

**Travel and Business
Expense Guide**

(Including Procedures for Use of Credit Cards)

Derby Public Schools

Unified School District No. 260

July 2024

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Forward

The Derby Public Schools *Travel and Business Expense Guide* is intended to set forth travel guidelines and expense reporting requirements, **no matter which funding source is used**, for individuals traveling on school district business including employees, Board of Education members, consultants, etc., including student travel. These guidelines are comprehensive; however, it is impossible to anticipate every situation encountered by an employee, consultant/service provider, employee candidate, etc., (hereinafter referred to as the "traveler"). Wherever the guidelines are silent, consult the superintendent's office or designee.

Any exceptions or deviations to the procedures outlined in this guide must be documented in writing and approved by the superintendent or designee.

Purpose of the Guide

To furnish guidelines to those that incur and/or approve expenses.
To ensure uniformity in the reporting and substantiation of expenses incurred.
To provide accountability for district business travel expenses.

All reservations for individuals traveling on school district business must be made by the Derby Public Schools Business Office *regardless* of the funding source. Failure to follow the procedures may result in the employee being held responsible for the expenditures.

The school district will reimburse the traveler for actual and reasonable travel expenses incurred during school business related travel. On-line expense reports (on Skyward), with appropriate documentation/receipts, must be completed by the traveler and properly approved prior to reimbursement. The district will not pay expenses for a spouse or child accompanying a traveler for personal reasons while the traveler is conducting school district business.

ORIGINAL, ITEMIZED RECEIPTS ARE REQUIRED FOR REIMBURSEMENTS EXCEPT FOR PER DIEM OR MILEAGE.

APPROVAL OF DISTRICT TRAVEL

Prior to traveling at school district expense, the forms listed below must be completed and approved by the appropriate immediate supervisor or administrator. All travel shall be consistent with established business travel guidelines. The administrator's signature verifies compliance with Derby Public Schools travel policies.

- *Anticipated Absence*
- *Out of State Travel Form* (if applicable) approved by the superintendent
- Copy of *Purchase Requisition* (for registration only) entered with registration forms attached to Anticipated Absence

Conference names should be *spelled out* on all travel forms. Original forms (not copies) should be used.

An *Anticipated Absence* form and any applicable registration forms, **fully completed, must** be sent to the Derby Public Schools Business Office for most travel. For travel supported by Professional Development (PDC), the forms should be sent to the PDC office. Travel supported by grant money must have the forms approved through the Admin Center.

PDC (26) funds may not be used for classified employee travel.

REGISTRATIONS

A registration form for each traveler, fully completed, must be sent to the Derby Public Schools Business Office at least **ten-business days** in advance of the scheduled **deadline**. Early registration is encouraged to ensure timely processing. (Any last-minute faxing of registration forms will be the responsibility of the originator.) Registration forms must be accompanied by an Anticipated Absence. A single Purchase Requisition may be used for multiple registrations to the same conference.

Internet Registrations: Conference registrations may be completed over the internet as long as no immediate payment is required. A confirmation needs to be sent to the PDC office, or to the Business Office, depending on the source of funds. **No credit card information is to be entered except by the Business Office.**

Organization Memberships: State law does not allow the district to pay membership dues for individuals to belong to an organization. However, if a conference offers

member and non-member rates, the authorizing administrator may approve payment at the non-member rate.

TRAVEL ADVANCES

Travel advances are **NOT** allowed. In general, employees are responsible for their own expenses on out-of-district travel. Requests for reimbursement are to be submitted on the *Travel Expense Statement* form.

CREDIT CARDS

District credit cards are used for charging airfares and holding hotel reservations. For other district credit card policies, see the following section.

TRANSPORTATION

Commercial Airline: The Derby Public Schools Business Office is responsible for making airline reservations, booking tickets, and completing travel arrangements for the following:

1. Any district employee, consultant/service provider, agent, or any traveler for whom the primary source of funds is provided by the school district.
2. Any person for whom the primary responsibility for chaperoning of such travel lies with the school district.

The traveler should not purchase any tickets.

Reservations should be requested with as much advance notice as possible. A flexible, departure/arrival time frame will permit selection of an economical route/carrier. In order for the district to obtain the lowest possible airfare, a traveler may be required to stay over a Saturday night.

The district will not pay expenses for a spouse or child accompanying a traveler for personal reasons while the traveler is conducting school district business. ***If a spouse's arrangements are made along with the employees, the cost must be reimbursed to the district within 14 days of the reservation being finalized. All spouse travel changes must be made by the traveler.***

Prospective airline incentives (i.e. frequent flier points) which provide benefits to the traveler will not be used as a determinant in choosing a flight or carrier.

The traveler should notify the Derby Public Schools Business Office as soon as possible if cancellation of reservations is necessary. ***Tickets cannot be transferred to other***

travelers. Such changes or cancellations may result in additional costs (at least \$50) that will be charged to the traveler.

