

**ADMINISTRATIVE
DIRECTIVE**

Administrative Directive Title: Traveling Expenses Guidelines	AD Number: 2.804.1	Adopted: March 2015 Former Descriptor: FM13
Policy References: Board Policy 2.804 – Expenses and Reimbursements	Revised: 4/19; 7/19; 8/19; 7/22; 7/23; 11/24	

1 Travel expenses by Board members and school district employees consist of transportation, meals,
 2 accommodations, and any miscellaneous expenses that are incidental to travel. Employees will use
 3 the most economical means available when traveling at the district’s expense, will thoroughly
 4 document all expenses incurred, and will complete all necessary travel requests and reports
 5 according to these directives. This procedure outlines the guidelines and process for requesting,
 6 approving, and reimbursing traveling expenses for employees of Murfreesboro City Schools when
 7 traveling on official business.

8 **PRIOR APPROVAL REQUIRED**

9 Prior to the scheduled meeting/conference, a travel request form shall be submitted by all school
 10 district employees. Employees are limited to attend one national conference per fiscal year, unless
 11 approved by the Director of Schools. Certified classroom teachers who request professional leave
 12 pursuant to Board Policy 5.303 more than one (1) day per fiscal year must also be approved by the
 13 Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction. **If prior authorization did not occur**
 14 **before the official travel took place, the district reserves the right to deny the reimbursement**
 15 **request.** Travel advances are strictly prohibited.

16 While board members are not required to submit a travel request form, any travel and attendance
 17 at conventions/meetings shall be authorized in advance by the entire Board.

18 **TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION FORMS**

19 Prior approval is required by the Director of Schools for any employee travel involving an
 20 overnight stay or mileage in excess of fifty (50) miles one-way before a commitment being made
 21 for the trip. This approval will be granted through the approval of the travel request form, which
 22 must be completed and include the following information:

- 23 • Destination
- 24 • Dates of anticipated travel
- 25 • Purpose of attendance (including a copy of conference/seminar program)
- 26 • Information on how attendance will positively impact student learning
- 27 • Names of traveler(s)
- 28 • Budget, including conference fees, transportation, mileage, lodging, meals/incidentals,
- 29 anticipated additional expenses, and substitute teachers

30 Once travel is approved, employees are responsible for making their own travel arrangements,
31 including transportation, accommodations, and any other related bookings, subject to the
32 limitations outlined in this procedure.

33 TRAVEL EXPENSE CLAIM FORMS

34 The employee is responsible for entering a requisition in Skyward to create a purchase order prior
35 to making travel arrangements. Claims for reimbursements related to the travel must be made on
36 the *Travel Expense Claim* form and reference the purchase order number.

- 37 • Itemized original invoices and a hotel statement with a zero balance must be included,
38 with any supporting documentation.
- 39 • Receipts for meals are not required as Meals & Incidentals are reimbursed at the federal
40 per-diem rate.
- 41 • Itemized original receipts for the expenditures not covered by the per-diem rate must
42 be included.

43 Employees must submit the completed *Travel Expense Claim* form to their supervisor for approval
44 and then provide to the Finance Department for review, approval, and payment. All signatures on
45 the Claim form must be in ink. All expenses requiring documentation must be supported by valid
46 receipts or invoices, and receipts/invoices should clearly indicate the date, location, and nature of
47 the expense. If documentation is not available, supporting documentation may be required.
48 Falsification of any submitted documentation may be grounds for employee discipline. Employees
49 cannot receive an honorarium, stipend, or any other compensation from a third party and also
50 request travel reimbursement. If an employee receives an honorarium, stipend, or other
51 compensation from a third party, they should reduce the claim amount of the authorized expenses
52 by the compensation from the third party.

53 **Reimbursement for travel expenses will only be made if the Travel Expense Claim form is**
54 **properly completed and submitted within fourteen (14) calendar days of the last day of**
55 **travel, unless exigent circumstances apply, and the employee requests an extension of the**
56 **deadline from the Finance Department. Failure to complete the form or provide the**
57 **documentation outlined above may result in the denial of the request in part or in whole.** The
58 Director of Schools and the Finance Director or designee must approve all reimbursements.

