

POLICY

BOARD OF EDUCATION TOWNSHIP OF UPPER

Upper Township Policy

BYLAWS OF THE BOARD 9250 Travel and Related Expenses

As stated in the regulations (N.J.A.C.6A:23B-1.2)c(3), the Board's policy must include, at a minimum, the applicable restrictions and requirements from these OMB Circulars including but not limited to:

- Types of travel (conventions/conferences, staff training and seminars, and regular district business, as listed/defined in section III of the State Circular);
- Methods of transportation (air travel and other methods as listed/defined in section VII of the State Circular);
- Mileage allowance (as authorized in section VII of the State Circular);
- Meal allowance (allowable per diem reimbursements as authorized for overnight travel in section IX and for daily trips in section X of the State Circular);
- Overnight travel (per diem reimbursements as authorized for lodging and meals in section IX of the State Circular); and
- Submission of supporting documentation including receipts, checks and vouchers (as required in section XIII of the State Circular).

When recommended by the Superintendent, and approved by the Board, staff members may be eligible for the following job related expenses:

Travel and Related Expenses

Travel reimbursement will be paid only upon strict compliance with the Board's policy provisions and approval requirements, and only for those expenses which are consistent with the provisions of P.L. 2007, c. 53 (C. 18A:11-12). Board members and employees shall only be reimbursed for work-related travel that is directly related to and within the scope of the Board member's and/or employee's current work responsibilities. Board members and employees shall only be reimbursed for travel that:

- A. Promotes the delivery of instruction and is critical to the instructional needs of the school district or furthers the efficient operation of the school district,
- B. Is educationally necessary and fiscally prudent, and
- C. Is directly related to and within the scope of the board member's current responsibilities, and for school district employees, the school district's professional development plan.

As described in this policy, school district travel expenditures include, but are not limited to, costs for transportation, meals, lodging and registration or conference fees to and from the travel event. School district travel expenditures include costs for all required training and all travel authorized in existing school district employee contracts and Board policies. This includes, but is not limited to,

BYLAWS OF THE BOARD

required professional development and other staff training, required training for new Board members and attendance at specific conferences authorized in existing employee contracts.

Travel payments will be paid only upon compliance with the Board's policy provisions and approval requirements and only for those expenses which are consistent with the provisions of P.L. 2007 c. 53 (C. 18A:11-12). The Board will not ratify or approve payments or reimbursements for travel after completion of the travel event. All Board members and employees shall adhere to the following specifications to be considered for reimbursement:

- A. Reimbursement may not exceed State travel reimbursement guidelines as established by the Department of Treasury in NJOMB circular letter 06-02 (found at <http://www.state.nj.us/infobank/circular/cir0602b.htm>), including but not limited to the types of travel, methods of transportation, overnight travel and supporting documentation. However, the reimbursement for mileage, meals and lodging shall be subject to the provisions of this policy or any other controlling Board policy and shall be consistent with the provisions of P.L. 2007 c. 53 and all other controlling laws and regulations.
- B. Travel in excess of normal job requirements shall be reimbursed at 31.5 cents per mile. Travel to and from an employee's place of employment shall be considered a normal job requirement and is not reimbursable. However, mileage allowance for designated and approved employees who travel between schools in the District or to an approved workshop for conference is allowed for any employee traveling by his own vehicle, inclusive of tolls, on official business at the rate of 31.5 cents per mile, provided such mode of travel is previously approved by the Board of Education.
- C. The most economical mode of travel must be used, including the use of discounted and special rates. For air travel, it is recommended that at least the following options be considered when booking tickets:
 - Connecting versus non stop flights;
 - Departing earlier or later compared to the preferred departure time;
 - Utilizing alternate airports/cities;
 - Utilizing low cost airlines;
 - Exploring alternate arrival and or departure days.
- D. Reimbursement must also be in compliance with OMB Circular A-87 (found at http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a087/a87_2004.html). No reimbursement will be issued without submission of written documentation such as receipts, checks and vouchers detailing the amount of each expenditure. Such documentation must be submitted within a timeframe to be established by the board.

Travel & Related Expenses

- E. Travel expenditures must be 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.
- F. Board members and employees shall provide within one week after attendance at the board approved travel, a brief report that includes, as appropriate, but may not be limited to, a description of the primary purpose for the travel, and a summary of the goals and key issues that were addressed at the event and their relevance to improving instruction or the operation of the school district. This report will be submitted to the Board secretary or other appropriate party designated by the board.

