

STUDENT TRAVEL

FMG
(REGULATION)

The guidelines governing student travel and related expenses pursuant to Policy FMG REGULATION are summarized below to streamline and facilitate District approved student travel. These guidelines supersede any and all previous existing guidelines and apply to all student travel regardless of funding source, no exceptions.

School administrators are responsible for ensuring that all student travel is carried out in accordance with the District's administrative procedures. Student travel requests must be justified on the basis of educational value.

DISTRICT
SPONSORED
TRAVEL

Funds for District-sponsored travel, even if primarily provided by participants and/or booster clubs or organizations, shall be deposited into the District's student activity fund accounts. The purpose of this provision is to facilitate accounting for these funds and ensure cost containment through District contract and purchasing services.

Program Managers and Campus Principals should budget for non-UIL district-sponsored student travel for competitive events that would advance them to regional, state and national levels.

Student travel regardless of funding source (district budget, activity account, booster club, PTO, parent contributions, donations) must have funds available to process payment for travel accommodations thirty (30) calendar days prior to the travel date.

Exception:

The District will budget for UIL district-sponsored student travel for competitive events that would advance them to regional, state and national levels.

TITLE IX

No student shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to, discrimination under any academic, extracurricular, occupational training, or other educational program or activity operated by the District.

STUDENT
FIELD TRIPS

Student field trips are defined as a one-day trip within the El Paso, Doña Ana, Otero, Eddy and/or Hudspeth Counties not requiring an overnight stay and not exceeding a 175-mile radius from point of origin. Student field trip documentation is processed by the Transportation Office.

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STUDENT
ATTENDANCE

The District shall make no distinction between absences for UIL activities and absences for other extracurricular activities approved by the Board of Trustees. A student shall be allowed ten extracurricular absences not related to post-district competition, five absences for post-district competition prior to state, and two absences for state competition.

STUDENT
ELIGIBILITY

All students traveling must be academically eligible at the time of departure.

BOOSTER/PTO
FUNDED ACTIVITIES

UIL guidelines prohibit booster clubs from paying “directly” for trip expenses. Booster Clubs/Parent Organizations may donate funds to the school so that travel arrangements can be made and paid for.

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TRAVEL REQUEST

The Travel Request Form (Exhibit A) must be submitted for out-of-town travel and must be pre-approved by the immediate supervisor and/or budget authority.

The Travel Request Form (Exhibit A) must be completed in its entirety prior to submission deadline. An incomplete travel request form will be returned to the originator, which could result in delays, increased costs, and in some cases, cancellation of the trip.

All travelers must ensure that all travel is approved and submitted far enough in advance to take advantage of “early bird” registration and other travel discounts. In all cases, travel must be submitted to the Financial Services Division at least 21 calendar days prior to the date of travel and at least 7 calendar days prior to the conference registration deadline, no exceptions. Travel requests that do not meet the 21-day criteria are processed only with the written approval of the Superintendent of Schools.

Prior authorization by supervisor is required, for travelers requesting to extend the days on trip for personal reasons. Difference in airfare costs, per diem, lodging, and vehicle rentals will be at traveler’s personal expense.

Any incomplete requests will not be approved until all documentation is submitted and will delay the process.

A completed travel request package will include:

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1. Travel Request Form - Exhibit A (completely filled out, to include immediate supervisor's signature for approval)
2. Student Travel Roster (Exhibit I)
3. Registration Form (completely filled out)
4. Conference Agenda to include:
 - a. Date(s) of meeting/conference;
 - b. Conference begin and end time.
5. Hotel Information Form Exhibit H) with lodging preference
 - a. Rooming List

Once approved, the request will be routed to the Executive Director for Financial Services for verification of funds and travel arrangements. The Financial Services office staff will then make the necessary travel arrangements and prepare travel packets. The Financial Services Division will track all travel arrangements made for district personnel.

Trip requests will be processed in the order received by the Travel Clerk upon receipt of the trip information, but must be initiated at least 21 calendar days prior to the trip and at least 7 calendar days prior to the conference registration deadline.

CANCELLATIONS

The Travel Office is to be notified immediately in writing of any student cancellations and replacements. The notification must be made through the campus or department supervisor who authorized the travel using the Request of Approval for Trip Cancellation Form (Exhibit G).

The District will absorb any cancellation losses incurred due to a cancellation made at the District's discretion. Club accounts absorb cancellation costs for club-funded trips. Students are held responsible for any funds that cannot be recouped, unless the cancellation is due to emergency circumstances. Emergency situations include, but are not limited to: hospitalization or death in the immediate family or illness of the student. Written verification is required. The Travel Office will attempt to recover costs incurred due to cancellation whenever possible.

Cancellations with a replacement must be done in a timely manner and must be done by the campus/department budget authority.

REGISTRATION

A Travel Request Form – Exhibit A (approved by the Executive Director, Financial Services) must be completed before any registration arrangements are made. Any requests for registration fees must be exclusive of pleasure tours.

The traveler must pay for all membership dues or other association fees that are included in the registration fees.

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UNALLOWABLE
EXPENSES/CHARGES

Unallowable expenses include but are not limited to: Texas state tax, room rates that exceed the limits outlined above, meals, alcoholic beverages, water, laundry, games/movies, baggage handling, personal phone calls, personal use of Internet, personal accident insurance or personal effects coverage for rental cars, sheltered airport parking, etc.

