

# **CONWAY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

## **TRAVEL PROCEDURES MANUAL**

**November 27, 2018**

# TRAVEL PROCEDURES MANUAL

## Introduction

Board Policy 7.12 states that employees are only eligible to be reimbursed for travel which has been approved in advance. “Approved in advance” shall mean approval prior to the making of any reservations or registrations. Travel requests can only be processed when all required documents have been completed and received by the Business Office. This manual outlines the basic travel processing procedures for all schools and departments. It is the traveler’s responsibility to be familiar with the requirements contained in this document.

Travel reimbursement is subject to a variety of restrictions and guidelines, including but not limited to satisfaction of audit requirements; restrictions of federal and state grants; and governance of IRS code. Travel reimbursement is to cover *necessary* expenses while the traveler is away from home. Expenses that are voluntary or optional are not reimbursable. Examples of optional expenses: Between-meal snacks and drinks; additional charges related to car rental (GPS systems, extra insurances), etc. *Meals without an overnight stay are not reimbursable.* (Board Policy 7.12)

Travel requiring an overnight stay must be *pre-approved* by the Central Office Administrator. Only travel in excess of 75 miles will be considered for an overnight stay. (Board Policy 7.12)

## Pre-Trip Requirements

***Travel Request Form*** (available on the District’s website):

The Travel Request Form is the *first step* in the travel process. *It is to be completed and approved prior to the making of any reservations or registrations.*

- The Travel Request Form is to be completed for each employee or student group traveling. It is to include the purpose of the trip and an estimate of all travel and registration costs. All other required fields on the form must be completed.
- If estimated expenses exceed the daily limits outlined in this document, the “Special Travel Authorization” section of the Travel Request Form must be completed.
- The Travel Request Form must be signed as approved by the traveler’s supervisor.
- For overnight stays, the Travel Request Form must be approved by the Central Office Administrator.
- All travel requests are subject to availability of budgeted funds. If sufficient funds are not available, travel requests will be denied.
- Submit Travel Request Forms so as to allow at least ten (10) business days for the approval process.
- After all required approvals have been obtained registrations and reservations may be made. Purchase orders must be issued to cover estimated travel reimbursements, registrations, lodging, etc.

- Once the Travel Request Form is submitted, destination and dates of the trip cannot be changed.
- A copy of the Travel Request Form must accompany all related purchase orders.
- Instructions for the Travel Request Form are on page 9 (Appendix A).

## **General Travel Information**

Whether in-state or out-of-state, travel reimbursement is **not** a per diem. Reimbursement is to be claimed for actual expenses for meals and lodging and is not to exceed the maximum allowable rates as listed in this document. When a federal grant specifies a reimbursement rate, that rate will be accepted by the Business Office. Travel reimbursement will only be made for necessary expenses. Each traveler is responsible for his/her own expenses.

### **Lodging Rates and Reservations – Obtaining the best rate**

Employees must make every effort to obtain the best rate available. The best rate may not be the convention rate. In addition to the lowest hotel rate, consider such factors as the cost of travel to/from off-site hotels, parking, proximity, safety and overall convenience. When making reservations, the traveler must specifically ask for rates by name. Examples of questions to ask:

1. Do you have a governmental, educational or commercial rate?
2. Do school district employees qualify for the governmental rate?
3. Do you offer discounts for members of AARP, AAA, or retired military?
4. You may be eligible for discounts for other organizations of which you are a member. Mention them to the reservation clerk.

### **Lodging Specifics**

- Lodging may be paid in advance by a purchase order issued to the hotel. (Attach the approved Travel Request Form to the purchase order).
- Lodging paid by the traveler will be reimbursed upon completion of the trip. A completed, signed, approved Travel Expense Reimbursement Form, with proper receipts attached is required for lodging reimbursement.
- Each employee is responsible for his/her lodging and will not be reimbursed for the lodging of others.
- Lodging will be reimbursed up to the daily limit plus tax. Daily limits for in-state lodging are listed in Appendix D.
- Daily limits for out-of-state lodging can be found on the following website:  
<http://www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/home.do?tabId=0>.
- Special prior authorization is required if travel expenses will exceed the daily limits. See the Special Travel Authorization section of the Travel Request Form.
- Confirm reservations 48 hours before departing.

### **Meals**

- With an overnight stay, the District will reimburse up to three (3) meals a day: breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Between meal snacks or drinks are not reimbursable.