In addition to the requirements above, employee travel, to be reimbursable, must be directly related to the employee's professional development. No district employee shall be reimbursed for travel and related expenses without prior written approval of the chief school administrator and prior approval by a majority of the full voting membership of the Board (as set forth herein).

Prior Approval is Required

Board members and employees shall only be reimbursed for travel and related expenses that have received prior approval by a majority of the full voting membership of the Board and is in compliance with P.L. 2007, c 53 (C. 18A:11-12) and N.J.S.A. 18A:P12-24 and 24.1 of the School Ethics Act.

- A. Specifically, a Board member must recuse himself from voting on travel if the Board member, a member of his immediate family, or a business organization in which he has an interest, has a direct or indirect financial involvement that may reasonably be expected to impair his objectivity or independence of judgment.
- B. Also, a Board member shall not act in his official capacity in any matter in which he or a member of his immediate family has a personal involvement that is or creates some benefit to the school official or member of his immediate family; or undertake any employment or independence of judgment in the execution of his official duties.
- C. For employees, the Board requires that travel occur only upon prior written approval of the chief school administrator and prior approval by a majority of the full voting membership of the Board.
- D. For regular business travel only, the Board may authorize in its travel policy an annual maximum amount per employee for regular business travel for which school board approval is

Travel & Related Expenses

not required. As defined by law, "regular school district business travel" is distinct from "training and seminars" and "conventions and conferences."

- E. For Board members, travel may occur only upon prior approval by a majority of the full voting membership of the Board and that the travel be in compliance with section 4 of P.L. 1991, c393 (C.18A:12-24) and section 5 of P.L.2001, c.178 (C.18A:12-24.1), and the applicable provisions of P.L. 2007, c.53.

Travel Advances Are Banned

An employee of the school Board, a Board member, or organization, shall not receive an amount for travel and travel-related expenses in advance of the travel pursuant N.J.S.18A:19-1 et seq.

Annual Maximum Travel Expenditure Amount

The Board shall:

- A. Allot in its annual budget a maximum travel expenditure amount and annually review its policy to assure that it properly reflects the amount budgeted.
- B. Vote to authorize each reimbursement; specifying the way in which it promotes the delivery of instruction or furthers the efficient operation of the school district, within the maximum annual amount.
- C. Annually in the pre-budget year, establish by Board resolution, a maximum travel expenditure amount for the budget year, which the school district shall not exceed in that budget year. The Board resolution shall also include the maximum amount established for the pre-budget year and the amount spent to date.
- D. Provide that the maximum school district travel expenditure amount shall include all travel in accordance with this policy supported by local and State funds.

Additional Detailed Accounting Requirements Which Demonstrate Compliance

In order to demonstrate compliance with this policy, documentation of all reimbursed travel expenses shall be maintained on file. This record may include receipts, checks and vouchers submitted in connection with any reimbursement. The district 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 shall provide auditable information.

Travel & Related Expenses

To minimize travel expenditures, school boards and staff will take the following steps:

- A. "Retreats" will be held at school district facilities unless prior authorization is received from a majority of the full voting membership of the Board. A retreat is a meeting of school district employees and school board members, held away from the normal work environment, at which organizational goals and objectives are discussed.
- B. A school district shall not pay for any costs for car rentals, limousine services and/or chauffeuring costs to, from or during the event, as well as costs for employee attendance for coordinating other attendees' accommodations at the travel event.
- C. One-day trips that do not involve overnight lodging are not eligible for a subsistence payment or reimbursement except in limited circumstances authorized in Department of the Treasury guidelines.
- D. Overnight travel is eligible for a subsistence payment or reimbursement as authorized in Department of the Treasury guidelines, except as otherwise superseded by the following:
 1. Per diem payment or reimbursement for lodging and meals will be actual reasonable costs, not to exceed the Federal per diem rates as established in the Federal Register for the current year, or the limits of this Policy, whichever is lesser;
 2. Lodging expenses 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 the Federal per diem rates. If the hotel at the site of the convention, conference, seminar, or meeting is no longer available, lodging may be paid for similar accommodations at a rate not to exceed the hotel rate for the event;
 3. In any case in which the total per diem reimbursement is greater than the Federal per diem rate, except when the going rate for lodging at the site of the convention or meeting exceeds Federal per diem rates, the costs will be considered to be excessive and shall not be paid by school district funds;
 4. School districts shall patronize hotels and motels that offer special rates to government employees unless alternative lodging offers greater cost benefits; and
 5. Payment or reimbursement is approved for the full cost of an official convention meal that the employee or Board member attends, when the meal is scheduled as an integral part of the convention or conference proceedings. If a meal is included in the registration fee, the allowance for the meal is not eligible for reimbursement.

