

GADSDEN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Administrative Procedures

Travel Procedures

Guidelines for Travel and Requests for Reimbursement

PURPOSE

To establish GUIDELINES FOR TRAVEL AND REQUESTS FOR REIMBURSEMENT regulations and procedures for the Gadsden County School District (GCSD), employees, and those authorized to travel on behalf of the District when necessary, and reimbursement is requested.

AUTHORITY

1. Gadsden County School District Board Policy, Chapter 7.52
2. Department of Financial Services, Division of Accounting and Auditing, Bureau of Auditing, Reference Guide for State Expenditures
3. Section 112.061, Florida Statutes
4. Rule 69I-42, Florida Administrative Code
5. Florida Attorney General Opinion 81-53 Continental breakfast; reimbursement
6. Florida Attorney General Opinion 82-34 Reimbursement for travel expenses
7. State of Florida General Appropriations Act and implementing bills, if provided

SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY

Travel expenses shall be limited to those expenses necessarily incurred in the performance of a public purpose authorized by law to be performed by the GCSD and must be within the limitations described herein. This policy applies to all travel as defined herein for any purpose and for which reimbursement will be claimed by employees and those authorized to travel on behalf of the District as follows:

1. Expenditures properly chargeable to travel include registration payments, reimbursements of mileage for using a privately owned vehicle, per diem and subsistence allowance, common carrier transportation, and other expenses incidental to travel that are authorized by law.
2. All eligible travelers in the conduct of GCSD business, to attend meetings, conferences, conventions, workshops, and other training sessions for the benefit of the GCSD, at GCSD expense, pursuant to proper authorization prescribed herein.
3. Travel expenses for employees who travel to obtain certifications required for continued employment with GCSD are allowable.
4. Consultant travel, which is not covered within the scope of the consultant's contract, and which is billed separately to the GCSD on a cost reimbursement basis, must receive prior approval from the Superintendent and will be reimbursed according to this policy.
5. Under no circumstances will an employee be reimbursed for travel expenses incurred to take job placement examinations to apply for jobs, whether written or oral.

GADSDEN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Administrative Procedures

6. Requests for reimbursement payments must include:
 - a. Voucher for Reimbursement of Travel Expenses
 - b. Itemized hotel receipts (if applicable)
 - c. Transportation receipts for common carrier travel (if applicable)
 - d. Incidental receipts (if applicable)
 - e. In the case of a conference, convention, or training session not hosted by the GCSD, Panhandle Area Educational Consortium (PAEC), Florida School Board Insurance Trust (FSBIT), or where the GCSD personnel requesting reimbursement is not a presenter, the benefits to the GCSD must be provided along with the pages of the agenda that supports the request and an itemization of the registration cost.

DEFINITIONS

1. Employees – All employees of the GCSD. This includes full-time or part-time workers whose travel has been authorized and approved pursuant to this policy.
2. Authorized Person(s) – A person, other than an employee of the GCSD, who is authorized to incur travel expenses in the performance of the GCSD’s official duties, such as a consultant, board members, etc.
3. Conference – The coming together of persons with a common interest or interests for deliberation, interchange of views, or for the removal of differences or disputes and discussion of their common problems and interests. The term also includes similar meetings such as seminars, workshops, and trainings which are large formal group meetings that are programmed and supervised to accomplish intensive research, study, discussion, and work in a specific field or on a governmental problem or problems. A conference does not mean the coming together of GCSD personnel.
4. Convention – An assembly of a group of persons representing persons and groups, coming together for the accomplishment of a purpose of interest to a larger group or groups. A convention does not mean the coming together of GCSD personnel.
5. Traveler – A GCSD employee or authorized person when performing authorized travel on behalf of the GCSD.
6. Common carrier – Train, bus, commercial airline operating scheduled flights, or rental cars of an established rental car firm.
7. Point of Origin – Geographic location of the traveler’s official headquarters
8. In-state Travel – Authorized and approved travel within the territorial limits of Florida.
9. Most Economical Method of Travel – Mode of travel (state- or government-owned vehicle, private vehicle, common carrier, etc.) designated by GCSD per section 112.061, F.S.
10. Official Headquarters – This is the location of the traveler’s assigned office. In all such cases, the location must be in the best interest of the GCSD and not for the convenience of the employee or authorized traveler.