- Meal reimbursement without an overnight stay is not allowed. (Board Policy 7.12)
- Meals within 75 miles of Conway will not be reimbursed. (Board Policy 7.12)
- For in-state travel, meal reimbursement on the first day and last day of travel will be determined by the portion of the day that the employee is away. On the first day, if travel begins in the morning, the lunch and evening meals will be eligible for reimbursement. On the last day, if the employee returns in the afternoon, breakfast and lunch will be eligible for reimbursement.
- Each traveler must pay for his/her own meals.
- Details of the meal must be listed on the receipt.
- Credit card receipts or cash tickets that do not show details of the meal purchased are not acceptable and will not be reimbursed.
- Daily meal reimbursement rates for *in-state-travel* are listed in Appendix E.
- Daily rates for *out-of-state travel*, including meals and incidental expenses, will be established using the federal per diem rates found on the GSA website (attach a copy of the rates with the reimbursement request):

<http://www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/home.do?tabId=0>

- **Out-of-State first and last day of travel:** Special limitations apply to out-of-state first day and last day of travel. Use the rates shown in the First and Last Day column (75% of M&IE) on the GSA federal per diem rate chart.

**Important Reminder:** Travel expense, whether in state or out of state, is NOT a per diem; only actual expenses will be reimbursed when submitted with required documentation. See the Summary of General Information (page 8) for further details, including items that are never reimbursed.

### **Airfare, Fees and Confirmations**

Airline tickets should be paid by purchase order whenever possible. Check with local travel agencies regarding the acceptance of purchase orders.

Airline fees for checked baggage will be reimbursed at the rate of one checked bag each way per traveler.

Travel club fees will not be reimbursed unless the membership is for all district employees.

Conference fees should be paid by purchase order whenever possible.

Conference registrations should be confirmed at least 48 hours in advance.

Airline reservations should be confirmed at least 48 hours in advance or in accordance with the individual airline's recommendation.

### **Purchasing Airline Tickets through a travel agency:**

1. Call the travel agency. Ask about discounted rates. Ask how long the travel agency will hold the reservation before receiving a purchase order. Obtain the least expensive rate possible.

2. Complete the travel request form and submit to the Business Office. When all approvals have been obtained, a purchase order must be issued to the travel agency.
3. The travel agency will issue the ticket according to its policies once the purchase order is received.

**Purchasing airline tickets online.**

- Submit a Travel Request Form, indicating the cost for the trip including airfare.
- Once travel is approved, the traveler will pay for the airfare with his/her credit card.
- Print out the receipt showing the exact amount of the ticket and that the credit card was charged. Submit for reimbursement on a Travel Expense Reimbursement Form.
- It is the traveler's responsibility to know the airline's policy regarding trip cancellations, refunds, and any restrictions applying to the ticket purchased. Some tickets may be non-refundable. Trip cancellations and employee liability are discussed in the following section.

**Trip Cancellations and Employee Liability:** If a trip is cancelled after an employee has been reimbursed for airfare or other expenses, the employee shall be responsible for refunding the reimbursement to the district. The refund shall be made by whichever date comes first: Within 60 days of the trip cancellation; by the last day of the fiscal year in which the employee received the reimbursement; or upon termination of employment. Failure to refund such a reimbursement to the District for trip cancellations by the set date will result in due recourse which may include, but may not be limited to, withholding of future expense reimbursements or docking of the employee's pay.

**Advances**

No cash advances for travel will be made (Board Policy 7.12).

**Mileage**

- Maximum mileage allowed for personal vehicle use shall be determined by the shortest major highway route. The rate of reimbursement shall be the rate established by Board Policy 7.12.
- Standard map miles for frequently traveled in-state destinations are listed on page 13 of this document. Vicinity mileage shall be noted separately on the reimbursement form.
- To be paid for point-to-point mileage, a printout from the MapQuest website must be submitted with the Travel Expense Reimbursement Form.
- If more than one traveler rides in the same vehicle, only the owner of the vehicle can claim mileage reimbursement.
- When traveling out-of-state in a private vehicle, reimbursement shall be the lesser of coach airfare (including parking fees and other transportation) or the current mileage rate of reimbursement.

