

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
Cherry Hill, New Jersey**

POLICY 4260

TRAVEL EXPENSES

Instructional and support staff members may be reimbursed for travel expenses, or the Board may pay certain costs and fees for such staff, in accordance with the provisions of applicable law.

Travel and Related Expenses

Travel reimbursement will be paid only upon compliance with the Board's policy provisions and approval requirements. Employees shall only be reimbursed for work-related travel that is educationally necessary and fiscally prudent, and all such school district travel expenditures shall be:

- (1) directly related to and within the scope of the employee's current responsibilities and the district's professional development plan;
- (2) for travel that is critical to the instructional needs of the district or furthers the efficient operation of the district; and
- (3) in compliance with State travel payment guidelines as established by the Department of the Treasury and with guidelines established by the federal Office of Management and Budget; except that those guidelines that conflict with the provisions of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes shall not be applicable.

DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this Policy:

- (1) “Travel expenditures” means those costs paid by the school district using local, State, or federal funds, whether directly by the school district or by employee reimbursement, for travel by school district employees to the following four types of travel events:
 - (a) “training and seminars” which means all regularly scheduled, formal residential or non-residential training functions, conducted at a hotel, motel, convention center, residential facility, or at any educational institution or facility;
 - (b) “conventions and conferences” which means general programs, sponsored by professional associations on a regular basis, which address subjects of particular interest to a school district or are convened to conduct association business. The primary purpose of employee attendance at conferences and conventions is the development of new skills and knowledge or the reinforcement of those skills and knowledge in a particular field related to school district operations. These are distinct from formal staff training and seminars, although some training may take place at such events;
 - (c) “regular school district business” which means all regular official business travel, including attendance at meetings, conferences and any other gatherings which are not covered by the definitions included in subparagraphs (a) and (b) above;
 - (d) “retreats” which mean meetings with school district employees and school board members, held away from the normal work environment at which organizational goals and objectives are discussed. If available, school district facilities shall be utilized for this type of event.
- (2) “School district travel expenditures” include, but are not limited to, all costs for transportation, meals, lodging, and registration or conference fees to and for the travel event. School district travel expenditures also include costs for all required training and all travel authorized in existing school district employee contracts and school board policies. This includes, but is not limited to, required professional development and other staff training and attendance at specific conferences authorized in existing employee contracts.

REQUIREMENTS

All employees shall adhere to the following guidelines to be considered for reimbursement:

- A. Reimbursement will only be made in accordance with the provisions of applicable statutes and regulations, including N.J.S.A. 18A:11-12, this Policy, and District Administrative Procedures pertaining to such reimbursement.
- B. Reimbursement may not exceed State travel reimbursement guidelines as established by the New Jersey Department of Treasury in NJOMB circular letter 06-02 or any successor document, including but not limited to the types of travel, methods of transportation, mileage allowance, meal allowance, overnight travel and supporting documentation.
- C. Reimbursement must also be in compliance with federal OMB Circular A-87 or any successor document. No reimbursement will be issued without submission of written documentation such as receipts, cancelled checks or vouchers detailing the amount of each expenditure, except for such expenses as may be otherwise eligible for reimbursement without submission of receipts under State or federal guidelines. Such documentation must be submitted to the District's Assistant Superintendent for Business or designee within thirty (30) calendar days following completion of the travel.
- D. Except where otherwise permitted by law and this Policy, no district employee shall be reimbursed for travel and related expenses without prior written approval of the chief school administrator, and prior approval by a majority of the full voting membership of the Board. An employee shall first obtain the approval of any travel request from the employee's immediate supervisor, who will then submit the request for authorization through the district chain of command to the chief school administrator. Except as otherwise specified in subparagraph E. below, *the Board of Education will not ratify or approve payments or reimbursements for travel after completion of the travel event, where the employee has not obtained Board approval prior to the travel.*
- E.
 1. The Board excludes from the requirement of prior Board approval any travel caused by or subject to contractual provisions, other statutory requirements, or federal regulatory requirements. The Board does not exclude such travel from the subsistence requirements identified herein and the annual maximum travel expenditure amount which the Board must establish annually.
 2. For regular school district business travel only (as defined above), the Board authorizes an annual maximum amount of \$1,500 per employee for which prior Board approval is not required.