POLICY

BOARD OF EDUCATION TOWNSHIP OF UPPER

Travel & Related Expenses

Blanket or general pre-approval for travel is not authorized, and will not be permitted by the Board. Specifically, approval shall be itemized by event, event total cost and number of employees and/or Board members attending the event. However the 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/or Board members attending the event.

Meals

When engaged in approved travel, staff members will be entitled to a maximum allowance of \$31.00 per day, inclusive of tips and sales tax. This allowance excludes alcohol. Receipts for meal expenses are required. Meals shall only be reimbursed when overnight lodging is necessary and approved.

***Allowable reimbursements for meals for a partial period in excess of groups of 24-hour periods, including tip and sales taxes, shall be computed using the following schedule:**

Breakfast	\$ 6.00
Lunch	\$ 6.00
Dinner	\$16.00
Incidentals (non-meal tips)	\$ 3.00
Total	\$31.00

Where a meal is scheduled as an integral part of a conference, the costs of that meal are fully reimbursable. However, if the meal is included in the registration fee, that meal is not eligible for reimbursement.

Lodging

Overnight lodging is not permitted in Cape May, Atlantic and Cumberland Counties Lodging expenses may not exceed the rate as established in the Federal Register for the current year. If an employee's destination is somewhere other than the locations listed in the Federal Register, then the maximum per diem allowance for lodging is \$60.00.

Lodging expenses may, however, exceed the Federal per diem rates if the hotel is the site of a convention, conference, seminar or meeting and the going rate of the hotel is in excess of Federal per diem rates. In that instance, the rate shall not exceed \$99.00. The Board shall pay applicable taxes on either the Federal per diem rate or the rate up to \$99.00, at a hotel located at the site of the conference or workshop. Receipts are required for hotel expenses.

All Other Purchases

Purchases made by staff members shall not be reimbursed unless they are authorized by the principal and given prior approval by the Superintendent. When authorization is given, a voucher must be

BYLAWS OF THE BOARD
9250/Page 7 of 8

POLICY

BOARD OF EDUCATION TOWNSHIP OF UPPER

Travel & Related Expenses

obtained from the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary and the item listed thereon. Small purchases, under twenty-five dollars, can be purchased only through the petty cash fund provided the monthly petty cash fund has not exceeded its limits. No employee may exceed the \$25 per month allowance.

Requirements For All Reimbursed Expenses

1. Signed receipts, for all expenses, shall be required.
2. Requests for reimbursements shall be in accordance with the Board of Education's financial policy.
3. Job expenses shall be reimbursed only if the request for same is made within sixty days following the occurrence.
4. The following expenses are not allowable for reimbursement:
 - Charges for alcohol beverages;
 - Charges for laundry, valet service and entertainment;
 - Reverse telephone charges or third party calls;
 - Charges for calls concerning any matter of a purely personal nature.

Exclusions Allowed By Law

- A. A board of education may, in its policy, exclude from the requirements of prior school board approval any travel caused by or subject to contractual provisions, other statutory requirements, or federal regulatory requirements. The school board may not exclude such travel from the subsistence requirements and the annual maximum travel expenditure amount.
- B. A district board of education may elect to exclude travel expenditures to be supported by federal funds in the maximum travel expenditure amount. If federal funds are excluded from the established maximum school district travel expenditure amount, the board of education shall include in the board resolution, the total amount of travel supported by federal funds from the prior year, pre-budget year and projected for the budget year.

Penalties:

The board by this policy informs its members and staff that the penalties for violating this policy based on State law include:

POLICY

BOARD OF EDUCATION TOWNSHIP OF UPPER

- A. By law, any district board of education that violates its established maximum travel expenditure, or that otherwise is not in compliance with the travel limitations set forth in this section may be subject to sanctions by the commissioner as authorized pursuant to N.J.S.18A:4-23 and N.J.S. 18A:4-24, including reduction of State aid in an amount equal to any excess expenditure.
- B. A person who approves any travel in violation of the school district's policy or this section shall be required to reimburse the school district in an amount equal to three times the cost associated with attending the event.
- C. An employee or member of the board of education who travels in violation of the school district's policy or this section shall be required to reimburse the school district in an amount equal to three times the cost associated with attending the event.

Terms Used in this Policy

All terms as used herein shall, when and where applicable, be deemed to have the meanings ascribed In P.L. 2007, c.53 (C.18A:11-12).

Adopted: 27 June 1995
Revised: 25 March 1997
Revised: 15 May 2006
Revised: 23 July 2007