- For out-of-state mileage, see the MapQuest website. Calculations from MapQuest will be verified and considered official. Submit MapQuest documentation with the Travel Expense Reimbursement Form.
- Due to possible legal ramifications when driving a personal vehicle on school business, all insurance information must be completed in the appropriate area of the pre-trip Travel Request Form.
- When driving a rental car, insurance information must be completed in the appropriate area of the pre-trip Travel Request Form.

**Requesting Payment: Submitting Travel Expense Reimbursement Forms**

To be reimbursed for travel expenses incurred, a Travel Expense Reimbursement Form must be completed, signed, and approved by the traveler's Supervisor. The form is to be submitted to the Business Office within seven (7) days of the trip's completion date. Specific instructions for the Travel Expense Reimbursement Form are on page 11 (Appendix B).

- Use this form to report actual out-of-pocket trip expenses. Attach all applicable receipts.
- The form must be signed by the traveler and his/her supervisor.
- A Travel Expense Reimbursement Form can be for the expenses of only one employee. Each traveler is responsible for his/her own expenses and must complete his/her own reimbursement form.
- Dates and places on the Travel Expense Reimbursement Form must match those on the Travel Request Form. Any changes must be documented.
- If the dollar amount on the Travel Expense Reimbursement Form exceeds the Travel Request Form by more than 10%, a memo explaining the overage must be attached to the Travel Request Form.
- Reimbursement is to be claimed for actual expenses for meals and lodging within the daily limits. Maximum rates are not to be claimed unless actual expenditures have been incurred.
- Lodging will be reimbursed up to the daily limit plus tax.
- Lodging receipts must show the room rate and tax rate for each night spent. Receipts showing only the total amount will not be accepted.
- Complimentary lodging (for example, staying with a friend) should be explained on the reimbursement form.
- Meal reimbursement without overnight travel is not allowed.
- Credit card receipts or cash tickets that do not show details of the meal or other items purchased are not acceptable and will not be reimbursed.
- Tips paid by a school employee for meals associated with travel as defined by the District's Travel Policy 7.12, will be reimbursable for up to 15% of the meal cost, provided the employee submits a receipt for the meal as part of an "accountable plan" for reimbursement.
- Reimbursement for phone calls or internet service shall be limited to official business only. A memo explaining the reason for phone calls or internet fees must be attached to the reimbursement form.
- Expenses for entertainment, flowers, valet service, laundry, cleaning, alcoholic beverages or other similar personal expenses will not be reimbursed.

- Transportation expenses (taxi, car rental, public transit) shall be limited to official business only. Any portion of transportation expense determined to be personal in nature shall be the responsibility of the traveler and will not be reimbursed by the District.
- When traveling in a group, it will be permissible for one person to claim reimbursement for the shared taxi or rental car.
- Maximum mileage allowed for personal vehicle use shall be determined by the shortest major highway route. The rate of reimbursement shall be the rate established by Board Policy 7.12.

### **Guests of the District**

When meals for District guests are claimed, a *detailed* meal receipt and the name(s) of the guest(s) must be provided in order to verify they are not District employees.

### **Students as Travelers**

When students are escorted to an out-of-town non-athletic event, a Travel Request Form must be completed by the sponsor with estimated expenses for the entire group.

- After travel is completed, a Travel Expense Reimbursement Form must be submitted by the sponsor.
- Expenses of the students shall be noted on the form as “Student Travelers.”
- A list of the students and all appropriate receipts must be attached to the reimbursement form.

### **Special Travel Authorizations**

If a traveler requests reimbursement in excess of the daily maximum limits, the Travel Request Form’s “Special Travel Authorization” section must be completed. Reasons for the excess reimbursements must be noted on the travel request form or in an attached memo. Valid reasons may involve lack of suitable lodging at the established maximum rates or accessibility to the conference location.

## Summary

Receipts are required for the following expenses. **Credit card receipts or cash tickets with no details of the purchase are not acceptable.**

