

SUBCHAPTER 7. SCHOOL DISTRICT TRAVEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

6A:23A-7.1 School district travel expenditures

(a) Each school district shall ensure the effective and efficient use of funds by adopting and implementing policies and procedures that are in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:11-12 and State of New Jersey Department of the Treasury, Office of Management and Budget Circulars 08-19-OMB and 06-14-OMB (OMB Circulars) and any superceding circulars pertaining to travel, meals, events and entertainment, and the additional requirements set forth in this subchapter. If any superceding circulars of the Office of Management and Budget conflict with the provisions of these rules, the provisions of the superceding circulars shall govern.

(b) The provisions of this subchapter shall apply to charter schools. For purposes of this subchapter, the following shall apply:

1. References to “school districts” shall also mean charter schools;
2. References to “school board” or “board of education” shall also mean board of trustees of a charter school;
3. References to “Superintendent” shall also mean charter school lead person; and
4. References to “employee” shall also mean employee of a charter school.

(c) Any sections in the OMB Circulars that conflict with New Jersey school law (N.J.S.A. 18A:1-1 et seq.) shall not be included in the school board policy nor authorized under this section. This includes, but is not limited to, the authority to issue travel charge cards as allowed under the OMB Circulars, but not authorized for school districts under New Jersey school law.

(d) School district travel expenditures shall include, but are not limited to, all costs for transportation, meals, lodging, and registration or conference fees directly related to participation in the event.

(e) School district travel expenditures subject to this subchapter shall include costs for all required training and all travel authorized in school district employee contracts and school board policies. This includes, but is not limited to, required professional development, other staff training and required training for board members, and attendance at specific conferences authorized in existing employee contracts, provided that such travel meets the requirements of this subchapter. All such expenditures are subject to the rules in this subchapter including, but not limited to, inclusion in the annual travel limit, prior board approval, separate tracking, and per diem reimbursements.

6A:23A-7.2 Board policy for travel expenditures

(a) A school district board of education shall implement a policy, including procedures, pertaining to travel expenditures for its employees and board members that are in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:11-12, this subchapter and other rules and procedures the board deems appropriate.

(b) The board policy pertaining to school district travel expenditures shall incorporate either expressly, in whole or in part, and/or by reference the laws and regulations contained in N.J.S.A. 18A:11-12 and this subchapter.

(c) A board shall ensure through its policy and procedures that all travel by its employees and board members is educationally necessary and fiscally prudent, and shall include the requirement that all school district travel expenditures are:

1. Directly related to and within the scope of the employee's or board member's current responsibilities and, for school district employees, the school district's professional development

plan, the school building professional development plan, and employee's individual professional development plan;

2. For travel that is critical to the instructional needs of the school district or furthers the efficient operation of the school 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, including, but not limited to, the authority to issue travel charge cards. The board of education shall specify in its travel policy the applicable restrictions and requirements set forth in the State and Federal guidelines including, but not limited to, types of travel, methods of transportation, mileage allowance, subsistence allowance, and submission of supporting documentation including receipts, checks or vouchers.

(d) A board shall state in its policy that travel reimbursements will be paid only upon compliance with all provisions of N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7 and the board's procedures and approval requirements. The policy shall state that the school board will not ratify or approve payments or reimbursements for travel after completion of the travel event, except as provided at N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.4(d).

(e) A board shall require that a board member recuse himself or herself from voting on travel if the board member, a member of his or her immediate family, or a business organization in which he or she has an interest, has a direct or indirect financial involvement that may reasonably be expected to impair his or her objectivity or independence of judgment.

(f) A board shall require that a board member shall not act in his or her official capacity in any matter in which he or she or a member of his or her immediate family has a personal involvement that is or creates some benefit to the school official or member of his or her immediate family; or undertake any employment or service, whether compensated or not, which may reasonably be expected to prejudice his or her independence of judgment in the execution of his or her official duties.

6A:23A-7.3 Maximum travel budget

(a) Annually in the prebudget year, each board shall establish by board resolution, a maximum travel expenditure amount for the budget year, which the school district shall not exceed. The 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 supported by local and State funds.

2. A board may elect to exclude travel expenditures supported by Federal funds from the maximum travel expenditure amount. If Federal funds are excluded from the established maximum amount, the board shall include in the resolution the total amount of travel supported by Federal funds from the prior year, prebudget year, and projected for the budget year.