Tickets should be purchased well in advance of a planned departure to secure the lowest fare. Most tickets purchased are electronic tickets.

The district will reimburse employees traveling on school business for the first bag checked with the airline. A receipt is needed for reimbursement. Exceptions may be granted with the approval of the superintendent or director of finance.

District-owned Vehicle: Requests for district vehicles for out- of-district travel are to be made on the *Anticipated Absence* form. **District vehicles should be used whenever available.**

Personal Automobile: A personal automobile may be used for out-of-district travel on school district business **and approved in advance by the supervising administrator.** If multiple vehicles are going to the same destination, only one roundtrip of mileage will be reimbursed, unless approved in advance by the supervising administrator. The mileage reimbursement rate is in accordance with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). The mileage reimbursement includes any amounts for gas. Mileage will be calculated from traveler's base location (a district location) to the destination.

Mileage to areas outside of the surrounding area must be recorded on a *Travel Expense Statement form*.

Parking fees, mileage to/from the local airport, toll road charges, overnight storage, and bridge tolls, where applicable, will be reimbursed when a receipt is provided and is the most cost efficient, as determined by the Business Department. Multiple vehicles traveling to the same conference will only be reimbursed one set of parking, tolls, etc. unless prior approval by the supervising administrator. Fines incurred while on school business **are not** reimbursable to the traveler.

The district's automobile insurance provides secondary liability coverage for any district employee when required by the administration to drive a personal vehicle on school district business. The school district *does not* purchase or provide coverage for physical damage on or for any personally owned vehicle.

Total reimbursement for the use of a personal car shall not exceed the lowest cost for other means of transportation (i.e. airplane).

Rental Car: Depending on the number of people involved, the traveler will use the least expensive rental car when other means of transportation are unavailable and if approved in advance. Regardless of form of payment, rental car companies will require the traveler to present his/her major credit card.

State law mandates that rental vans for ten or more persons CANNOT be used to transport *students*.

It is recommended to purchase the Loss Damage Waiver (LDW) insurance and/or the Collision Damage Waiver (CDW) insurance (*if available*) when picking up the rental car. Do not purchase Personal Liability insurance. The purchase of other types of insurance offered by the rental agency should be determined by the driver's personal auto insurance coverage. In some cases, personal auto insurance and/or credit cards will provide adequate coverage for additional types of car rental insurance. Check with the credit card company or personal auto insurance agent prior to travel. Insurance is expensive and good judgment should be exercised. The district will only reimburse for LDW/CDW insurance coverage. Contact the Business Office with any questions on car rental insurance.

Public Transportation, Rideshare, Taxis, Shuttles: Travel to and from airports should be made by the most cost-effective mode of travel. Receipts are required for reimbursement.

LODGING

Lodging arrangements must be made through the Business office. When possible, the district will prepay the lodging and tax for travel. If this cannot be arranged, the traveler will be made aware that they will need to pay for the room and then be reimbursed.

Accommodations will be made at the conference hotel when possible. If rooms are not available, the district will make reservations at the nearest, most economical hotel with an above-average rating. As with airline reservations, rooms will not be reserved to accommodate a hotel membership.

Employees are **encouraged** to share accommodations whenever possible. If the authorizing administrator ***requires*** shared lodging, he/she must notify the Business Office of such a decision. The traveler should not pay for another employee's room charges unless travel paperwork was completed accordingly.

When attending a conference with special rates, the required Conference Housing form and/or information should be forwarded to the Derby Public Schools Business Department.

If the traveler does not utilize the hotel/ motel as reserved, the cancellation of the original reservation is the responsibility of the traveler who should also notify the Business Department.

The district does not pay for the use of internet services while staying at the hotel. Any exceptions must be approved by the administrator.

Itemized hotel receipts are required even if the room is prepaid. The final bill must indicate that the bill has been paid in full and show a "zero" balance. If using Express checkout, the final bill must indicate itemized charges.

Please double-check that the credit card being used for your room charge is NOT your personal card.

MEALS

The reasonable, actual cost of meals incurred while on an overnight out-of-town business trip is reimbursable if supported by receipts. Alcoholic beverages of any kind, whether purchased with meals or separately, **will not** be reimbursed by the district. The actual cost reimbursed for meals, **including tips, shall not exceed** the per diem allowance.

Per diem is the allowance for meals and incidental expenses on overnight trips.

Most States:	Breakfast	\$14.00
	Lunch	17.00
	<u>Dinner</u>	<u>29.00</u>
	Total per diem	\$60.00

For AZ, CA, CO, CT, DC, FL, GA, IL, LA, MD, MA, MI, NV, NJ, NM, NY, OH, PA, RI, SC, TX, VA, WA:

	Breakfast	\$15.00
	Lunch	19.00
	<u>Dinner</u>	<u>35.00</u>
	Total per diem	\$69.00

If one person pays for meals for other employees, all names should be listed on the payee's *Travel Expense Statement* form, and receipts are required.

