



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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TRENTON, NJ 08625-0500

CHRIS CHRISTIE  
Governor

KIM GUADAGNO  
Lt. Governor

ROCHELLE R. HENDRICKS  
Acting Commissioner

September 13, 2010

Richard G. Bozza, Ed.D.  
Executive Director  
New Jersey Association of School Administrators  
920 West State Street  
Trenton, NJ 08618-5394

Dear Dr. Bozza:

The New Jersey Department of Education is in receipt of the application you submitted on behalf of the New Jersey Association of School Administrators requesting a waiver of the prohibition on overnight travel in order to facilitate the hosting of TECHSPO 2011 to be held on January 27 and 28, 2011 in Atlantic City.

As you may be aware, N.J.S.A. 18A:11-12 requires that boards of education must ensure that all school district travel expenditures are "in compliance with State travel payment guidelines as established by the Department of the Treasury..." On March 17, 2008, the State Department of the Treasury issued *OMB Circular 08-19* that at Section X.B specifically prohibits reimbursement of in-State overnight travel. However, the circular authorizes the Commissioner of Education "to grant waivers for overnight travel for school board members and school district employees to attend in-State conferences pursuant to guidelines issued by the Department of Education." *OMB Circular 08-19 Section I.B.8.*

After careful consideration, the Department issued guidelines to reflect its determination that waivers of the overnight travel prohibition should be granted in only extremely limited circumstances, consistent with the clear Legislative intent to reduce non-instructional expenses of public school districts, particularly those related to travel. The guidelines were incorporated into regulations adopted on December 18, 2008 at N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.11 and are posted on the Department's web site at: <http://www.state.nj.us/education/code/current/title6a/chap23a.pdf>.

It is incumbent upon the sponsoring organization to demonstrate that the conference is broad and multidisciplinary in scope, incorporates content offerings from numerous specialty areas, and includes important professional development and training opportunities.

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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.

In connection with your waiver application, you provided a comprehensive description of the planned TECHSPO event including the 2010 conference program booklet and a preliminary 2011 brochure and event information statement. After carefully reviewing your submission, the Department finds that TECHSPO 2011 does not offer the breadth of content across numerous specialty areas required for the issuance of a travel waiver approval. Accordingly, your request for a travel waiver is denied.

It is important to note, however, that denial of your waiver request does not mean that you cannot hold a multi-day conference. Rather, it prohibits districts from reimbursing school board members and district employees for *overnight lodging* in connection with your conference. The conference may proceed; however, districts may not reimburse attendees for such overnight lodging. Reimbursement for registration fees, mileage and meals, subject to the limitations and conditions set forth in *OMB Circular 08-19* and *OMB Circular 06-14*, may be permissible.

Finally, I want to emphasize that although the waiver request is denied, I recognize the value and importance of the work performed by the New Jersey Association of School Administrators and extend my best wishes for a successful event.

Sincerely,



Rochelle R. Hendricks  
Acting Commissioner

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C: Executive County Superintendents  
Senior Staff