EXCEPTIONS

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Administrative Procedures Manual

District Travel

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GADSDEN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Administrative Procedures

Any exceptions or unusual circumstances that have not been provided for in this policy should be documented and approved by the Superintendent before travel or as soon as reasonably possible, while staying as close to the State of Florida policies for emergencies as possible.

FORMS

1. Authorization to Incur Travel Expense, Form DFS-AA-13 (07/03), adapted for use by the GCSD. (Appendix A)
2. Application for Advance on Travel Expenses, Form DFS-AA-25 (revised 07/98), adapted for use by the GCSD. (Appendix B)
3. Voucher for Reimbursement of Travel Expenses, Form DFS-AA-15, (revised 07/06), Excel format, adapted for use by the GCSD. (Appendix C)
4. GCSD In-District Travel Voucher (Appendix D)
5. GCSD Mileage Chart for In-District Travel – Head Start Only (Appendix E)
6. GCSD Mileage Chart for In-District Travel (Appendix F)

GCSD forms were adapted from the approved Department of Financial Services (DFS) forms and should be used for the planning and appropriate processing of travel expenses.

TYPES OF TRAVEL

1. Class A Travel – continuous travel of 24 hours or more away from official headquarters. The travel day for Class A is based on a calendar day (midnight to midnight).
2. Class B Travel – continuous travel of less than 24 hours which involves overnight absence away from official headquarters. The travel day for Class B travel begins at the same time as the travel period.
3. Class C Travel – short or day trips in which the traveler is not away from their official headquarters overnight.
4. Local Mileage – travel of less than 24 hours in which the traveler is not away from official headquarters overnight and which involves the use of a privately owned vehicle for official business within Gadsden and the surrounding counties and for which no meal reimbursements are claimed.

TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION

All travel will be conducted pursuant to authorized annual budget allocations. Before incurring any Class A, Class B, or Class C travel expenses for which reimbursement or cash advance is requested, an “Authorization to Incur Travel Expense” form should be approved and authorized by the traveler’s supervisor, the Assistant Superintendent, and the Superintendent. Authority for approval of GCSD reimbursed Class A, Class B, and Class C travel may be granted by the

GADSDEN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Administrative Procedures

traveler's supervisor, the Assistant Superintendent, or the Superintendent. Local mileage does not require an "Authorization to Incur Travel Expense" form; however, it will require the permission of the traveler's supervisor, the Assistant Superintendent, and the Superintendent before reimbursement will be made.

The following guidelines may be used when approving travel requests:

1. Funds are available in the budget.
2. A determination is made that a public purpose is achieved in taking the trip.
3. The number of travelers is the minimum number required to accomplish the purpose of the trip.
4. The method of travel (e.g., air, vehicle) is specified and the route or other arrangements are the most economical available and result in the shortest time away or the lowest overall cost consistent with the distance to be traveled and the purpose of the trip.

TRAVEL PAYMENT

When possible, an authorized GCSD Purchasing Card should be used as payment for all travel-associated expenses (except for meals and gas) incurred by employees conducting GCSD business unless authorization is given by the Finance Director for an alternative method of payment to be utilized.

Purchasing Card

Certain items, such as airline tickets, lodging, car rental, or registration fees (if allowed), should be prepaid with a Purchasing Card upon approval of the travel request. A Purchasing Card Receipt form should be completed for all transactions on GCSD Purchasing Cards.

Meals/Food

The GCSD Purchasing Cards are not to be used to pay for meals or food. After approval of the Authorization to Incur Travel Expense, at the traveler's request and approval of the Application for Advance on Travel Expenses, payment for meals can be advanced to the traveler at the applicable allowance rate.