1. Lodging. The room receipt must show your name, room rate per night, tax rate per night and zero balance due.
2. Registration fee for the event. The receipt must show your name, amount paid and the name of the event.
3. Airline tickets. The receipt must show your name and amount paid.
4. Parking. The amount paid must be shown. If it is not possible to obtain a receipt, reimbursement will be limited to the amount estimated on the Travel Request Form.
5. Rental car. The receipt must show your name and amount paid. A memo justifying the expense must be attached to the Travel Expense Reimbursement Form if not previously submitted with the Travel Request Form.
6. Meals. The receipt must show the details of the meal and the amount paid. **Credit card receipts or cash tickets that do not show details of the meal purchased will not be accepted.** Voluntary tips will be reimbursed for up to 15% of the meal's cost provided the employee submits a meal receipt as part of an "accountable plan" for reimbursement. (District Policy 7.12).
7. Telephone calls. The receipt must show the number called and the amount charged. A memo must be attached to the Travel Expense Reimbursement Form explaining the call was for official business.
8. Incidental expenses. The receipt must show details of the purchase and the amount paid.
9. Taxis and public transit. The receipt must show the amount paid. If it is not possible to obtain a receipt, reimbursement will be limited to the amount estimated on the Travel Request Form.
10. Guest of the District. The name of the guest must be noted on the Travel Expense Reimbursement Form and the appropriate receipts submitted.

It is better to have a receipt and not need it than to need a receipt and not have it.

The following items will never be reimbursed.

1. Voluntary tips exceeding 15% of meal charges; tips without a meal ticket.
2. Alcoholic beverages.
3. Laundry and valet services.
4. Any expenses of another District employee.
5. Any expenses considered personal in nature.
6. Credit Card receipts or cash tickets with no details of the meal/items purchased.

A travel expense reimbursement form must be completed for each traveler. Each traveler is responsible for his/her own expenses.

Confirm all reservations (airline, lodging, conference registration) at least 48 hours before departure.

## APPENDIX A INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING TRAVEL REQUEST FORM

### General Information

1. Budget Unit. Enter the sixteen-digit budget unit and account code that the travel will be charged to.
2. Name of traveler. Name of person traveling and/or receiving reimbursement.
3. Date. Enter date of request.
4. Mailing Address. Home address of traveler.
5. Phone, email. Enter the phone number and email to contact the traveler.

Driver Information. This information is required if the traveler is driving a personal vehicle or a rental vehicle for any part of the trip.

6. Traveler's driver license number.
7. Expiration date of driver license.
8. State driver license was issued.
9. Automobile liability insurance carrier of the traveler.
10. Insurance policy number.
11. Expiration date of insurance policy.

### Trip Information

12. Purpose. Explain briefly the purpose of the trip. For example, give the name of the conference the traveler is attending.
13. Mode of travel. Enter main method of travel: Airline, personal vehicle, rental vehicle, District vehicle, etc. Attach a memo justifying a rental vehicle.
14. Destination/stop-over points. Enter the final destination and any stop-over points (places going to and from the destination where the traveler will stay overnight).
15. Date and Time. Enter the date and approximate time of departure and the date and approximate time of return.
16. Over-night Stay Required? Indicate by "Yes" or "No" whether the trip will require the traveler to stay over-night. Overnight stays require PRE-approval of the appropriate Central Office Administrator.
17. Traveler. Indicate by checking the appropriate box whether the traveler is a school employee, a non-school employee, or a student group. List the name of the student group, if applicable.
18. Other travelers. List anyone with whom the traveler will be traveling. Attach a list if more room is necessary.
19. Estimated Expenses. Estimate all listed expenses. List in the appropriate column.
  - Lodging. Cost of hotel/motel room.
  - Meals. Cost of food can only be reimbursed on the Travel Expense Reimbursement Form.
  - Mileage. Cost of mileage for using a personal vehicle. This can only be claimed for reimbursement on the Travel Expense Reimbursement Form.
  - Airline. Cost of airline ticket.
  - Other transportation. Cost of rental vehicle, taxi, public transit, etc.

- Other expenses. Cost of incidental expenses such as parking fees, phone calls and registration fees. All other expenses must be claimed for reimbursement on the Travel Expense Reimbursement Form except for registration fees which can be paid by purchase order.
- TOTAL. Total both columns separately. Sum the totals of each column and enter in the estimated total box in the general information section. Totals are self-calculating on the electronic version.

20. Special Travel Authorization. Complete this section if estimated lodging and meals will be in excess of maximum rates. Explain why the rates will be in excess. For example, staying at the designated conference hotel will be more beneficial or economical than staying away from the convention site.

21. Signatures. The traveler and the traveler's immediate supervisor must sign the form.

Once completed, the form is to be submitted to the Business Office for final approval.

A separate travel request form must be completed for each traveler.

After travel is approved, purchase orders must be generated for estimated travel reimbursements, registrations, lodging, etc.