3. Exclusion of Federal funds from the annual maximum travel budget does not exempt such travel from the requirements applicable to State and local funds.

(b) A board may authorize in its travel policy an annual maximum amount per employee for regular business travel only for which board approval is not required. 1. The annual maximum shall not exceed \$1,500 and shall be subject to the approval requirements in N.J.S.A. 18A:19-1.

2. Regular school district business travel as defined in N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-1.2 includes attendance at regularly scheduled in-state county meetings and Department sponsored or association sponsored events provided free of charge. It also includes regularly scheduled in-State professional development activities for which the registration fee does not exceed \$150.00 per employee or board member.

3. Regular school district business travel as authorized in the board's travel policy requires approval of the superintendent prior to obligating the district to pay related expenses and prior to attendance at the travel event.

i. The superintendent shall designate an alternate approval authority to approve travel requests in his or her absence when necessary to obtain timely board approval.

ii. The superintendent shall establish in writing the internal levels of approval required prior to his or her approval of the travel event, as applicable.

6A:23A-7.4 Travel approval procedures

(a) All travel requests for employees of the district shall be approved in writing by the superintendent and approved by a majority of the full voting membership of the board, except where the board has excluded regular business travel from prior approval pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.3(b), prior to obligating the school district to pay related expenses and prior to attendance at the travel event.

1. The superintendent shall designate an alternate approval authority to approve travel requests in his or her absence when necessary to obtain timely board approval.

2. The superintendent shall establish in writing the internal levels of approval required prior to his or her approval of the travel event, as applicable.

(b) All travel requests for board members shall require prior approval by a majority of the full voting membership of the board, except where the board has excluded regular business travel from prior approval pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.3(b), and the travel shall be in compliance with N.J.S.A. 18A:12-24 and 18A:12-24.1.

(c) A board may approve, at any time prior to the event, travel for multiple months as long as the board approval, as detailed in board minutes, itemizes the approval by event, total cost, and number of employees and board members attending the event. General or blanket pre-approval is not authorized.

(d) A board may, in its policy, exclude from the requirements of prior school board approval any travel caused by or subject to existing contractual provisions, including grants and donations, and other statutory requirements, or Federal regulatory requirements. For the exclusion of prior board approval to apply, the required travel event must be detailed, with number of employee(s), board member(s), and total cost in the applicable contract, grant, donation, statute or Federal regulation.

1. This does not include general grant guidelines or regulations that are permissive but do not require the travel event, unless the specific travel event, number of employee(s), board member(s) and total cost is detailed in the approved grant, donation, or other fund acceptance agreement.

2. This does not include general contractual provisions in employment contracts for continuing education or professional development, except where the board has

included in its policy, a maximum amount per employee for regular business travel that does not require prior board approval pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.3.

(e) Where occasional unforeseen situations arise wherein a travel request cannot obtain prior approval of the board, justification shall be included in the text of the travel request.

1. Such requests shall require prior written approval of the superintendent, or designee, and the Executive County Superintendent or designee.

2. The Board shall ratify the request at its next regularly scheduled meeting.

3. Travel to conferences, conventions and symposiums are not considered to be emergencies and shall not be approved after the fact.

6A:23A-7.5 Required documentation for travel

(a) The board in its policy shall specify the type of documentation required to justify the number of employees attending an event and the benefits to be derived from their attendance;

(b) Neither the superintendent, or designee, nor the board shall approve a travel request unless it includes the following information:

1. The name and dates of the event;

2. A list of board members and/or employees to attend either by name or title;

3. The estimated cost associated with travel;

4. A justification and brief statement that includes the primary purpose for the travel and the key issues that will be addressed at the event and their relevance to improving instruction or the operation of the school district. For training events, whether the training is needed for a certification required for continued employment, continuing education requirements, requirements of Federal or State law, or other purpose related to the programs and services currently being delivered or soon to be implemented in the school district; or related to school district operations;

5. The account number and funding source – Federal, State, private or local; and

6. In the case of annual events, the total attendance and cost for the previous year.

(c) Detailed documentation shall 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.

6A:23A-7.6 SBA responsibilities regarding accounting for travel

(a) The SBA or designee shall prepare itemized travel budgets by function and object of expense for each cost center, department or location maintained in the school district's accounting system, as applicable, as part of the preparation of and documentation for the annual school district budget. The aggregate amount of all travel budgets shall not exceed the board approved maximum travel expenditure amount for the budget year as required by N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.3.