When a meal is included in a registration fee, the meal allowance cannot be claimed for reimbursement, even if the traveler decides for personal reasons not to eat the meal. As provided in Attorney General Opinion 81-53, a continental breakfast is considered a meal and cannot be claimed for meal reimbursement if included in a registration fee for a convention or conference. Pursuant to s. 112.061(8)(a) 5, F.S., actual expenses for banquets and other meal functions that are not part of a basic registration fee may be reimbursed if participation in such an event directly enhances the public purpose of the agency. This rule will not apply to conferences or conventions where GCSD employees or authorized personnel do not pay a registration fee to attend. In the case

GADSDEN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Administrative Procedures

where a meal is provided by a hotel or airline, the traveler will be allowed to claim the meal allowance provided by law.

Travel Advance

If the traveler is not authorized to use a GCSD Purchasing Card, employees may obtain travel advances upon approval of the travel request. Approval of the “Authorization to Incur Travel Expense” form is required before a traveler may submit an “Application for Advance on Travel Expenses” form. Approval by the traveler’s supervisor, the Assistant Superintendent, and the Superintendent is required before payment will be made.

REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES

All travel advances should be settled within ten (10) working days of return from traveling. No advances for additional trips shall be made until all prior advances have been reconciled. Chapter 112.061, F.S. provides that any person who willfully makes or contributes to a fraudulent claim shall be guilty of a misdemeanor of the second degree and shall be civilly liable in the amount of overpayment. Such employees shall also be subject to disciplinary action by the GCSD, up to and including termination.

It is the responsibility of the Finance Department to ensure that the traveler complies with this section of the policy. Exceptions to this section of the policy may be made upon written justification of circumstances that necessitate multiple advances approved by the Superintendent.

Within ten (10) days of completing authorized travel, travelers should file a “Voucher for Reimbursement of Travel Expenses” form. The Voucher for Reimbursement of Travel Expenses should reflect the entire cost of the trip, including all advances and direct payments made. The traveler must sign and date the form for completeness and correctness as to the travel performed. The completed form must be signed by the traveler’s supervisor, the Assistant Superintendent, and the Superintendent. If the GCSD is due funds from the advance, a check payable to the GCSD should be attached to the Voucher for Reimbursement of Travel Expenses.

ALLOWABLE TRAVEL EXPENSES

The following describes the allowable travel expenses and the required documentation. In general, where receipts are required, original receipts should be submitted. If an original receipt is not available, a statement of the expense with an explanation must be prepared and included with the “Voucher for Reimbursement of Travel Expenses” form. Copies of bank transactions are allowable; however, it is recommended that secured information be redacted from such copies. Further, a copy of the meeting/conference/convention/training agenda, when one is provided, must be attached to the “Voucher for Reimbursement of Travel Expenses” form. When one is not provided, this should be indicated on the Voucher for Reimbursement of Travel Expenses.

GADSDEN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Administrative Procedures