## APPENDIX B

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE TRAVEL EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT FORM

1. School or Location. Enter the name of the department/school to pay the expenses.
2. Name of payee. Enter the name of the traveler.
3. Address of payee. Enter the home address of the traveler.
4. Purpose of trip. Enter a brief description of the trip.
5. Personal vehicle license number. Enter the license number of the traveler's private vehicle if mileage is being claimed.
6. Date. Enter each date of travel.
7. Name of town visited. Enter the name of towns where expenses were incurred.
8. Expenses. List expenses incurred each day and not paid by purchase order.
  - Airfare. Airline tickets or bus tickets not paid by purchase order. Receipts must be attached.
  - Hotel room. Daily room rate including tax, if not paid by purchase order. Receipts must be attached.
  - Meals. Cost of meals each day. Detailed receipts must be attached.
  - Taxi/Rental car. Cost taxis, shuttles or rental cars. Attach receipts if available. If receipts are not available, do not enter more than the amount estimated on the Travel Request Form. Receipts are required for rental cars.
  - Incidentals. Enter the amount of each incidental expense (registration fee, parking fee, etc.) with the appropriate footnote. Receipts must be attached.
  - Telephone. Cost of business calls only. Receipts must indicate number called. Reason for call must be noted.
9. Total detailed expenditures. Total each line. This will self-calculate on the electronic version.
10. Sub-totals. Total each column. This will self-calculate on the electronic version.
11. From/To. Enter the point began and concluded each day. List vicinity mileage separately.
12. Mileage driven. Enter the map mileage between the points listed. Official mileage will come from MapQuest where applicable. Attach the MapQuest print-out.
13. Rate per mile. Enter the current rate. The current rate is embedded in the electronic version.
14. Total mileage. Calculate the total mileage cost by multiplying the mileage driven by the rate per mile. This is self-calculating on the electronic version.
15. Sub-totals for mileage. Add the columns Mileage Driven and Amount Claimed. This is self-calculating in the electronic version.
16. Total expenditures. Enter the total from the Total Detailed Expenditures column. This is self-calculating in the electronic version.
17. Total mileage. Enter the total from the Total Mileage column. This is self-calculating in the electronic version.
18. Total Claimed. Add the numbers on the Subtotal and Mileage Claimed lines. This is self-calculating in the electronic version.
19. Total Due Payee. This is the Total Claimed.
20. Total Due School. Since advances are no longer applicable, this field is obsolete.
21. Signature of payee. The traveler must sign the form before submitting to the Business Office.
22. Title. Enter the traveler's position.
23. Approved by. The form must be signed by the payee's principal or supervisor.
24. Date Approved. Enter the date approved by the payee's principal or supervisor.

## **APPENDIX D**

### **STANDARD RATES OF REIMBURSEMENT**

Mileage: Board Policy 7.12 requires mileage rates to be the same as allowed state employees. Appropriate mileage will be decided using map mileage or MapQuest, and will be paid according to the rate in effect on the date(s) of travel.

Meals: Meal expenses will only be reimbursed when overnight stays are required. Credit card receipts or cash tickets that do not show details of the meal purchased are not acceptable and will not be reimbursed. For in-state travel, the daily meal rate is \$39.00 plus tax prorated as follows:

- Breakfast \$ 10.00 plus tax
- Lunch \$ 11.00 plus tax
- Dinner \$ 18.00 plus tax

For out-of-state travel, the federal per diem rates will be used. Refer to this website:  
<http://www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/home.do?tabId=0>

Lodging: For in-state travel, the daily rate for lodging is \$110.00 plus tax. For out-of-state travel, the federal per diem rates will be used. Refer to this website:  
<http://www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/home.do?tabId=0>.

**All rates will be adjusted when necessary by the Business Office.**

**APPENDIX E**

## STANDARD MILEAGE (Arkansas State Highway Map Miles)

From: Conway

<b>To</b>	<b>Miles</b>
Little Rock	31.0
North Little Rock	28.0
Arch Ford Co-operative, Plumerville	12.0
Hot Springs	84.0
Fort Smith	128.0
Fayetteville	162.0
Pine Bluff	73.0
Russellville	49.0
West Memphis	152.0
Jonesboro	132.0
Cabot	49.0
El Dorado	148.0
Vilonia	12.0
Greenbrier	12.0
Morrilton	21.0
Searcy	49.0
Benton	55.0
Texarkana	174.0
Blytheville	185.0
Mayflower	10.0