59 TRANSPORTATION

60 Transportation at the district's expense shall be by the most economical method available. The
61 district may compare travel methods to determine the most economical method of travel and
62 reimbursement may be limited to the lower amount of travel. Hours required for travel shall be
63 treated as on-duty working time.

64 MASS TRANSIT

65 When travelling by air, train, or bus, travelers should arrange for the most economical fare
66 available, consistent with circumstances. Expenses are reimbursed at coach rate for the most direct
67 route available for the least cost. No reimbursement will be made for an airfare which exceeds that
68 available to a member of the general public traveling coach, tourist, or economy class with seven
69 (7) days' notice, without the prior authorization of the Director of Schools. No additional
70 reimbursement will be made for any additional expenses incurred to accumulate additional mileage

71 for employees in frequent flyer programs (e.g., extending stays or layovers to schedule a particular
72 carrier or taking a circuitous route), flight insurance, or for any early bird check-in fees. If an
73 employee personally chooses to fly on an earlier or later date than what is required to attend the
74 conference, they must provide a copy of what the airfare would have been if they flew on the dates
75 that would have normally been expected to attend the conference with the information from the
76 same day of purchase. If the airline doesn't allow baggage to fly for free, you can be reimbursed
77 for the cost of one bag per flight documented by a receipt. Excess baggage fees and fees for
78 baggage which is oversized or overweight is not reimbursable.

79 If a traveler uses a ride share service, these are reimbursed at the actual cost. Receipts shall be
80 presented, if available. A detailed receipt is required showing travel locations, dates, and amount
81 paid. Fares that are wanted for personal reasons (shopping, exploring the area, etc.) are not
82 reimbursable. If a receipt is not available, a written statement, including the trip destination and
83 amount paid, will be required for reimbursement. If a shuttle service is reasonably convenient and
84 available from the airport to the employee's destination, then the shuttle service shall be used when
85 its costs are lower than that of a taxi or ride share service.

86 **SCHOOL DISTRICT VEHICLE OR DISTRICT-PROVIDED TRANSPORTATION**

87 If a district vehicle is used, the district will pay only the cost of actual expenses for gasoline. If an
88 employee uses a district vehicle for travel, no mileage reimbursement will be issued. If an
89 employee purchases gasoline for a district vehicle while on travel, the gas receipt will need to be
90 turned in for the employee to be reimbursed.

91 If the district provides transportation for a group of employees to travel together to a conference
92 or seminar through the rental of a van or provision of a bus and an employee chooses to travel
93 separately in a private vehicle, the employee shall not be reimbursed for their mileage.

94 **PRIVATE VEHICLE**

95 The use of a private vehicle may be considered when conducting official school business with
96 prior approval of the employee's supervisor. Approval will depend on certain factors such as the
97 ability to verify vehicle liability information. The employee will not be reimbursed for
98 maintenance or repairs required while traveling or in preparation for the trip.

99 Auto mileage reimbursement rate will generally be fixed at the IRS allowable rate. However, this
100 rate will not become effective until the Finance Department publishes travel regulations for that
101 year. The rate specified on the travel voucher signed by the traveler will be used. Employees who
102 use their private vehicle for travel will be reimbursed only for mileage; they will not be reimbursed
103 for any fuel purchase(s) that are made.

104 **LOCAL MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT**

105 Employees providing their own transportation for traveling in the performance of their duties will
106 be reimbursed for mileage at the current rate per mile as outlined in the Travel Regulations
107 approved by the Finance Director on an annual basis.

108 Reimbursement cannot be claimed for expenses incurred by traveling to and from a place of
109 residence to official workstation, unless attendance at meetings or work sessions, after regular

110 working hours, is necessary. Travel to multiple destinations on the same day should be included
111 on the same reimbursement request using the *Local Mileage Reimbursement Claim Form*.