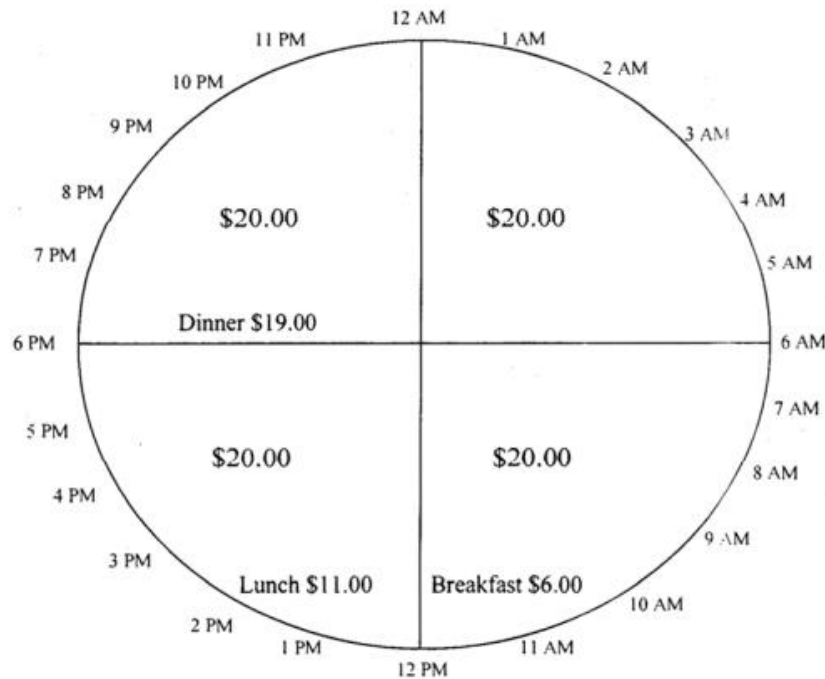
Any changes or additions to the cost of the travel made after the Authorization to Incur Travel Expense was approved must be explained on the Voucher for Reimbursement of Travel Expenses.

Meals and Lodging for Class A and Class B Travel

Travel shall be reimbursed by the following methods for each day of such travel, at the option of the traveler, provided that the same method of reimbursement is used to calculate each day of the travel (i.e., the entire trip will be either based on the per diem rate or based on actual expenses plus meal allowances):

1. Daily Per Diems – the most current standard State of Florida government per diem rate (\$80) to include both lodging and meals, or
2. Actual expenses for lodging at a single occupancy rate, to be substantiated by paid bills. However, if the traveler chooses a form of lodging where a paid bill is not applicable, the standard State of Florida government per diem rate will apply. The State of Florida government per diem rate is not applicable unless the traveler chooses lodging in which costs are incurred and can be substantiated by a paid bill or receipt.

Per Diem Clock



GADSDEN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Administrative Procedures

Allowable rates for per diem are provided for in s. 112.061(6), F.S. All claims for per diem and subsistence must be within the limitations outlined in this section of the statutes. All travelers are allowed the authorized per diem for each day of travel or if actual expenses exceed the allowable per diem, the amount allowed for meals as provided in s. 112.061(6) (b), F.S., plus actual expenses for lodging at a single occupancy rate. Per diem shall be calculated using four six-hour periods (quarters) beginning at midnight for Class A or when travel begins for Class B travel. Travelers may only switch from actual to per diem while on Class A travel on a midnight-to-midnight basis. A traveler on Class A or B travel who elects to be reimbursed on a per diem basis is allowed \$20.00 for each quarter from the time of departure until the time of return.

When claiming the standard State of Florida government per diem rate for Class A or Class B travel including meal reimbursements, the traveler shall be reimbursed one-fourth of the standard State of Florida government rate of per diem and meal allowances for each quarter, or fraction thereof, of the travel day included within this travel period. No receipts are required.

The travel day is divided into the following quarters:

12:01 a.m. to 6:00 a.m.
6:01 a.m. to 12:00 noon
12:01 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
6:01 p.m. to 12:00 midnight

Meal expenditures will be reimbursed according to the most current State of Florida government per diem meal rates. The following times shall be used to determine when meal reimbursements may be claimed:

- Breakfast \$6: travel begins before 6:00 AM and extends beyond 8:00 AM
- Lunch \$11: travel begins before 12:00 PM and extends beyond 2:00 PM
- Dinner \$19: travel begins before 6:00 PM and extends beyond 8:00 PM

A traveler may not claim per diem or lodging reimbursement for overnight travel within fifty miles (one-way) of the GCSD headquarters or their residence unless the circumstances necessitating the overnight stay are fully explained by the traveler and approved by the Finance Director.

An employee should not be reimbursed for any meal or lodging included in convention or conference registration fees paid by the GCSD. A continental breakfast provided as part of the conference/convention registration fee is considered breakfast and should not be claimed for reimbursement. An evening reception or other function that serves only hors d'oeuvres is not considered dinner and may be claimed for reimbursement. Should the conference/convention

GADSDEN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Administrative Procedures

registration fee include the provision of any lunches or dinners, these meals should not be claimed for reimbursement.

