



Each Child, Every Day

Book	St. Lucie County School Board Policy Manual
Section	Chapter 7: Business Services
Title	Travel Expense Reimbursement
Number	7.52*+
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Travel expenses incurred by employees or other authorized persons involved in conducting School Board business may be reimbursed when authorized by the Superintendent or the School Board. All requests for travel expense reimbursements shall comply with federal and state laws and regulations and School Board policies. The Superintendent shall establish uniform procedures to implement this policy and prescribe forms and procedures necessary for maintaining accurate, uniform records.

All requests for travel expense reimbursements will be processed by the Finance department. The Finance Department shall have the authority to disallow any travel expenses not consistent with this policy. In addition, the Finance department shall have the authority to deny travel advance privileges to any employee, department or authorized person that fails to properly or promptly submit Travel Expense Reports.

All requests for travel expense reimbursement shall be reasonable, customary, and ordinary for the type of trip taken. All travelers shall travel in the most efficient manner possible.

Eligible Travel

Travel expense reimbursement may be approved for travel within and outside St. Lucie County when it is part of the traveler's official duties.

Use of Rental Cars

A rental vehicle or School District vehicle should be used for travel outside of St. Lucie County whenever possible to minimize costs. The car rental must be through an approved vendor and it should be for a mid-size car or smaller. Written justification must be submitted prior to the travel for the use of a rental car larger than a mid-size vehicle.

Rental vehicles should be shared whenever possible to minimize travel costs. However, no traveler shall be entitled to reimbursement for mileage when the traveler travels with another who rents a vehicle or is reimbursed for mileage.

Employees must obtain prior supervisor approval in order to be reimbursed for mileage for the use of their private vehicle.

Expenses for Travel within St. Lucie County

Employees on authorized travel within St. Lucie County should use a School District vehicle when one is reasonably available. If a School District vehicle is not available, the traveler may be reimbursed for mileage.

Mileage reimbursement shall be computed at the Internal Revenue Service ("IRS") Standard Mileage Rate effective upon publication by the IRS for distances traveled on official business. The rate per mile will be published by the Finance Department annually, or as updated by the IRS.

Expenses for Travel Outside of St. Lucie County

Employees on authorized travel outside of St. Lucie County shall abide by the following guidelines.

1. Maximum Expenses

- a. The Superintendent, or designee, may approve travel expenses for a single trip up to a maximum of \$3,500, excluding registration fees and tuition.
- b. Administrators reporting directly to the Superintendent may approve travel expenses for employees they supervise for a single trip up to a maximum of \$2,500, excluding registration fees and tuition.

2. Approval Requirements

Travelers must obtain the proper approval prior to the travel occurring.

- a. Board members: Individual Board members may approve their own travel.
- b. The Superintendent may approve their own travel.
- c. Cabinet Members: Approval by the Superintendent, or designee, is required.
- d. District Administrators and District Staff: Approval by the supervising Cabinet member is required.
- e. Principals: Approval by their supervising Executive Director of Schools is required.
- f. Non-school site employees: Approval by their immediate supervisor and the supervising administrator at the Chief Officer level is required.
- g. Assistant Principal/School site employees: Approval by the Principal is required.

3. Maximum Number of Employees

- a. One teacher in each teaching subject-area may be selected by a Principal to attend a national meeting of the teacher's subject-area field.

4. Reimbursement of Expenses by Other Agencies

Employees who are requested or directed to attend conferences or conventions sponsored by the Florida Department of Education, or by other institutions or vendors, may be approved for travel when the School District is reimbursed in full for such travel.

Reimbursement of Expenses

Reimbursable expenses will not be paid until after the traveler has returned from the trip and submitted to the Accounts Payable Department an Out of District Travel Expense Report with required supporting documents attached.

The following exceptions related to cash advances, direct payments to vendors for meals and lodging in connection with travel and required advance registration fees may apply:

A. Cash Advancements

Cash advancements to travelers in an amount not to exceed the estimated out-of-pocket reimbursable expenses, which may not exceed the approved maximum, may be authorized by their supervisor. The traveler shall submit a final accounting with all necessary supporting documents within ten (10) working days following return from the trip. The traveler must refund the amount of cash advancement exceeding the approved actual expenses. Any balance due to the traveler will be paid as part of the travel expense reimbursement process.

B. Travel Reimbursements to Non-School Board Employees

All direct reimbursement to non-School Board employees (referred to as "vendors" by Accounts Payable) for authorized travel shall be authorized in the contract with the vendor and shall comply with federal and state law and School Board policies. A final accounting for the travel with all necessary supporting documents shall be provided with the vendor's next invoice but in no event more than sixty (60) days after the travel ended.

