

ESCAMBIA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURES / GUIDELINES

Purpose: To outline the procedures for the documentation and reimbursement of travel by Escambia County Board of Education employees and consultants employed by the School District.

Procedures:

1. **General Provisions:** Out of town travel will be considered travel outside of Escambia County. *All travel expenses will be on a reimbursement basis only* (Registration may be paid in advance). Travel requests shall normally be limited to that for which funds have been appropriated in the annual budget.

Travel must relate to employee's duties and responsibilities for the Escambia County Board of Education. Only necessary expenses of official travel will be reimbursed. All non-supervisory classified employees must, when possible, travel during normal working hours. A Professional Development Leave request form must be completed and approved before any travel or registration expenses are incurred.

2. **Authorized Expenses:** The Board of Education will reimburse the employee for registration fees, meals, lodging, coach airline tickets, mileage for personal vehicle, parking and toll fees, baggage handling fees, taxi fares between the airport and the hotel and/or the hotel and the training site, and for Board business telephone internet charges while away from Escambia County.

1. **Transportation:** Based on the mode of travel most economically advantageous to the System.

- a. **Automobile:** Personnel using personal automobiles shall be reimbursed for actual and necessary travel at the board approved mileage rate.
- b. **Air:** Coach class only; ticket stubs must be attached to the travel expense statement.

Note: If an alternate means of transportation is chosen, the limit of reimbursement shall be no more than the mode of transportation that is the most economical.

2. **Room Accommodations:** Necessary and reasonable lodging expenses will be honored when supported by original, itemized statement/receipt. When appropriate, staff members are encouraged to share accommodations.

3. Unauthorized Expenses: The Board of Education will not reimburse the employee for alcoholic beverages, snacks, personal supplies or entertainment.
4. Employee Authorization for Travel: Employees who are required to or who are requesting to travel are eligible for travel reimbursement and must receive authorization in advance of their travel via a professional leave request form. All employees requesting travel must complete a professional leave request form. This form must be approved and signed by the Superintendent prior to any travel. Overnight trips of less than 100 miles, one way travel, must be approved by the Superintendent prior to travel.

The Professional Development Leave request form must be accompanied by an agenda, brochure or some other form of documentation to substantiate the need for travel. The professional leave request form MUST include the funding source that will be paying for the travel expenses. The professional leave request should be completed at least **two weeks** prior to the date of departure, if possible.

Unauthorized travel will be at the expense of the employee.

5. Employee Reimbursement Requests: All employees are required to complete a travel request form when requesting travel reimbursement.
The employee will submit the travel reimbursement form with the expense summary section completed and any required attachments with all of the necessary supporting documentation to their School Principal or Supervisor for review and approval. Once approved, by signature, the travel reimbursement form must be sent to the Central Office for payment no later than 30 days following the travel date. Requests that are not complete will be returned to the School Principal or Supervisor. All travel reimbursements will be mailed to the address on file.
6. Registration Fee Prepayment Requests: Travel requests that include prepaid registration fees must be submitted to the Central Office at least two weeks prior to the registration deadline. The request should be submitted by purchase order. A copy of the approved travel request form must accompany the purchase order.
7. Meal Allowances: Employees traveling may be reimbursed a food/meal per diem allowance in the amount of \$50.00 per full day of approved overnight travel. A paid receipt is not required for this allowance. **If lunch is provided, then employees will only be reimbursed for half of the per diem allowance which is \$25.00. Meals are only reimbursable for overnight travel. In accordance with IRS regulations, we do not reimburse for “day meals.”**
8. Mileage Reimbursement Rate: Employees may be reimbursed for business miles traveled in a personal vehicle at the Standard Mileage Rate prescribed by the Board of Education. Currently this rate is .50/mile. Reimbursement is for

point-to-point mileage only and is paid from the employee's base or home whichever is closer.

9. Required Documentation of Allowable Expenses: Reimbursement of authorized expenditures will be made only if substantiated.
 - a. **Registration fee** – documented by publication or by invoice/receipt or a copy of check showing payment.
 - b. **Lodging** – original itemized invoice.
 - c. **Coach Airline Tickets** – original itemized invoice.
 - d. **Mileage for personal vehicle** – substantiated by total miles driven, adjusted for any personal convenience mileage or by point-to-point mileage from employee's base or home whichever is closer.
 - e. **Parking and Toll fees** – substantiated by dated receipt.
 - f. **Baggage handling fees** – substantiated by dated receipt or by hand record showing the date and the amount paid.
 - g. **Shuttle/Taxi fees** – substantiated by dated receipt or by hand record showing the date, destination and the amount.
 - h. **Telephone or Internet Charges** (only for Board Business) – documented by lodging invoice and/or substantiated by hand record showing the date, the location, the number called and the cost.
 - i. **Other expenses** – documented by dated receipts.

10. Gratuities (Tips): Gratuities are not an allowable expense, and therefore, will not be reimbursed.

11. Employee Responsibilities: Employees are responsible for ensuring the most reasonable rates for all expenditures. If at all possible, employees traveling to the same location for the same purpose should carpool and share lodging. It is also the employee's responsibility to ensure that the applicable forms and receipts are submitted for reimbursement.

12. Consultants: All consultants hired by the Board will be required to follow the guidelines set forth when requesting reimbursements.

13. Other Provisions: The Superintendent may authorize exceptions or modifications to the provisions set forth if he/she deems the exceptions/modifications necessary to meet the needs of the School Systems operations. School Principals or Supervisors, accompanied by an explanation of the circumstances that justify the need for making the exception, will request the Superintendent's authorization of exceptions in writing.