In the case where a meal is provided by a hotel or airline, the traveler will be allowed to claim the meal allowance provided by law.

Lodging

Reimbursement for lodging expenses is limited to a single occupancy rate. The cost of lodging shared with a non-official or non-employee (e.g., family members) is limited to the single occupancy rate. The reimbursement rate for the lodging room is limited to \$175.00 per day excluding parking and required resort fees. Costs beyond that amount are to be paid by the traveler; however, the GCSD Finance Director or Superintendent has the authority to approve reimbursement beyond the \$175.00 per day rate if justification is provided. *This amount is subject to change per the Legislature's Annual Appropriation Implementing Bill.*

When traveling within Florida the authorized GCSD Purchasing Card should be used for the payment of lodging expenses. The traveler must also present a copy of the GCSD's tax-exempt certificate. No sales tax will be reimbursed for Florida accommodations that should have been tax-exempt. For individuals who are not authorized to have a GCSD Purchasing Card, a Credit Card Authorization form should be completed with the lodging vendor.

When lodging, transportation, and/or meals are paid for or provided by any federal, state, or other local governmental agency, no further expenses will be reimbursed.

Class C Travel

A traveler shall not be reimbursed for Class C travel on a per diem basis. Provided the reason for the travel does not include a meal, the traveler shall receive subsistence as follows:

- Breakfast \$6: travel begins before 6:00 AM and extends beyond 8:00 AM
- Lunch \$11: travel begins before 12:00 PM and extends beyond 2:00 PM
- Dinner \$19: travel begins before 6:00 PM and extends beyond 8:00 PM

When provided for in statute, Class C travel meal allowance is defined as taxable income and must be shown as a separate item on the Voucher for Reimbursement of Travel Expenses. Employee Class C travel should be deducted from the total claimed and processed through payroll.

Reimbursement of Travel Expenditures by Individuals with Disabilities

When a payment reimbursement request is made for travel expenses in excess of those ordinarily authorized pursuant to s. 112.061, F.S., and Rule 69I-42, F.A.C., and such excess travel expenses were incurred to permit the safe travel of an individual with disabilities, those excess expenses will

GADSDEN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Administrative Procedures

be paid to the extent that the expenses were reasonable and necessary to the safe travel of the individual.

Transportation

Transportation expenses incurred in connection with the performance of an activity that serves a public purpose authorized by law to be performed by the agency may be paid directly to common carriers or individual travelers. The traveler must use the most direct route from the traveler's headquarters unless it can be demonstrated that travel from another location is more economical. If the traveler uses an indirect route for his/her convenience, the traveler must bear any extra cost. The GCSD Finance Director should designate the most economical method of travel for each trip, keeping in mind the following conditions:

1. The nature of the travel.
2. The most efficient and economical means of travel (considering time of the traveler, cost of transportation, and per diem or subsistence required)
3. The number of travelers making the trip and the amount of equipment being transported. If the class of travel is other than the most economical method of travel, the GCSD Finance Director must authorize the expense in writing and describe the circumstances requiring such travel. This documentation shall be attached to the travel voucher.

A. Common Carrier

Travelers whose transportation is by common carrier shall make use of any state-term aircraft or auto rental contract which may be in effect at the time. Failure to use state-term contracts will require justification to be provided with the reimbursement information. Justification must be as allowed by the state term contracts.

Common carrier charges may be billed directly to the GCSD pursuant to Rule 69I-42.007(6), F.A.C., or the traveler may pay his or her common carrier charges and request reimbursement. Sufficient information must be included with the "Voucher for Reimbursement of Travel Expenses" maintained by the GCSD, which relates to the common carrier charges. Common carrier charges paid by the traveler shall be included in the traveler's reimbursement request.

The GCSD may authorize the rental of hybrid cars for official travel when it has been determined to be the most economical method of travel. Documentation must be retained on file at the GCSD to support the agency's decision.