When meals are included in the conference registration fee, the specific meal amounts listed above will be deducted from the per diem allowance.

***One-Day Travel:* Travelers will not be reimbursed for meal expenses on one-day business trips.**

Bus Driver Meals: Bus drivers will not be reimbursed for the cost of meals for activity trips that do not include overnight stays. The per diem guidelines will apply to overnight activity trips.

Business/Inservice Expenses: Situations may arise when an employee is required to provide a meal for a person or group of persons who could conceivably contribute to the operation or development of the school district. Generally, reimbursable business meals attended only by employees are discouraged; however, it may be appropriate for an employee to provide funding for accommodations and meals for another employee or group of employees for business/Inservice functions. The claimant must submit an original, itemized receipt reflecting the following:

1. Cost (including tax and tips)
2. Date
3. Name and location of the restaurant
4. Names and titles of all persons in attendance
5. Purpose

OTHER EXPENSES

Telephone, Fax, Internet: Reasonable business-related telephone and fax expenses incurred while traveling on school district business are reimbursable. Internet access charges must be authorized in advance by the approving administrator.

Laundry: Reasonable laundry service expenses may be reimbursed on trips of five (5) nights or more. Receipts are required unless impractical to obtain, i.e. Laundromat machines.

Personal Expenses: Personal expenses *are not* subject to reimbursement.

STUDENT TRAVEL

Expenditures related to out-of-state travel for student groups are the responsibility of the group requesting permission. The building principal must approve all requests. The request must be approved by the BOE no less than four weeks before the event. Parent consent for the trip is to be obtained before a student may be allowed to participate. The following information should be provided: destination and dates; purpose of trip including educational value/experience; number of students attending; sponsor names; detailed budget proposal; insurance provisions; and plan of action in case of emergencies.

The district will provide funding for sponsor expenses on approved trips. The sponsor(s) will need to submit a proposed budget for all of their expenses to the superintendent for approval. A copy will also need to be provided to the Business Office.

CONSULTANT/SERVICE PROVIDER

District representatives shall inform all consultant/service providers regarding the district's *Travel and Business Expense Guide*. Conformity with this guide will be expected if contracts are to be validated. If it is more feasible for the consultant/service provider to make their own travel arrangements, the district representative shall notify Derby Public Schools Business Office in advance of travel. The per diem rate is the same for consultants as for employees.

Forms for consultant services should be sent as follows:

- *Purchase Requisition* for lodging, fully completed (including name of hotel/motel as vendor), signed by the authorized administrator.
- *Purchase Requisition* for honorarium and expenses, fully completed, signed by the authorized administrator.

TRAVEL OUTSIDE THE CONTIGUOUS UNITED STATES

Any business travel outside the contiguous United States, including Canada and Mexico, shall have prior approval in order to be reimbursable by the school district.

EMERGENCIES

Judgment must be used for emergency expenditures. The emergency itself does not justify unusual expenditures nor does it guarantee reimbursement. The district travel agency may be contacted for emergency assistance en route. Phone numbers are listed on the traveler's itinerary for both the local and toll-free calls.

Credit Card Usage

Derby Public Schools uses credit cards. Use of cards is restricted to the following guidelines.

Prior to obtaining a Visa, Dillons or Wal-Mart charge card, employees will need to sign the form in the Business Office stating that they are familiar with the guidelines. Failure to follow these guidelines will result in the employee no longer having access to **any** of the district cards.

VISA

The district maintains several credit cards not only at the District level but also at the building level through Visa. Cards **cannot** be checked out by BOE members for travel expenditures. Several cards are issued in the names of district administrators. These cards are used for travel and business meeting expenditures. Other expenditures are to be made through purchase orders. Each card will have an established credit limit.

An original receipt must support every charge. For meals, the names of the person(s) and event should be noted on the receipt. Charges made on credit cards are reviewed by the superintendent or designee each month via Skyward and included in the claims report each board of education meeting for approval.

Missing receipts are the responsibility of the individual using the card. The second occurrence of a missing receipt will result in the loss of credit card privileges for the individual.

FUEL CARDS

The Transportation Office provides charge cards for fuel. They are to be used only for purchase of fuel for district vehicles.

WAL-MART

Cards are issued by Wal Mart for use at that store only. The district's allocation of cards is kept in the office of each building and must be checked out from there. A purchase order must be used in connection **with the cards**.

A receipt must be turned in with the card after use. The receipts must be attached to a copy of the approved purchase order and then sent to the Business Office to reconcile the monthly statement from Wal-Mart. ***The second occurrence of not turning receipts in with the purchase order will result in the building losing the use of their Wal Mart cards.***

Note: The above procedures also apply to the use of Dillons charge cards.