

## **Travel Request**

Travel requests for members of the school district Board require approval of the Board. Prior approval of the Board or Board Chair is preferred.

Travel requests must be submitted ten (10) days in advance of any travel and must be approved by the Superintendent. Out-of-district travel must be approved by the Superintendent and the school district Board. Travel to Portland will be considered in-state. All travel requests must meet program goal and objective requirements.

The travel request must show meals, lodging, transportation, registration and any other estimated expenses for which reimbursement will be requested upon completion of travel and the budget category to which reimbursement is to be charged. Substitute costs should also be included on the travel request to ensure a more accurate budget estimate.

Travel arrangements for travel and lodging shall be validated through online services such as Expedia.com or Travelocity.com to ensure the best rates. In addition, the school district is also allowed to use the State of Washington contract with Alaska Airlines to help reduce our air travel expenses. In the event of a group traveling to the same conference, the appropriate budget manager will collect the Travel Request Form from each staff member and turn all the information in to the Business Office to prepare the necessary purchase orders and make all the travel arrangements once the travel request has been approved.

## **Purchase Orders**

Purchase orders may be issued for lodging. The school district may pre-pay registration fees, airfares, or other forms of travel with either a purchase order or credit card. If a purchase order is used, a detailed receipt is still required as back-up documentation and the staff member upon return must complete a Travel Expense Claim form and attach ALL detailed receipts including any registration receipt received at the conference and/or the travel ticket stub(s).

## **Advanced Travel**

Staff may request Advanced Travel for an overnight, out-of-town trip. Request forms are available from the Business Office and must be completed at least 48 hours in advance of departure. The rules concerning settlement of the Advanced Travel allowance following return to the school district are very strict and must be adhered to. A Travel Expense Claim form with detailed receipts attached must be completed within ten (10) business days of return.

## **School District Credit Card**

The school district credit card may be used to pay for a room IF a purchase order is not accepted by the vendor.

The school district credit card is to be used as a last resort to pay for expenses. In the event the credit card is used to pay for expenses, upon return, staff must complete a Travel Credit Card Expense Reconciliation form. Itemized receipts must be attached. The school district shall have the right to withhold all funds payable to the claimant for any disallowed charges on the credit card or for any advanced travel not reconciled by staff within ten (10) business days of return.

### **Reimbursement of Claims**

Reimbursement of claims are only for the expenses of the individual to whom the payment will be made. In order to comply with school district policy, state law and requirements of the State Auditor's Office for adequate details on travel expense claims for travel out-of-town, all claims for reimbursement must include the following information and must have itemized receipts attached.

1. Claimant's name, address, building in which assigned, and the expenditure code the travel is to be charged;
2. The claim must detail the date, location, and purpose of the trip and itemize all legitimate expenses for which claim is made;
3. Reimbursement may be made for special travel including international travel, at a rate not to exceed Federal per diem travel guidelines.
4. With itemized receipts, the school district will reimburse travel expenses for the following:
  - a. Conference registration and fees: Organization dues are not reimbursable as a travel expense;
  - b. Overnight accommodations: Employees will be reimbursed for reasonable lodging expenses based on the current U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) limits for out of state travel, including lodging at a conference site. It is understood that the rate can be higher at the conference site than the GSA limit. However, the GSA limits apply, except in the instance when staying at a hotel in the region but not on the conference site requires extra travel expenses such as parking, car rental or extra travel, and the total cost exceeds the rate of the conference site. In this instance, the conference site rate will be allowable with documentation of the total cost of the GSA rate and the extra travel expenses. When more than one person is traveling to the same location, the School district encourages rooms to be shared if gender appropriate.
  - c. Meals will be reimbursed up to the GSA per diem maximum as they fall within the trip schedules. Per the Internal Revenue Service, meals reimbursed to an employee are taxable unless the traveler was away from his/her home overnight or long enough to require substantial rest or sleep. If deemed necessary, advance travel funds may be requested. Per Diem information is available on the Internet at: <http://www.gsa.gov>.

Meal reimbursement NOT resulting from a required overnight stay is considered taxable income by the IRS and will be paid through payroll at the end of each month.

- d. Reasonable gratuities are permitted as a reimbursable expense in addition to the cost of meals as well as for such services as baggage handling. Meal gratuities should be included on the meal receipt and listed with the meal on the claim form, but may not exceed the GSA Per Diem allowable amount. Other gratuities should be listed as other expenditures;
  - e. Mileage reimbursement shall be based on the current Federal Rate per mile and made pursuant to the Federal Internal Revenue Code and Internal Revenue Service regulations for use of a personal vehicle for travel within and out-of-town. The school district will not reimburse the expenses of more than one car traveling to any one location for the same meeting unless those traveling number more than one carload or approval is granted due to scheduling conflicts which do not permit traveling together. A conflict in scheduling must be work related and not for personal reasons (i.e., visiting relatives or extending one's stay). Permission to take more than one vehicle must be approved by the Superintendent. The report must show each point of departure and destination and miles;
  - f. Ferry fares: Fares may be paid by the driver for passengers, in which case names of passengers must be listed on the travel claim.
  - g. Other means of transportation, including an airplane, train, bus, taxi, etc. If an employee travels first class, the employee must pay the difference between "coach" and the first-class ticket.
  - h. Automobile parking and storage charges.
  - i. Bridge and road tolls.
4. Occasionally, travel may occur in areas where standard GSA per diem rates may not be adequate. The allowable per diem rate may be increased by 150 percent of the normal standard rate, provided the following occur:
- a. 41 CFR Chapter 301-7.1 through 301.7.2 regarding "General" requirements and "Employee/Agency Responsibilities" are followed. These establish general expense/per diem requirements and reasonableness.
  - b. Each exception that allows for an increase in per diem rate (up to a maximum of 150 percent) must be approved by the School Board after consideration of the high cost facts and circumstances.
5. When approved, travel claims must be channeled through the Superintendent or budget manager, who must sign and forward them to the Business Office; and,
6. Travel expenses will be reimbursed in a timely manner

### **Travel Advances**

- A. A written request for a travel advance must be submitted to the Business Office.
- B. Travel advances are paid in the form of a check payable to the staff member.

A statement of expense must be submitted to the Business Office within ten (10) days following completion of the travel. If the actual expenses are less than travel advance, the staff members will reimburse the district for the difference.

**Non-reimbursable Expenses:** The following expenses are not reimbursable:

- A. Alcoholic beverages, meals or snacks other than regular meals;
- B. Room service;
- C. Personal telephone calls, postage, and memberships;
- D. Mileage to and from home;
- E. Mileage for other nonofficial school district functions;
- F. Entertainment;
- G. Expenses for travel extending beyond the time required for the meeting or business, unless it is in the school district's financial interest to extend the travel over a Saturday night or such other rate advantages; and,
- H. Expenses incurred by non-employees traveling with the staff member, including room sur-charges.