B. District Vehicle

Reimbursements will not be made for travel that utilizes a District vehicle. Vehicles should be gassed up at the Transportation Department before travel. If gas is needed while traveling, the GCSD Purchasing Card should be used and receipts kept for proper tracking.

GADSDEN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Administrative Procedures

C. Air

Aircraft travel, for which a state-term contract does not exist, must be the most economical rate and class available. Exceptions will be allowed only when fully justified. Any cost over state-term contracts that are not fully justified will be borne by the traveler.

Coach fare by route and/or rate best suited for the interest of the GCSD is allowed and must be documented by a paid receipt. Should a traveler select a different route and/or rate, for their benefit, reimbursement will be limited to the coach fare, by the route and/or rate, determined by what is in the best interest of the GCSD.

Reimbursement of first-class airfare is specifically limited to trips under emergency conditions when coach accommodation is not available. In those instances where an electronic airline ticket was purchased, documentation should include a copy of the traveler's itinerary, identifying the purchase of the airline ticket, or a separate paid receipt for the airline ticket.

D. Private Vehicle

The GCSD Finance Director may authorize the use of privately owned vehicles for official travel instead of publicly owned vehicles or common carriers. The traveler is entitled to a mileage allowance at a fixed rate of \$0.67 per mile. When calculating mileage reimbursement, the amount must be rounded down to the whole dollar. Reimbursement for expenditures relating to the operation, maintenance, and ownership of a vehicle shall not be allowed when privately owned vehicles are used in public business.

Travelers shall not be paid a mileage allowance for travel between their residence and their headquarters or regular work location (See Attorney General Opinion 82- 34). If travel begins more than one hour before or one hour after the traveler's regular work hours, the point of origin may be the traveler's residence, provided that the miles claimed may not exceed the miles driven. Travelers are encouraged to use the GCSD's mileage chart when appropriate.

All mileage shall be shown from point of origin to point of destination and included with the Voucher for Reimbursement of Travel Expenses. When possible, mileage should be computed and reimbursed based on the current Florida Department of Transportation Official Intercity Highway Mileage map for in-state travel and the GCSD's Mileage Chart for in-county travel. Alternate methods of computing mileage, such as the use of an Internet website, may be authorized on the travel request memo if supported by appropriate documentation. Road and bridge tolls may be claimed in addition to mileage upon presentation of receipts. Vicinity mileage necessary for the conduct of official business is allowable but must be listed separately on the reimbursement request and the purpose explained.

GADSDEN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Administrative Procedures

No traveler who is entitled to mileage or transportation expense shall be allowed either mileage or transportation expense when they are gratuitously transported by another traveler. The traveler's payment information shall indicate complimentary travel.

Reimbursement for local mileage or Class C travel mileage involving the use of the employee's vehicle should be submitted and shall specify:

- Date of the travel
- Origin
- Destination
- Number of miles traveled.
- Purpose of the travel
- Amount requested for reimbursement.

E. Taxi, Limousine, Public Transportation

The actual costs incurred for normal use of a taxi, limousine, public transportation, and parking are reimbursable. Receipts are not required for reimbursement of parking, taxi, limousine, and public transportation costs that are less than \$20.00 per traveler per trip. "Per trip" shall be the trip authorized in the "Authorization to Incur Travel Expense" form, not each ride in public transportation. When these items cumulatively exceed \$20.00 during the duration of the travel, receipts are required to document the full amount. In those cases where receipts are not available (i.e., mass transit tokens) reimbursement may still be sought with an explanation of the circumstances via a memorandum attached to the "Voucher for Reimbursement of Travel Expenses" form.

F. Parking

Travelers should look for the most economical parking and should prioritize free or reduced-price parking included with conference attendance or lodging over choosing valet. Valet parking should only be utilized when that is the only means of parking available. The actual amount paid for mandatory valet parking at the hotel plus a tip of \$1 per occasion is reimbursable. Valet parking tips shall not be paid if self-parking is available at the hotel. Documentation showing it was mandatory must be attached to the travel reimbursement.