(b) The SBA shall 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 this subchapter, and shall be in a detailed format suitable for audit.

(c) The SBA or designee shall review and approve all requests for travel expenditure reimbursement submitted for expenses incurred in the course of school district business as to cost and support documentation required by this subchapter. The SBA shall not approve or issue payment of travel expenditures or reimbursement requests until all required documentation and information has been submitted to support the payment and shall not approve any travel expenditure that when added to already approved travel expenditures would exceed the board approved maximum travel expenditure amount for the budget year.

(d) The SBA shall be responsible for the adequacy of documentation of transactions processed by their staff and the retention of that documentation to permit audits of their records.

(e) An employee of the board, a board member, or organization shall not receive payment, either partial or full, for travel and travel-related expenses in advance of the travel pursuant to N.J.S.A 18A:19-1 et seq. The payment of travel and travel-related expenses shall be made personally by a school district employee, board of education member and reimbursed at the conclusion of the travel event. This applies to travel-related purchases for which a purchase order is not applicable. This section does not preclude the district from paying the vendor directly with the proper use of a purchase order (for example, for registration, airline tickets, hotel).

6A:23A-7.7 Sanctions for violations of travel requirements

(a) Any board that violates its established maximum travel expenditure as set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.3, or that otherwise is not in compliance with the travel limitations set forth in this subchapter may be subject to sanctions by the Commissioner as authorized pursuant to N.J.S.A 18A:4-23 and 18A:4-24, including reduction of State aid in an amount equal to any excess expenditure pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:11-12 and 18A:7F-60.

(b) A person who approves any travel request or reimbursement in violation of the district's policy or this subchapter shall be required to reimburse the school district in an amount equal to three times the cost associated with attending the event pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:11-12.

(1) The board policy shall include the designation of either the Chief School Administrator or School Business Administrator, or designate both, as the person(s) who are the final approval authority for travel and therefore, subject to this penalty.

(c) An employee or board member who violates the school district's travel policy or these rules shall be required to reimburse the school district in an amount equal to three times the cost associated with attending the event pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:11-12.

(d) The board policy shall include procedures to monitor compliance and application of the penalty upon determination a violation has occurred after board payment of the event. If a violation is determined prior to payment or reimbursement of the travel event, the board policy may exclude application of any additional penalties.

(e) The annual audit conducted pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:23-1 shall include test procedures to ensure compliance with the district's board policy and travel limitations set forth in this section and N.J.S.A. 18A:11-12.

6A:23A-7.8 Prohibited travel reimbursements

(a) A board shall state in its policy that the following types of expenditures are not eligible for reimbursement:

1. Subsistence reimbursement for one-day trips, except for meals expressly authorized by and in accordance with the provisions of N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.12;

2. Subsistence reimbursement for overnight travel within the State, except where authorized by the Commissioner in accordance with the procedures set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.11;
3. Travel by board members or employees whose duties are unrelated to the purpose of the travel event or who are not required to attend to meet continuing educations requirements or to comply with law or regulation;
4. Travel by spouses, civil union partners, domestic partners, immediate family members and other relatives;
5. Costs for employee attendance for coordinating other attendees' accommodations at the travel event;
6. Lunch or refreshments for training sessions and retreats held within the school district including in-service days and for employee participants traveling from other locations within the school district;
7. Training to maintain a certification that is not required as a condition of employment (example: CPE credits to maintain a CPA license if the employee is not required to be a CPA for continued school district employment);
8. Charges for laundry, valet service, entertainment;
9. Limousine services, and chauffeuring costs to or during the event;
10. Car rentals, either utilized for airport transportation or transportation at a conference, convention, etc., unless absolutely necessary for the conduct of school district business. Justification must accompany any request for car rentals. If approved, the most economical scheduling of car rental is to be used, including the use of subcompacts, discounted and special rates. An example of the justified use of car rental is when an employee is out of state, making inspections at various locations, and the use of public transportation is impracticable. When car rental is authorized, the employee shall not be issued an advance payment for the anticipated expense associated with the rental;
11. Alcoholic beverages;
12. Entertainment costs including amusement, diversion, and social activities and any costs directly associated with such costs (such as tickets to shows or sports events, meals, lodging, rentals, transportation, and gratuities);
13. Gratuities or tips in excess of those permitted by Federal per diem rates;
14. Reverse telephone charges or third party calls;
15. Hospitality rooms;
16. Souvenirs, memorabilia, promotional items or gifts;
17. Air fare without documentation of quotes from at least three airlines and/or on-line services; and
18. Other travel expenditures that are unnecessary and/or excessive.