112 **OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL**

113 If the employee is using their private vehicle to drive out-of-state to attend a conference or seminar,
114 the employee must maintain a 100/300/50 automobile insurance policy. An employee who does
115 not maintain this minimum may not drive a privately-owned vehicle out of state. Insurance
116 coverage must be verified prior to the out-of-state travel.

117 **RENTAL CAR**

118 It is preferred that employees use a ride share or taxi service to travel at the destination. An
119 employee may only be reimbursed for car rental if the cost of the rental is equal to or less than the
120 cost of using the taxi/ride share service for transportation during the trip.

121 The employee must purchase and will be reimbursed for the cost of any additional collision or
122 liability insurance available from the rental car agency. The cost of a larger vehicle will only be
123 reimbursed if such a vehicle is necessary to accommodate the number of district employees that
124 also attend the business trip. The government or weekend rate must be requested.

125 **PARKING**

126 Parking charges for the dates of official travel will be reimbursed with a receipt. Valet parking will
127 not be reimbursed unless the hotel does not offer other parking options and a written explanation
128 must accompany the reimbursement request. The district will not reimburse an employee for
129 parking fines or traffic violations.

130 **MEALS**

131 An employee shall be reimbursed for meals consumed while on official travel on the federal
132 CONUS per diem rate. No per diem may be claimed for one-day travel (when there is no overnight
133 travel). To view the CONUS per diem rates, visit [https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-](https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates)
134 [rates](https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates). If an employee's meal is included as a part of the conference or seminar charge, the employee
135 cannot seek reimbursement for that meal. If an employee pays for the total cost of a meal shared
136 with other district employees who are entitled to receive a per diem payment for that meal, the
137 employee paying for the meal will be entitled to request payment for each employee identified on
138 the Travel Expenses Claim form. Any gratuity in excess of fifteen percent (15%) will be the
139 responsibility of the employee or board member.

140 **LODGING**

141 An employee will be reimbursed for lodging expenses incurred during official business travel
142 requiring an overnight stay, not to exceed the conference or convention rate (if applicable). If an
143 employee shares lodging with another employee, each employee shall report the expense on a pro-
144 rated basis.

145 If a conference or convention rate is not available, lodging accommodations should not exceed the
146 U.S. General Services Administration CONUS lodging rates provided by the federal government.
147 To view the CONUS lodging rates, visit <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>. If
148 the travel destination (city or county) is not listed on the GSA lodging rate page, then the standard

149 CONUS rate of \$96 for lodging will be used, unless exigent circumstances apply or as approved
150 by the employee's supervisor.

151 If the employee does not incur expenses because the employee has alternate lodging (lodging with
152 family), the employee will not be entitled to reimbursement. Employees will not be reimbursed for
153 travel involving an overnight stay within fifty (50) miles one way of Murfreesboro, unless
154 approved by the Director of Schools.

155 Employees will be responsible for any personal expenses billed to their room. Items from the
156 minibar, movies, drycleaning, etc. are not reimbursable items.

157 **TRAVEL WITH NON-EMPLOYEES**

158 The district will not reimburse employees for the costs of non-employees traveling with
159 employees, including, but not limited to: spouses, children, other family members. The district will
160 not reimburse an employee for costs, which are greater than the costs, which would have been
161 incurred if the employee had traveled without the nonemployee.

162 If the employee travels with another district employee who has not received travel authorization
163 under this directive, the individual will not be considered an employee for the purposes of
164 reimbursement.

165 **MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES**

166 Miscellaneous expenses that are not included in another specifically reimbursable expense may be
167 reimbursed on a case-by-case basis at the reasonable and actual cost upon approval of the Finance
168 Director. A receipt is required.

Legal References
Tennessee Internal School Funds Manual, Section 5-17
TCA 49-2-2001(c)
Murfreesboro City Sec. 1013, Travel Expense Policy