C. Travel Arrangements for Airline Travel

Each traveler shall make their own airline reservations. Prior to an employee making airline reservations, the employee must obtain two (2) complete lists of available airfares from different sources, indicating the departing and destination cities, as well as the cost of the airline ticket. The listings must be attached to the reimbursement request. Acceptable listings can be obtained from a travel agency or Internet providers.

Travel Expenses Not Authorized

Travel expense reimbursement shall not be authorized for:

- A. Any employee who received college credit for work done while in attendance at a workshop, seminar, conference, or similar meeting.
- B. No tips or gratuities of any kind.
- C. Upgrade costs: employees will not be reimbursed for the cost of upgrades related to travel.
- D. Additional costs for extending a business trip for personal reasons.

Travel Expenses Paid from Grant Funds

For travel paid with Federal funds, the travel authorization must include documentation that demonstrates that (1) the participation in the event by the individual traveling is necessary to the grant award, and (2) the costs are reasonable and consistent with the School Board's travel expense reimbursement policies. All travel reimbursement requests must be submitted to Accounts Payable prior to the grant closing.

Travel Expenses Paid from School Internal Fund Accounts

Travel expenses paid from school Internal Fund accounts shall comply with the School Board's travel expense reimbursement policies.

Travel Expenses of Other Authorized Persons

The School Board may pay the travel expenses for:

- A. A person who contributes services as an advisor or consultant.
- B. A person who is a candidate for an executive or professional position.

Travel for such persons must have been approved by the Superintendent or designee and the travel reimbursement shall comply with the School Board's travel expense reimbursement policies. All documents must be submitted with the Out of District Travel Expense Report to the Accounts Payable Department within ten (10) days of the end of travel.

Reimbursement Guidelines

Reimbursement amounts for travel expenses shall be in accord with the following guidelines:

A. Transportation By Privately Owned Vehicle

1. The amount shall be calculated using the mileage for a round trip according to a current Florida Department of Transportation map or approved internet map service. Necessary local vicinity travel shall be shown separately on the voucher.
2. Necessary parking and storage fees; bridge, road, ferry, and tunnel tolls (receipt required).
3. Private vehicles should be shared whenever possible to minimize travel costs.
4. Reimbursement for use of private vehicles must not exceed the most economical airfare, when scheduled airline service is available, and accompanying rental car costs if a rental car is also required because the traveler traveled to the location by airline.

B. Transportation by Common Carrier

Travelers may be reimbursed for expenses incurred for common carrier transportation (train, bus, commercial airline operating scheduled flights, or rental car from an established rental car agency) at the most economical rate. Associated taxi and bus fares will be reimbursed. Set charges for baggage will be reimbursed (no more than 2 bags and overweight fees will not be reimbursed). Original receipts are required for all common carrier transportation. No tips or gratuities of any kind shall be reimbursed.

Under no circumstances is an employee authorized to travel using a private aircraft or a non-commercial/non-registered seagoing vessel while on official School Board business.

C. Per Diem or Meals and Lodging Allowance for Out-Of-County Travel

1. For overnight travel the traveler may be allowed actual expenses for lodging at single occupancy rates, substantiated by a lodging receipt, plus the maximum amount provided by law for each day for meal allowances. Total reimbursement shall not exceed School Board approved maximum.

2. For travel that does not include an overnight stay, the traveler may be allowed meal per diem expenses in accord with state law and School Board policies.

3. Meal Allowances

The School Board uses the same meal allowances established by the state. The Finance Department will publish the current allowable amount annually, or as updated by the state.

Breakfast allowance is when travel begins before 6 a.m. and extends beyond 8 a.m.

Lunch allowance is when travel begins before 12 noon and extends beyond 2 p.m.

Dinner allowance is when travel begins before 6 p.m. and extends beyond 8 p.m., or when travel occurs during nighttime hours due to special assignment.

4. Reimbursement by a State or Local Institution

When meals or lodging are to be reimbursed by a state or local institution, the traveler shall be reimbursed the actual costs of such items, not to exceed the maximum amounts otherwise permitted.

5. Conferences and Meals

If the cost of any meals is included as part of the registration fee, the allowance for meals must not be claimed or must be deducted if the per diem method for meals is used.

When attending a conference, convention, seminar, or similar type of meeting, an agenda must be included with the Out of District Travel Expense Report.

6. Communications

Reasonable and necessary communication expenses for official business while traveling , such as telephone, fax, mail, and other similar items, shall be reimbursed when properly documented and supported by a paid receipt.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: [1001.41](#), [1001.42](#), F.S.

LAWS IMPLEMENTED: [112.061](#), [1001.39](#), [1001.43](#), F.S.

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION RULE: [6A-1.056](#)

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