6A:23A-7.9 Travel methods

(a) For the purposes of this section, "transportation" means necessary official travel on railroads, airlines, shuttles, buses, taxicabs, school district-owned or leased vehicles and personal vehicles.

(b) The purchase or payment of related transportation expenses shall be made by purchase order or personally by a school district employee, board of education member and reimbursed at the conclusion of the travel event. An actual invoice or receipt for each purchase or expense shall be submitted with a claim for reimbursement.

(c) Pursuant to OMB Circulars, the following travel methods requirements apply:

1. Air and rail tickets shall be purchased via the Internet, if possible, using airline or online travel services such as Travelocity, Expedia or Hotwire.

2. Air travel shall only be authorized when determined that it is necessary and advantageous to conduct school district business.

i. The most economical air travel should be used, including the use of discounted and special rates.

ii. The following options should be considered when booking tickets:

(1) Connecting versus nonstop flights;

(2) Departing earlier or later compared to the preferred departure time;

(3) Utilizing alternative airports within a city, for example, Chicago, Illinois – Midway Airport versus O’Hare Airport;

(4) Utilizing alternative cities, for example, Newark versus Philadelphia;

(5) Utilizing "low cost" airlines; and

(6) Exploring alternate arrival and/or departure days.

iii. No employee or board member can earn benefits as a result of school district funded travel. Employees and board members are prohibited from receiving "Frequent Flyer" benefits accruing from school district funded travel.

iv. Airfare other than economy (that is, Business or First Class) shall not be fully reimbursed by the school district except when travel in such classes:

(1) Is less expensive than economy;

(2) Avoids circuitous routings or excessive flight duration; or

(3) Would result in overall transportation cost savings.

v. All airfare other than economy and not covered by the above exceptions purchased by an employee or board member shall only be reimbursed at the economy rate for the approved destination.

vi. Cost estimates on travel requests and associated authorizations shall be consistent with current airline tariffs, with consideration of available special fares or discounts, for the requested destination.

vii. Airline tickets shall not be booked until all necessary approvals have been obtained.

viii. Justification shall be required when actions by a traveler result in additional expenses over and above the authorized travel request. Sufficient justification shall be considered only for factors outside the control of the purchaser. Additional expenses without sufficient justification shall not be reimbursed.

ix. Justification shall accompany requests for airline ticket reimbursement when purchased by employees or board members contrary to (e)2i through viii. Sufficient justification shall be considered only for factors outside the control of the purchaser. Noncompliant purchases without sufficient justification shall not be reimbursed. Reimbursement of purchases with sufficient justification shall be otherwise permitted and reimbursed in accordance with this subchapter.

3. Rail travel shall only be authorized when determined that it is necessary and advantageous to conduct school district business.

i. The most economical scheduling of rail travel shall be utilized, including excursion and government discounts, whenever applicable.

ii. When one employee or board member is traveling within the Northeast Corridor, NJ Transit shall be used as the rail option. Use of Amtrak will not be authorized unless it is the only means of travel available.

iii. The use of high speed rail services, such as Acela, shall not be authorized.

iv. When two or more employees and/or board members are traveling to the same event in the Northeast Corridor (between Boston, MA and Washington, DC), rail travel shall not be authorized. In those cases, the travelers must use a school district vehicle or, if not available, a personally-owned vehicle must be used.

v. All rail travel, including rail travel in the Northeast Corridor, must be processed in the same manner as prescribed for air travel in (c)2 above.

4. Use of a school district-owned or leased vehicle shall be the first means of ground transportation. Use of a personally-owned vehicle on a mileage basis shall not be permitted for official business where a school district-owned or leased vehicle is available.

i. Mileage allowance in lieu of actual expenses of transportation shall be allowed at the rate authorized by the annual State Appropriations Act, or a lesser rate at the board's discretion for an employee or board member traveling by his personally-owned vehicle on official business.