G. Car Rental

Travelers should book car rentals through the GCSD account. Travelers will need their district ID badge and a valid Driver's License to pick up the rental car. Reimbursement of mileage from the traveler's official headquarters to the rental car agency is allowed. Mileage from the rental car agency to the traveler's home upon return is not allowable.

Car rental expenses are reimbursable but only when prior approval is obtained on the "Authorization to Incur Travel Expense" form and a receipt is attached. However, a GCSD-

GADSDEN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Administrative Procedures

approved traveler should not purchase collision-damage waivers when renting a car. The purchase of “Personal Accident Insurance” by a traveler is also non-reimbursable as employees on authorized business are covered under Workman’s Compensation. Expenses incurred for collision-damage waivers or personal accident insurance will not be reimbursed unless prior approval of an exception is granted.

Registration Fees

If the GCSD engages an instructor to perform training sessions for its employees, the fee will be a contractual service; however, if a GCSD employee enrolls in a workshop/seminar, etc., which is routinely offered to the public, the fee will be a registration fee. Fees for registration, including meals and other programmed events sponsored by the conference or convention organization, should be prepaid. Optional fees for recreation and/or entertainment activities associated with a conference or convention are not reimbursable unless required as part of the conference rate. Fees for non-GCSD employees (e.g., family members) to participate in activities are not reimbursable.

POINT OF ORIGIN

The following locations are authorized GCSD point of origin locations:

- A. Max D. Walker Building, 35 Marting Luther King, Jr. Blvd, Quincy, FL 32351
- B. Head Start/Pre-K, 500 W. King St, Quincy, FL 32351
- C. Midway Head Start, 86 Martin Luther King Blvd. Midway, Fl 32343
- D. Quincy Area 3s, 35 Marting Luther King, Jr. Blvd, Quincy, FL 32351
- E. Chattahoochee Elementary School, 335 Maples Street, Chattahoochee, FL 32324
- F. George W. Munroe Elementary School, 1830 W. King Street, Quincy, FL 32351
- G. Greensboro Elementary School, 559 Greensboro Hwy, Quincy, FL 32351
- H. Stewart Street Elementary School, 749 South Stewart Street, Quincy, FL 32351
- I. James A. Shanks Middle School, 1400 W King Street, Quincy, FL 32351
- J. West Gadsden Middle School, 200 Providence Road, Quincy, FL 32351
- K. Gadsden Elementary Magnet School, 200 Providence Road, Quincy, FL 32351
- L. Havana Magnet School, 1210 Kemp Rd. Havana, Fl 32333
- M. Gadsden County High School, 27001 Blue Star Hwy, Havana, FL 323331
- N. Carter-Parramore Academy, 631 Stewart Street, Quincy, FL 32351
- O. Gadsden Central Academy, 631 Stewart Street, Quincy, FL 32351
- P. Crossroad Charter School, 470 Strong Road, Quincy, FL 32351
- Q. Gadsden Technical College, 201 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd, Quincy, FL 32351

For travelers working where there is no established office, the headquarters is the District Office: Max D. Walker Building, 35 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd, Quincy, FL 32351.

Miscellaneous

GADSDEN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Administrative Procedures

Any other necessary expense, not otherwise provided for but incurred for the benefit of the GCSD, must appear together and be identified on the “Voucher for Reimbursement of Travel Expenses” form. Taxi fares, ferry fares, bridge, road and tunnel tolls, storage and parking expenses, and communication expenses may be reimbursed.

Other miscellaneous gratuities for the hotel, taxis, the airport, porters, etc. should be identified here. The amount should be reasonable and, whenever possible, the traveler should obtain and attach receipts to the report to substantiate miscellaneous expenditures. The allowance for gratuity will be no more than 15% of the cost and the portage tip allowed will be no more than \$1.00 per bag with a maximum of four bags.