) occupancy tax upon the presentation of a valid hotel occupancy tax exemption form and an Exemption Letter from the State Comptroller (both available on TISD's Travel Website). See section above on limitations placed on the maximum allowed for hotel reimbursements. There is a list of hotels who have agreed upon a contract rate with the State of Texas and Tyler ISD employees are eligible for those rates when traveling on District business. Look for the link to State Contract Hotels on TISD's Travel Website. Note: this contract rate might be higher than the allowable GSA rate.

For out of state lodging limits, look at the GSA link on TISD's Travel Website.

Note: With local funds, the District will cover the full cost of a single room for a bus driver on a District trip and for a coach/sponsor traveling with students on a trip.

Here are the hotel charges that you will NOT be reimbursed for: movie rentals, internet charges, phone charges, room service, exercise room, and courtesy bar/snack items. If phone or internet charges are work related, please document that on your voucher, and you may be reimbursed, subject to your supervisor's approval.

You will be reimbursed for parking and the taxes on parking.

I need a rental car to transport the students (Note: You must have a Commercial's Driver's License to transport students). What do I need to do?

See page 3.

What will I be reimbursed for mileage? Is there a difference if I rent a car versus driving my own vehicle?

See page 3.

How do we handle student/sponsor meals?

For student/sponsor meals, you have three choices, the first two are much easier than the third.

Option 1: You can request advance funds for your student/sponsor meals and have the students sign the Student Meals Receipt (available on our website in DISTRICT FORMS) for a predetermined amount. In this case, the students/sponsors DO NOT have to turn in receipts; they simply have to sign their names indicating they received a certain amount for this purpose.

DO NOT CHANGE A RECEIPT AMOUNT ONCE IT HAS BEEN RECORDED AND SIGNED FOR.

PLEASE USE INK FOR THESE RECEIPTS.

Option 2: The second choice is to use a travel card for all student meals. You do have to turn in receipts, but for smaller groups, this can work well. In addition, the card identifies you as a sales tax exempt purchaser. Take a sales tax exemption form to the restaurants with you and save your group some money.

Option 3: The third choice is to require that the students/sponsors turn in receipts and/or money back to you after you've given them an advance. This is much more difficult and time-consuming, although you can possibly save money.

The amount given to the students for meals must not exceed TISD's per diem rate for employee meals UNLESS a student activity fund (Fund 865) is paying for the meals. A student organization can decide to spend more for meals, but this should be documented in the organization's minutes and on a Student Activity Request form. The amount for student/sponsor meals **can also be less** than the TISD per diem rate for employees:

Breakfast	\$13.00	left before 6 a.m.
Lunch	\$14.00	Left before 12 noon or returned after 12 noon
Dinner	\$23.00	Left before 6 p.m. or returned after 6 p.m.

Whatever the amount is, use the Student Meals Receipt form and the Sponsor Meals Receipt form (available on our website in DISTRICT FORMS), if needed.

TISD employee sponsors can receive funds for meals on non-overnight travel when they are required to be on duty as chaperones for students. This is the ONLY time, other than a documented business meal, that a TISD employee can receive funds for a non-overnight meal.

According to TEA, an employee may not be reimbursed for meal expenses if the employee is outside the employee's designated headquarters for fewer than six consecutive hours on the day the expenses are incurred. Be sure to record your time and date of departure and return accurately.

Is there a deadline for turning my travel reimbursement in?

If funds were advanced to you, you must turn in your travel voucher and receipts within 10 days of your return. Travel cards must be returned with a voucher and receipts within 5 business days of return. Travel reimbursements for all employees must be requested **within 30 days** after the travel occurs in order to comply with IRS regulations. If the travel takes place in August, it must be submitted immediately upon your return. **Reimbursements submitted over 60 days after the expenditure occurred will be denied.**

Section B - Athletic Department Policies & Forms

Guidelines for Advances and Team Travel

1. Advance requests should be made as early as possible. It generally takes a week to ten (10) days to process an advance.
2. Each advance request form must be completed in entirety, including the number of students going on the trip.
3. Each meal may cost up to \$7.00. Please calculate the amount of money needed per student for meals, then multiply this by the number of travelers. (If you leave before 6:00 am, you may feed them breakfast. If you return after 6:00 pm, you may feed them dinner.)

Example: Leave at 5:30 am on 9/20/14
 Return at 7:00 pm on 9/20/14
 13 students
 2 coaches
 1 bus driver

Each = 1 breakfast + 1 lunch + 1 supper = \$21.00
\$21.00 X 16 = \$336.00 Advance should be for \$336.00

Coaches are encouraged to be creative when feeding student athletes. A traveling breakfast of fruits and muffins from the grocery can cut expenses.

4. When spending the night, make your hotel reservations as far in advance as possible. Remember your hotel tax form. Look for continental breakfasts to help with your food expenses.
5. When advance money is issued for student travel, any excess funds must be turned in with appropriate tax exempted meal receipts within ten (10) days following your return from the trip. This will be strictly enforced.
6. Any handwriting must be legible and include your Employee ID number and mailing address. If your address has changed, please notify the athletic office.

**REQUEST FOR ADVANCEMENT OF FUNDS
(Entry Fees – Registration - Student Meals)**

School:

Sport:

Coach:

Grade/Team:

Event:

Reason for Advanced Payment:

Deadline for Payment:

Date of Event:

Number of Participating Students:

Amount Needed: \$

****Registration and/or Invitation must be attached to this form.**

Make check payable to:

Name of Recipient:

School/Other:

Address:

City, State, Zip:

Mailing to be handled by:

Athletic Department: _____ Coach: _____

Accounting to mail: _____

Approved: Athletic Director _____ Date: _____