(1) In accordance with the OMB circulars, if any condition in an existing negotiated contract is in conflict with the Circulars, such as the mileage reimbursement rate, the provision of the contract will prevail.

ii. Parking and toll charges shall be allowed in addition to mileage allowance.

iii. Reimbursement for travel to points outside the State by automobile shall be permitted when such arrangements prove to be more efficient and economical than other means of public transportation.

iv. In determining the relative costs of private and public transportation, all associated costs (that is, tolls, taxicabs, airport or station transfers, etc.) shall be considered.

v. All employees and board members using privately-owned cars in the performance of their duties for the school district shall present a New Jersey Insurance Identification Card indicating that insurance coverage is in full force and effect with companies approved by the State Department of Banking and Insurance. The card shall be made available to the superintendent or designee before authorization to use privately-owned cars.

vi. Employees and board members who are out-of-State residents must provide appropriate insurance identification in lieu of the New Jersey Insurance Identification Card.

5. School district-owned or leased vehicles shall be utilized in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-6.12.

6. Necessary taxicab charges are permitted. However, travel to and from airports, downtown areas and between hotel and event site shall be confined to regularly scheduled shuttle service, whenever such service is complimentary or is less costly. If shuttle service is not available, taxicabs may be used.

7. Cruises shall not be permitted for travel events or transportation.

6A:23A-7.10 Routing of travel

(a) Pursuant to OMB Circulars:

1. All travel shall be by the most direct, economical and usually-traveled route. Travel by other routes as a result of official necessity shall only be eligible for payment or reimbursement if satisfactorily established in advance of such travel.
2. In any case where a person travels by indirect route for personal convenience, the extra expense shall be borne by the individual.
3. Reimbursement for expenses shall be based only on charges that do not exceed what would have been incurred by using the most direct, economical and usually-traveled route.

6A:23A-7.11 Subsistence allowance – overnight travel

(a) Pursuant to the OMB Circulars, one-day trips that do not involve overnight lodging shall not be eligible for subsistence reimbursement, except for meals expressly authorized by and in accordance with the provisions of N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.12.

(b) Pursuant to the OMB Circulars, generally, overnight travel shall not be eligible for subsistence reimbursement if travel is within the State. Overnight travel is permitted if such travel is authorized pursuant to (c) below, or is a required component by the entity issuing a grant, donation or other funding agreement with the district. The specific required overnight in-State travel event must be detailed in the final grant, donation, or other fund acceptance agreement along with number of employee(s), board member(s) and total cost. All reimbursements are subject to this subchapter unless the funding acceptance agreement specifies otherwise.

(c) The Commissioner shall be authorized to grant waivers for overnight travel for school board members and school district employees to attend in-State conferences. Such waivers will be granted in only extremely limited circumstances, where the sponsoring organization can demonstrate that the conference is broad and multi-disciplinary in scope, incorporates content offerings from numerous specialty areas, and includes important professional development opportunities and/or required training. In addition, the sponsoring organization must demonstrate that the conference's content, structure, scheduling and anticipated attendance necessitate that it be held on multiple consecutive days with overnight lodging. When such waivers are granted, individual school districts or individuals will not be required to submit waiver requests for attendance at these conferences.

1. Sponsors of conferences may submit to the Commissioner a request for a waiver of this prohibition by providing information regarding the conference as follows:

- i. The name and dates of the event;
- ii. Justification for the length of the conference and the necessity to hold events for each day beyond the first day of the conference;
- iii. Identification of all other conferences sponsored or co-sponsored by the organization (whether single or multi-day) in the previous year;
- iv. A description of the target audience by position title and/or educational certificate and endorsement;
- v. Justification of the importance of the target audience attending the event;
- vi. The cost of registration;
- vii. A detailed list and description of any activities to be charged to the participants by the sponsor separate from the registration fee such as luncheons, work shops, entertainment, etc., including:
 - (1) The cost of the activity;
 - (2) Whether participation is mandatory or voluntary; and
 - (3) The purpose such as social, guest speaker, working session, etc.;

- viii. A copy of agenda or program for the event;
- ix. A brief statement that includes the primary purpose of the event and the key issues that will be addressed at the event and their relevance to improving instruction or the operation of a school or school district;
- x. For training events, whether the training is needed for a certification required for continued employment, continuing education requirements, or requirements of Federal or State law; and
- xi. In the case of annual events, total attendance and registration cost for previous year.

