Travel Expenses

The following procedures will apply to district employees in the expenditure of travel expense funds included in the annual budget of the district programs.

1. Travel within the state of Washington and the Portland area shall be authorized by the employee's immediate supervisor. Travel extending beyond these areas shall be approved by the superintendent or designee. The superintendent shall periodically inform the board of directors of all out-of-state travel (except travel in the Portland area). Extended travel by the superintendent shall be discussed with the president of the board of directors prior to departure.

2. Travel for district personnel shall be authorized only if in the opinion of the approving administrator such travel will result in the recipient more ably performing the duties for which he/she was employed.

3. Travel expense shall be reimbursed for:

    a. Transportation via the most direct route and by the most economical means, consideration being given to reducing travel time by the use of air travel. Approved travel in the employee's private automobile will be reimbursed at the rate approved by the Internal Revenue Service for income tax deduction at the time such approval is made public, provided that no retroactive reimbursements will be made based on these IRS rates. Where group travel is involved, the use of car pools is encouraged. Mileage reimbursement shall be paid from the employee's regular work location (school building, office, maintenance center, etc.) or home, whichever is shorter. Mileage may also be paid according to approved mileage tables.

    b. The reimbursement for lodging and subsistence expenses incurred on official school district business in all areas of the Continental USA is to be on an actual expense basis for lodging and meals, as evidenced by a receipt, up to a specified maximum per diem rate. These two components comprise the maximum allowable per diem rate for all areas in the Continental USA. The per diem reimbursement rates for both non-high cost and high cost areas of the state of Washington will not exceed the maximum allowable per diem rates stated in the schedule at www.ofm.wa.gov/policy/colormap.pdf. Maximum per diem reimbursement rates for the Continental USA can be found at www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/contentView.do?contentType=GSA_BASIC&contentId=17943&noc=T.

    c. The applicable per diem amounts are generally adequate to cover lodging expenses. However, the allowable lodging amount may be insufficient for a particular travel assignment. In the following situations the traveler's administrator may approve payment of lodging expenses not to exceed 150 percent of the applicable maximum per diem amount for the location:

        - When the costs in the area have escalated for a brief period of time either during special events or disasters.

- When lodging accommodations in the location of travel is not available at or below the maximum lodging amount, and the savings achieved from occupying less expensive lodging at a more distant site are consumed by an increase in transportation and other costs.
- It is anticipated that maximum benefit will be achieved by authorizing the traveler to stay at the lodging facility where the meeting, conference, convention or training session is held.

d. Miscellaneous travel expenses essential to the conduct of official school district business are reimbursable to the traveler. Receipts are required for reimbursable expenses in excess of $5 plus any applicable tax. Reimbursable expenses include, but are not limited to:

- Registration fees required in connection with attendance at approved conventions, conferences and official meetings.
- Fuel for rental/district vehicles.
- Actual cost of laundry and/or dry cleaning expenses, as evidenced by a receipt, is authorized for travelers in continuous travel status for more than five (5) days.

e. Miscellaneous travel expenses not requiring a receipt include the following:

- Day parking fees.
- Taxi fares (including a customary tip or gratuity), ferry fares, and bridge tolls.
- Charges for necessary facsimile (fax) services.
- Telephone calls where it is necessary to use a coin box telephone.

4. Certain travel expenses are considered as personal and not essential to the conduct of official district business and are not reimbursable. Such non-reimbursable expenses include, but are not limited to:

- Consumption of alcoholic beverages.
- Valet services, entertainment expenses, radio or television rental, and other items of a similar nature.
- Cost of transportation to and from places of entertainment and other non-district business.
- Cost of personal trip insurance, medical and hospital services.
- Personal phone calls.
- Any tips or gratuities associated with personal expenses.

5. Expenditures for travel related goods and services which are to be billed directly to the district are to have prior approval by the supervisor. The vendor is to be provided either a purchase order or purchase authorization to be used for billing the district.

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