PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS

The Board of Education recognizes the importance of conferences, meetings and workshops as a factor contributing to the educational growth of both the staff member and the district.

The Board delegates to the Superintendent of Schools the power to authorize the attendance of staff members at conferences outside the district and to recommend reimbursement to them for any actual and necessary expenses incurred within the limits of New York State Law and Board rules and regulations.

Legal References:

General Municipal Law, Section 77-b
Hageny's 1966 Handbook on Education Law, Chapter 6, Section 77.4

Policy
Adopted 9/19/68

PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS

General Principles

Every professional staff member is responsible for improving himself/herself and the district's educational program. Experiences, contacts and exposure obtained by attendance at professional meetings outside the district is recognized as an integral part of this responsibility.

Approval for attendance at conferences at district expense shall be determined by the benefits which may accrue to the district and individual.

Factors such as the acquisition of information acquired only by attendance, active participation in a program or professional recognition may be given special consideration but they do not entitle a staff member to automatic approval of her/his request.

Priority generally will be given to requests that involve minimum travel, time and cost when conferences are approximately equal in importance in the judgment of the Superintendent.

Opportunity to attend conferences shall be rotated among the district's schools and staff members so as to promote wide and equitable participation.

The number of staff members from any single subject area, grade or administrative level attending a conference should not be such as to be detrimental to the educational effectiveness of the district.

Attendance of few staff members at various important conferences rather than attendance of many staff members at a particular conference shall be encouraged.

Tenure, seniority or responsibility status of a staff member shall not be a decisive factor of approval.

Conferences outside of the staff member's specialization or those that appear to promote the personal welfare of the member will not ordinarily be approved.

Responsibilities of Building Principals

Building principals shall submit to the Superintendent an estimate of their budgetary needs for the following school year. These proposed estimates should reflect the requests of staff members and supervisors, the needs of the district and the experience of previous years.

Regulations
Approved
9/19/68
Amended: 11/28/78

PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS

Responsibilities of Individual Staff Members

Written request for conference attendance together with an expense estimate shall be submitted by elementary school staff members to the building principal and by secondary school staff members to the building principal or, if so directed, to the department chairperson.

Where staff members are assigned to more than one building or where a rotation schedule of attendance is maintained, it shall be the responsibility of the individual to inform his/her building principal in sufficient time for the principal to make budgetary arrangements for the following year. When specific information of a particular conference is not available, the approximate date, place and name of staff member should be submitted.

Procedure

A staff member requesting approval for attendance at a conference shall submit in duplicate to the building principal a Conference Request and Approval Form stating the conference name, date, place and purpose of attending the conference together with an estimate for expenses, if possible, at least thirty (30) days prior to the conference date.

The building principal shall forward to the Superintendent a Schedule of Conference for Approval form ten (10) school days prior to the end of each month listing the recommended conference requests of staff members for the following month together with the staff members' Conference Request and Approval Form.

The principal's recommendation shall take into account whether the staff member can be released from her/his duties; whether his/her attendance is in the best interest of the District; and whether an equitable distribution of participation within a school, grade, or department is maintained. When district wide rotation procedures are followed, the principal shall clear with those administrators who share supervision responsibility.

The Superintendent will inform the building principal of her/his decision by signing and returning the Conference Request and Approval Form. If the request is approved, the principal is authorized to make provision for the necessary substitute

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Approved: 9/19/98
Amended: 11/28/78

PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS

Payment

All staff members shall pay all costs of trips out of their personal funds. Reimbursements will be made after the conference attendee submits to the building principal a Claim Form and Travel Expense Reimbursement Request form together with all receipts. These will be forwarded to the Central Office for final approval and payment.

Staff members will be reimbursed for conference attendance expenses only within the limits of New York State law and District regulations.

Allowable expenses shall include cost of room, meals, transportation and registration fee. Non-allowable expenses include such items as recreational and social activities, alcoholic beverages, taxes and gratuities.

Tax exemption certificates must be obtained from the office of the principal or Superintendent and used to claim exemption for transportation, hotel and service taxes. Otherwise, these will not ordinarily be reimbursed.

If transportation costs are excessive, upon prior recommendation of the principal, travel tickets may be purchased in advance by the business office.

Reporting Responsibilities

Upon return from a conference, the staff member should take some means to share the experience, impressions and knowledge gained with his/her associates. This may be accomplished through staff or departmental meetings, written reports, workshops, or other media. In addition, a brief statement summarizing the significant ideas shall be forwarded to the principal and Superintendent.

The principal shall be responsible for the supervision of such reporting and follow-up arrangements. She/he, in turn, shall submit to the Superintendent a monthly summary report on the follow-up activities of his/her staff.

The Superintendent shall make appropriate use of these reports by informing the Board of Education and encouraging the preparation of news releases to the community.

New York State Teachers Association Zone Conference Day

All teachers will be expected to attend at their own expense Zone Conference meetings of the New York State Teachers Association on the day designated annually for this purpose.

Regulations
Approved: 9/19/68
Amended: 11/28/78