(d) If a waiver of the prohibition on overnight travel is granted pursuant to this section, it shall permit reimbursement for travel expenses for only those individuals whose home to convention commute exceeds 50 miles.

(e) Overnight travel within the State shall not be eligible for subsistence reimbursement if travel is on the day prior to the start of the conference. Reimbursement shall be prohibited for lodging prior to check-in time for the first day of the event or after check-out time on the last day of the event.

(f) The US General Services Administration publishes a schedule of Federal per diem rates in the Federal Register for approved overnight travel by the event location. The latest Federal per diem rates schedule for lodging, and meals and incidental expenses by location can be found at www.gsa.gov. The following restrictions apply to allowable per diem reimbursements:

1. Allowable per diem reimbursement for lodging, meals and incidentals shall be actual reasonable costs, not to exceed the federal per diem rates for the event location. Registration and conference fees are not subject to the Federal per diem rate caps. If the event location is not listed, the maximum per diem allowance shall be \$31.00 for meal/incidental expenses and \$60.00 for lodging, or amounts listed in any superceding NJOMB circular.

2. Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:11-12(o), reimbursement for lodging expenses for overnight travel, out-of-State or in-State as authorized by the Commissioner, 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 Federal per diem rates.

i. If the hotel at the site of the current travel event is not available, lodging may be paid for similar accommodations at a rate not to exceed the hotel rate at the site of the current event.

ii. If there is no hotel at the site of the current travel event (for example, Atlantic City Convention Center), then reimbursement for lodging shall not exceed the Federal per diem rate.

3. If the meal is not part of a one-sum fee for a travel event, reimbursement may be approved for the full cost of an official convention meal that the employee or board member attends, when such meal is scheduled as an integral part of the convention or conference proceedings. Receipts shall be submitted in order to obtain reimbursement in such situations. The amount of the Federal per diem rate for the corresponding meal shall be deducted from that day's subsistence allowance.

4. The allowance for a meal or meals, or incidentals shall not be eligible for reimbursement when included and paid in the registration fee, the cost of lodging or transportation charge.

5. Receipts shall be required for all hotel and incidental expenses. Meal expenses under the Federal per diem allowance limits do not require receipts pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:11-12o(3).

6. In any cases in which the total per diem reimbursement is greater than the Federal per diem rates, the costs shall be considered excessive in the absence of substantial justification accompanying the travel voucher submitted by the employee or board member. In such cases, receipts shall be submitted for all costs including meals.

7. Employees and board members shall patronize hotels and motels that offer special rates to government employees unless alternative lodging offers greater cost benefits or is more advantageous to the conduct of school district business.

8. Actual subsistence expenses shall not be reimbursable if paid by the traveler to a member of his family, to another school district employee or to a member of the family of another school district employee.

6A:23A-7.12 Meal allowance – special conditions – and allowable incidental travel expenditures.

(a) Meals for in-State travel shall not be eligible for reimbursement except as expressly authorized within this subchapter.

(b) Meals during one-day, out-of-State trips required for school business purposes may be authorized for breakfast, lunch and/or dinner in an amount permitted by NJOMB. The Commissioner shall post the most current rates on the Department website for reference.

(c) Lunch for training sessions may be authorized for an amount up to \$7.00 per person only when it is necessary that employees or board members remain at a site other than their school district and there are no viable options for lunch at the off-site location. 1. Per N.J.S.A. 18A:11-12a(1)(d), employee and board member retreats shall be held onsite unless there is no school district site available.

2. If lunch is included in a lump-sum registration fee for the training session, the full amount is eligible for reimbursement if reasonable.

3. Refreshments for breaks may also be provided at training sessions held at a site other than the school district. Therefore, providing lunch for staff meetings and in-service days or for staff that come from other parts of the school district shall not be permitted. (See N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.12(d).)

(d) Subsistence expenses for an employee or board member shall not be allowed at the school district or within a radius of 10 miles thereof, except for meals expressly authorized by and in accordance with the provisions of this section. Non-allowed expenses include, but are not limited to, meals and refreshments for staff meetings and in-service days.

(e) Reimbursement may be approved for the cost of an official luncheon or dinner, up to \$7.00 and \$10.00, respectively, that an employee or board member is authorized to attend, where such a meal is scheduled as an integral part of an official proceeding or program related to school district business and the employee's responsibilities.