- F. The district shall not bear costs for car rentals, limousine services, and chauffeuring costs to or during the event, as well as costs for employee attendance for coordinating other attendees' accommodations at the travel event.
- G. An employee shall not receive an amount for travel and travel-related expenses in advance of the travel.
- H. One-day trips that do not involve overnight lodging are not eligible for a subsistence payment or reimbursement except in limited circumstances authorized in Department of the Treasury guidelines. Overnight travel is eligible for a subsistence payment or reimbursement as authorized in Department of the Treasury guidelines, except as otherwise superseded by the following:
 - 1. Per diem payment or reimbursement for lodging and meals will be actual reasonable costs, not to exceed the federal per diem rates as established in the federal register for the current year;
 - 2. Lodging expenses may exceed the federal per diem rates if the hotel is the site of the convention, conference, seminar or meeting and the going rate of the hotel is in excess of the federal per diem rates. If the hotel at the site of the convention, conference, seminar, or meeting is no longer available, lodging may be paid for similar accommodations at a rate not to exceed the hotel rate for the event;
 - 3. Receipts are required for hotel expenses. Meal expenses under the federal per diem allowance limits do not require receipts;
 - 4. In any case in which the total per diem reimbursement is greater than the federal per diem rate, except as stated in paragraph (2) of this subsection, the costs will be considered to be excessive and shall not be paid by school district funds;
 - 5. The district shall patronize hotels and motels that offer special rates to government employees unless alternative lodging offers greater cost benefits; and
 - 6. Payment or reimbursement is approved for the full cost of an official convention meal that the employee attends, when the meal is scheduled as an integral part of the convention or conference proceedings. If a meal is included in the registration fee, the allowance for the meal is not eligible for reimbursement.

- I. Any individual seeking reimbursement shall provide, to the supervisor authorizing the submission of the travel request to the chief school administrator, a brief report that includes at a minimum a description of the primary purpose for the travel, and a summary of the goals and key issues that were addressed at the event and their relevance to improving instruction or the operation of the school district. This report must be submitted within thirty (30) calendar days of the conclusion of the travel.

The Board hereby requires, and charges its Assistant Superintendent-Business with the responsibility to ensure, that detailed documentation be maintained on file in the school district which demonstrates compliance with the Board's travel policy, including travel approvals, reports, and receipts for all school district funded expenditures, as appropriate.

A person who approves any travel or associated travel reimbursement in violation of this Policy or *N.J.S.A. 18A:11-12* shall be required to reimburse the school district in an amount equal to three times the cost associated with attending the event. An employee who travels in violation of this Policy or *N.J.S.A. 18A:11-12* shall be required to reimburse the school district in an amount equal to three times the cost associated with attending the event.

The Board shall:

- A. Annually in the prebudget year, establish by resolution, a maximum travel expenditure amount for the budget year, which the school district shall not exceed in that budget year. The school board resolution shall also include the maximum amount established for the prebudget year and the amount spent to date.
 1. The maximum school district travel expenditure amount shall include all travel in accordance with this section supported by local and State funds.
 2. The Board may elect to exclude travel expenditures to be supported by federal funds in the maximum travel expenditure amount. If federal funds are excluded from the established maximum school district travel expenditure amount, the Board shall include in the Board resolution, the total amount of travel supported by federal funds from the prior year, prebudget year, and projected for the budget year.
- B. Maintain separate accounting for school district travel expenditures as necessary, to ensure compliance with the school district's maximum travel expenditure amount. This may include, but need not be limited to, a separate or offline accounting of such expenditures or expanding the school district's accounting system. The tracking system shall be sufficient to demonstrate compliance with the Board's policy and *N.J.S.A. 18A:11-12*, and shall provide auditable information.

The Superintendent shall develop Administrative Procedures to implement this policy.

Legal References:

| | |
|--|--|
| <u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:2-1 | Power to effectuate action |
| <u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:4-23 | Supervision of schools; enforcement of rules and 24. Determining efficiency of schools; report to state board |
| <u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:11-1 | General mandatory powers and duties |
| <u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:12-4 | Compensation of members |
| <u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:12-24 and 24.1 | School Ethics Act Code of Ethics |
| <u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:54-20 | Powers of board (county vocational schools) |
| <u>N.J.A.C.</u> 6A:10A-8.3 | Travel and Related Expense Reimbursement (Abbott Districts) |
| <u>N.J.A.C.</u> 6A:23B-1.1 <u>et. seq.</u> | Travel and Related Expense Reimbursement (Non-Abbott Districts) |
| <u>P.L.</u> , 2005, c.132 | Appropriations Act |
| <u>P.L.</u> , 2007, c. 52 | A5, provides for various school district accountability measures |

See also:

In the Matter of Anthony Esgro, Luis Perez, Clifford Meeks and Frank Speziali, Glassboro Board of Education, CO7-97, March 30, 1998

Related Procedure E-13: Procedure and Guidelines for Travel and Expenses Reimbursement for Board Members and Employees

C-15: Use of Credit Cards

Adopted: 11/27/07