2026-2027
Professional Development Reimbursement Procedures

"The burden of proof shall be placed upon the purchaser."

Information contained in this document is per N.J.A.C. Subchapter 7. School District Travel Policies and Procedures and Randolph Board of Education Travel Policies and Regulations. The failure to follow these procedures may result in a denial of reimbursement or attending professional development. **Any deviation from these rules should be pre-approved by the Business Office.**

TIMELINE

- All requests to attend professional development events, even when there is no cost (or only substitute costs), must be submitted through Frontline Professional Growth (FPG, aka MLP).
- Upon completion of the event or program, all reimbursement requests must also be submitted in FPG within 30 days of the conclusion of the event or program. For programs where there is no cost (or only substitute costs), the event or program must be marked complete in FPG within 15 days of the conclusion of the event or program.
- The amounts submitted in FPG are used for Board of Education approval. Therefore, reimbursements cannot exceed the amount submitted in the FPG.
- Submissions in FPG should be submitted 30-60 days in advance of Board of Education meetings. The calendar of Board of Education meetings can be found at: Schedule of School Board Meetings.
- Retroactive approvals are not permitted. If enough time is not available before a Board of Education meeting, a submitter's supervisor may request special permission from the Board of Education Secretary.
- Workshop Reimbursement procedures do not encompass every potential situation that may arise. It is incumbent on the employee to seek counsel from the Business Office if there is any uncertainty about these rules **in advance** of incurring any potentially prohibited expense.
- ***Reimbursement will only be given for expenses incurred on days that have been Board approved. If travel days are not included in your original request, expenses incurred on those days will not be reimbursable.***
- Reimbursements submitted for final approval in FPG before the 25th of the month will be paid after the Board of Education Meeting the following month.

PROOF OF ATTENDANCE

- ALL reimbursements require some form of proof of attendance
- Acceptable forms of verification of attendance:
  - Certificate of Attendance
  - Name Badge
  - E-mail from the organization confirming your attendance (not registration, but actual attendance)

PROOF OF PAYMENT - REGISTRATION FEES

- Proof of Payment for workshops should be in the form of a copy of the **canceled check** (front and back) OR a copy of the **credit card statement (with the staff member's name and last four digits of the account # noted)** reflecting the transaction. Cash is not permitted as a means of payment and will not be reimbursable.
- A receipt from the organization is not sufficient proof of payment **UNLESS the** receipt states the participant's name **and specifies a credit card transaction along with the cardholder's name and the last four digits of the credit card number**.
- If using PayPal (PP), Apple Pay (AP) or Google Pay (GP) as method of payment, please submit

the PP/AP/GP receipt along with copy of corresponding credit card statement including the staff member's name and last four digits of the account # reflecting the PP/AP/GP transaction.

MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT

- Mileage reimbursement is determined by NJ Office of Management and Budget, and the rate is subject to Board of Education approval.
- Only **Google Maps** directions will be accepted. Upload all pages into Frontline Professional Growth, showing starting and ending points.
- **Google** directions should only be submitted if requesting mileage reimbursement. If you carpooled with another attendee and are not requesting mileage reimbursement, please indicate so in FPG.
- **Starting point of Google directions should be either from home or from your school, whichever is the lesser amount. [CIRCULAR (nj.gov) – VIII, H., 4 – pg. 12].**
- When estimating costs, be sure to include mileage for **round-trip travel** and travel on multiple days if applicable**.**

TRAVEL - AIRFARE

- When airfare is required, employees must make every effort to select the most economical option.
- When airfare is required, three different quotes from different vendors need to be provided at the time of the initial request in FPG and in advance for Board of Education approval. Airfare quotes should be emailed to Krystn Cedzidlo at kcedzidlo@rtnj.org.
- Airfare will only be reimbursed at the basic economy rate. Submit full itemized airfare receipt including employee name, flight information, and a breakdown of airfare, taxes and fees in FPG. Credit card statements alone will not be accepted as documentation of airfare. If you voluntarily upgrade your flight, ensure that you obtain a receipt from the original booking and can document the charge separate from any upgrade.
- Note: Do **NOT** combine your air and lodging to receive promotional savings. We require itemized receipts for both airfare **and** hotel (see lodging section). Hotels cannot provide adequate documentation for your reimbursement when using a "booking together" promotion.
- Airline seat upgrades and early bird check-in fees will not be reimbursed.
- Baggage fees can be reimbursed. Baggage fee costs must be included in your initial FPG submission. Up to one bag each way is allowable for reimbursement.
- Trip insurance will not be reimbursed.
- Airfare paid with points cannot be reimbursed.
- Parking at the airport is generally disfavored. Attendees are encouraged to use a taxi, ride share, or other shared means of transportation (e.g. Uber, Lyft, Super Shuttle)