1. School district business above refers to the management operations of the district and does not refer to activities that benefit students and are part of the instructional program. Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-5.8(b)4, all reasonable expenditures related to district employees that are essential to the conduct of a student activity are permitted.

(f) Regular meetings, special meetings, and work sessions of the board of education shall be limited to light meals and refreshments for all board members.

1. The meals may be served to employees who are required to attend the event and where it is impractical for the employee to commute to and from his or her residence between the end

of the work day and the beginning of the event, or where the employee is required to remain at the school district to prepare for the event.

2. The school district shall acquire the light meals and refreshments by the solicitation of quotes if required pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-1 et seq.

3. Where the school district's food service program can prepare comparable meals at a lower cost, the food service program shall be used.

4. The average cost per meal shall not exceed \$10.00.

5. The school district shall purchase or prepare food that are sufficient to provide each board member, dignitary, non-employee speaker or allowable staff member one meal. Meals should be carefully ordered to avoid left-overs. Unintended left-over food should be donated to a charitable shelter or similar facility, if at all possible.

(g) Allowable incidental travel expenses are defined as those that are essential to transacting official business.

1. Charges for telephone calls on official business may be allowed. The voucher must show the dates on which such calls were made, the points between which each call was made and the cost per call.

2. Employees and board members using their personally-owned telephone for business may request reimbursement, less Federal Communications Tax. Calls for business are tax exempt and the telephone company will make allowances for the tax if the employee or board member certifies to the telephone company when paying bills for personally-owned phones that said calls were business calls.

3. Incidental expenses, when necessarily incurred by the traveler in connection with the transaction of official business, may be submitted for reimbursement only when the necessity and nature of the expense are clearly and fully explained on the travel voucher and the voucher is approved. Travel vouchers shall be supported by receipts showing the quantity and unit price.

6A:23A-7.13 Records and supporting documents

(a) All persons authorized to travel on business shall keep a memorandum of expenditures chargeable to the school district, noting each item at the time the expense is incurred, together with the date incurred.

(b) The travel voucher shall be completed by the employee or board member to document the details of the travel event. The travel voucher must be signed by the employee or board member to certify to the validity of the charges for which reimbursement is sought. The form must also bear the signatures of approval officials for processing.

(c) Sufficient documentation shall be maintained centrally by the school district to support payment and approval of the travel voucher.

(d) In addition to the documentation required for reimbursement, each person authorized to travel shall submit a brief report that includes the primary purpose for the travel, the key issues addressed at the event and their relevance to improving instruction or the operations of the school district. This report shall be submitted prior to receiving reimbursement.

(e) Documentation for requests for travel reimbursement shall show:

1. The dates and individual points of travel, number of miles traveled between such points and kind of conveyance used;

2. If the distance traveled between any given points is greater than the usual route between these points, the reason for the greater distance must be stated;

3. The hours of the normal work day and actual hours worked must be shown when requesting meal reimbursement for non-overnight travel;

4. Original receipts shall be required for all reimbursable expenses, except for meals that qualify for per diem allowances and for parking meters;

5. Actual vendor receipts for personal credit card charges shall be attached to reimbursement requests. Credit card statements shall not be accepted as documentation of expenses;

6. Personal charges on a hotel bill shall be deducted and shown on the bill;

7. When lodging is shared jointly, the fact must be stated on the travel voucher;

8. Where travel is not by the most economical, usually-traveled route, the employee or board member reimbursement request shall set forth the details of the route, the expenses actually incurred, the hour of departure, the hour of arrival and an explanation for the use of costlier travel arrangements;

9. When travel is authorized in the employee's or board member's own automobile on a mileage basis, the points between which travel was made and the distance traveled between each place must be shown. A statement as to ownership of the auto or other conveyance used, as well as a certification that liability insurance is in effect, must be documented;

10. Reimbursement requests must be supported by other receipts as required;

11. The voucher shall be itemized; and

12. Reimbursement requests shall be rendered monthly when in excess of \$25.00. Travel for a single travel event must be reported as soon as possible after the trip.

(f) All outstanding travel vouchers for the school year ending June 30 shall be submitted as soon as possible after June 30 regardless of amount, notwithstanding (e)12 above.

(g) Travel mileage reimbursement requests of the just completed school year that are not submitted by July 30 or the date approved by the district for the closing of books, whichever is earlier, for the just completed school year shall not be approved or paid.