

TRAVEL EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURE

The following procedure shall be used for reimbursement of travel expenses incurred by School Committee members and School Department employees. Employees should contact their building principal, supervising administrator or the Business Office for assistance with business travel and reimbursement procedures or issues.

1. **Mileage:** Staff members who have prior approval to use their vehicle in the performance of their duties will be reimbursed for mileage at the RSU 9 rate, which is an average of Fed. and State rate.

Travel from home to place of work and return may not be included for reimbursement. Travel for authorized activities should be calculated from the place of work to the activity and the return to the place of work. School Department employees are all encouraged to minimize mileage whenever possible.

2. **Meal Allowance/Miscellaneous:** Reimbursement for the daily meal allowance will not exceed a total of \$50.00 for either in-state or out-of-state travel for up to three meals. Gratuities will be included in between 15% to 20%. Itemized receipts are necessary for all reimbursements. Meals included in registration fees are not exempt from this provision.
3. **Lodging:** Lodging is limited to actual costs at the average rate published for the conference/activity. Travelers are to request tax-exempt status when making reservations.
4. **Other Authorized Expenses:** The following actual expenses, in addition to lodging and meals are authorized:
 - a. Registration fees (receipt by purchase order required if paid by the individual).
 - b. Car rentals are allowable only with prior authorization from the Superintendent. Liability and personal injury insurance should not be purchased when renting vehicles since the district carries an insurance policy to cover such occurrences. However, collision insurance should be purchased. Employees or school officials renting vehicles should request a copy of the district's proof of insurance from the Superintendent's office.
 - c. Air travel must be at coach or the lowest available published fare. All air travel expenses must be documented with a receipt.
 - d. Whenever practicable, travelers should use free shuttle service if provided during conferences to and from the hotel and conference center. The most economical means of traveling to and from the airport should also be utilized. Travelers will be reimbursed the cost of shuttle or taxi by presenting a receipt to the district at the completion of the trip.

5. **Entertainment:** Entertainment expenses will not be reimbursed.
6. **Alternative Modes of Travel:** Employees and school officials choosing to use their personal car, rail or bus in lieu of airline transportation will not be reimbursed for lodging and meals in addition to those which would customarily be covered if air travel were utilized, unless the overall cost is less than flying. The maximum reimbursement which will be approved will not exceed the discount airfare for a ticket purchased 14 days in advance. Excess time out of the school unit for travel by personal car will not be approved as professional leave.
7. **Extended Stay:** Any lodging or meals resulting from extension of the stay beyond the length of the conference or convention, either before or after, will be the sole responsibility of the employee or school official unless the extended stay is due to unavoidable circumstances beyond their control, as approved by the Superintendent.
8. **Stop-Over Charges:** A charge for stopover in route or a routing other than direct line for the convenience of the employee will be paid by the employee.
9. **Other Expenses:** The following actual expenses incurred as a necessary part of approved travel may be claimed if substantiated by documentation:
 - a. Parking fees
 - b. Road toll charges
 - c. Airline baggage fees
10. **Non Allowable Expenses:** The following expenses are not authorized for reimbursements:
 - a. Personal expenses such as laundry, valet services, clothing, toiletries, flowers, gifts, etc.
 - b. Cost of traveler's checks
 - c. Alcoholic beverages
 - d. Expenses for an employee's spouse or family
 - e. Side trips for personal reasons
11. **Submission of Information:** Travel expense information is to be submitted to the Superintendent's office within the fourteen (14) days of the staff member's return to the school unit with all necessary supporting documentation as required.
12. **Unapproved Expenses:** Staff members who incur expenses which have not been approved by their immediate supervisor/administrator will be personally accountable for all expenses incurred.
13. **Advanced Travel Expense:** Travel expense, as authorized by the Superintendent, may be advanced to school department employees. Requests shall be supported by an itemized estimate of expenditures. All fund advances are

subject to refund to the district if the required expense report and supporting documentation are not submitted as required.

14. **Expense Reimbursements:** Approved expense reimbursements will be made through the regular accounts payable pay process.
15. **Conference Registrations:** The School Department will pay for conference registrations as approved through the budget process. Organizational membership fees will be paid when membership is included with the conference registration and the combined total is less than or equal to non-member registration. Late conference registration fees are the responsibility of the individual requesting attendance. The School Department will pay late fees only if approved by the immediate supervisor/administrator. Requests for processing must be submitted to the Superintendent's office prior to the pre-registration deadline. Pre-registrations for conferences should be sent to the Superintendent's office as soon as possible to allow adequate time for processing, in order to avoid late fees.
16. **Cancellation Fees:** Cancellation of airline reservations which result in a penalty must be approved by an immediate supervisor/administrator. Fees for cancellation of reservations without immediate supervisor/administrator approval will be the responsibility of the individual making the cancellation.
17. **Accidents during travel:** Any employee who is involved in an accident while traveling on business must promptly report the incident to the building principal or administrative supervisor and to the Business Office.
18. **Procedure Abuse:** Including falsification of expense reports, may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

The Superintendent/designee may develop such administrative procedures and forms as are deemed necessary to facilitate implementation of these procedures.

Cross Reference: BIB – Board Member Development Opportunities
 IJOA – Field Trips

Adopted: November 28, 2023