TRAVEL – GROUND TRANSPORATION

- Cancellation fees for ground transportation are not reimbursable (e.g. Uber, Lyft, Super Shuttle).
- While at the event, if transportation from the hotel is needed, utilize public transportation if possible. If not possible and a taxi, Uber, Lyft, etc. is used, please submit the vendor's receipt along with your credit card statement reflecting payment.
- Tips for car service should not exceed 20% of the total.
- Travel via car service or public transportation while at an event is for official conference purposes only. This includes travel to/from the airport, and to official conference activities. Leisure travel via car service will not be reimbursed.
- Private car service will not be reimbursed.

TRAVEL – TRAIN/CAR RENTAL

- Train fare **will not be reimbursable** without prior approval from the Business Office,

which will generally not be provided absent extenuating circumstances or significant cost savings.
- Car rental fees **will not be reimbursed**.

TRAVEL - LODGING

- Reimbursement for lodging for out-of-state overnight travel, or in-state as authorized by the NJ DOE Commissioner, may exceed the Federal per diem rates **IF** the hotel is the only site of the convention, conference, seminar or meeting and the hotel rate is in excess of Federal per diem rates.
- The site of the convention, conference, seminar or meeting must be specified in Frontline Professional Growth.
- When the hotel that is the sole site of the convention, conference, seminar, or meeting, the Federal per diem rates apply.
- If the conference/event is at a stadium or convention center and has multiple recommended hotels, reimbursement will be at the per diem rate from gsa.gov. Even if a convention has a designated "headquarters" hotel, the reimbursement is limited to the per diem rate.
- **In-state** overnight hotel stays prior to the conference start date or after the conference end date will **NOT** be reimbursed. (i.e. checking into Atlantic City hotel the night before conference begins or checking out the day after the conference has ended).
- NJ Department of Education waivers authorizing in-state lodging or meal reimbursement must be uploaded into FPG along with the reimbursement documents.
- Room upgrades and NJ state taxes will not be reimbursed.
- **The expectation is that your return home will occur on the last day of the event. If that is not feasible, please seek affirmative approval from the Business Office to stay beyond the end of the conference.**
- If the hotel provides a shuttle to and from the airport or to the convention site, you are encourage to utilized the shuttle instead of using a taxi or car service.
- Hotel stays booked with points are not eligible for reimbursement.

GSA ALLOWANCES - HOTEL & MEAL REIMBURSEMENTS

- Visit www.gsa.gov for meal/hotel allowances. Enter the city and state of the hotel in order to obtain GSA per diem allowances.
- Meal reimbursement for the first and last days of travel is calculated as per the GSA.
- Please note that per diem meal allowances cannot be combined into one, larger meal. There are limits to each meal allowance (breakfast, lunch, dinner).
- Out-of-state tax on meals can be reimbursed if within the GSA per diem amount.
- Gratuities can be reimbursed as long as total amount does not exceed 20% of the total meal cost, and will not be reimbursed in excess of the GSA per diem amount.
- GSA allowances should be uploaded into FPG along with the reimbursement documents.

RECEIPTS

- Reimbursement for alcoholic beverages is strictly prohibited. Charges for any alcoholic beverages must not appear on any receipts submitted for reimbursement.
- All receipts must be itemized. For meal receipts provide the receipt listing items purchased not just the credit card receipt. Non-itemized receipts will be rejected.
- Credit card statements alone will not be accepted as documentation of expenses. Accompanying itemized receipts must be included.
- If meals are purchased for other attendees or guests, please indicate so directly on receipt.
- When submitting meal receipts, put the receipts for each day on their own page and indicate which meal that day. Please then sort pages by date.

- If requesting reimbursement for tolls, include EZ Pass statement or receipts for each toll.
- Attach parking receipts, if applicable.
- ***Combine all receipts and reimbursement documents into <u>one</u> file.*** Please upload that file (PDF preferred) in FPG and "attach" when marking activity complete. (Directions available in your FPG under My Info > My Information > My File Library > Organization Files.)
- Failure to submit your receipts in accordance with these guidelines may delay your reimbursement.

<u>HELPFUL HINTS</u>

- Save your insurance card as a separate file in your FPG file library. Include the expiration date in the file name (example: inscard021519).
- For questions regarding these guidelines please contact the Business Office
- For assistance with the Frontline Professional Growth program, contact Krystn Cedzidlo at kcedzidlo@rtnj.org.