MEAL RECEIPTS

For students in grade levels PK-8 and UIL Competition Activities: Meal receipts are required for all student travel. Any remaining funds must be returned to the Travel Office. Meal receipts and unused funds must be returned within ten (10) business days after completion of travel. The employee shall maintain custody of the money at all times and should not distribute the money to the students.

For students in grade levels 9-12:
Meal receipts are not required for student travel in grade levels 9-12. In these cases a Per Diem Issuance Log (Exhibit K) is required. Student signatures are required on this form as proof of receipt of meal money. The completed Per Diem Issuance Log (Exhibit K) must be submitted with the Student/Sponsor Travel Expense Report (Exhibit J)

FEDERAL FUNDED
MEAL RECEIPTS

Meal receipts are required for all student travel regardless of grade level. Any remaining funds must be returned to the Travel Office. Meal receipts and unused funds must be returned within ten (10) business days after completion of travel. The employee shall maintain custody of the money at all times and should not distribute the money to the students.

The per diem rates for all student travel are listed below:

- \$7 - Breakfast (12:00 a.m. – 7:59 a.m.)
- \$10 - Lunch (8:00 a.m. – 12:59 p.m.)
- \$16 - Dinner (1:00 p.m. – 6:59 p.m.)
- \$0 – No Meals (7:00 p.m. – 11:59 p.m.)

ROOM ASSIGNMENTS

Students are assigned four to a room unless circumstances prevent this arrangement. All room assignments must be gender specific. Please refer to the DEE Regulation for lodging rates.

STUDENT

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TRANSPORTATION

To transport students in connection with school activities, the following is to be adhered to:

Sponsor/chaperone should request authorization and funding for the rental of the appropriate transportation (cars, vans, buses, etc.)

District buses or charter buses may be used to transport 15 or more students in any one vehicle. Passenger cars or passenger vans may be used to transport fewer than 15 students.

In all circumstances in which passenger cars or passenger vans are used to transport students, the operator of the vehicle shall ensure that the number of passengers in the vehicle does not exceed the designed capacity of the vehicle and that each passenger is secured by a safety belt.

The District assumes no liability for students who are, for any reason, transported by parents or students in private vehicles.

Contact the Transportation Department or the Risk Manager for more information on student transportation.

ADVANCES

Employees traveling with student as chaperones or sponsors will obtain an advance for estimated trip expenditures such as meals, parking fees, taxi fare, shuttle fees, and miscellaneous items for those expected to travel.

SPONSORS / CHAPERONES

Sponsor(s) or chaperone(s) are responsible for student conduct at all times. A sponsor(s) or chaperone(s) on a District approved trip with students must be a District employee. Hourly employees must adhere to the travel time tracking guidance provided in Administrative Regulation DEE. **All non-exempt employees traveling out of town must be accompanied by an exempt employee.** Overtime earned while on travel will be compensated through compensatory time or monetarily at the discretion of the trip budget authority and/or the employee's supervisor. Arrangements as to the method of compensating overtime, should any occur, should be made with the non-exempt employee prior to travel using the Request for Overtime Form. At no time will overtime be paid to an employee from a student club account. **A non-exempt employee that is allowed to travel must submit an "Authorization to Travel/Time Card" (Exhibit E) form along with the Travel request form.**

- Throughout the duration of the trip, the traveler must record hours on duty on the Non-Exempt (Hourly) Employee Travel Time Card (Exhibit E).

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- Upon the employee's return from travel, the Travel Time Card (Exhibit E) must be submitted to the timecard approver at the respective location.
- The timecard approver must enter the time worked while on travel into the TEAMS system.
- Once the timecard is printed and signed by both the approver and employee, the Travel Time Card Form (Exhibit E) must be stapled to the employee's timecard and submitted to the Payroll Department. These documents must be attached to the employee's time card for payroll processing.

When accompanying a student group sponsor(s) and/or chaperone(s) are expected to accompany students at all times and to return with the group. When students of both genders are traveling, a male and female chaperone is required. The recommended ratio for students traveling to sponsor(s)/chaperone(s) required is 12:1. Variances outside of this ratio must be approved by the Superintendent.

Only District employees acting as chaperones may travel in District provided transportation with student groups on trips or activities. Parents may travel with student groups on trips or activities provided they make and fund their own travel arrangements. Employees who are parents may travel with their child during the workday provided they make their own arrangements and charge the absence as a personal day or a day without pay.

When traveling with students, chaperone(s) and sponsor(s) will receive a travel per diem allotment of \$33 per day.

It is the responsibility of the sponsor(s) or chaperone(s) to keep necessary records and receipts pertaining to the trip and submit required reports upon return. Every sponsor(s) or chaperone(s) traveling must abide by the Employee Travel Regulation. Every sponsor(s) or chaperone(s) traveling must submit the Student/Sponsor Travel Expense Report (Exhibit J) and Travel Board Report (Exhibits C and F). The person to whom the travel advance is issued is accountable for the funds and liable for loss or misapplication of these funds.

All receipts and any pertinent documentation and unused money are to be returned to the Travel Office within 10 days after completion of travel.

BOARD REPORTS AND TRAVEL

EXPENSE FORM Sponsor/Student Travel Expense Reports and Board reports are required after all student travel using district funds. Reports are due within ten (10) calendar days after the completion of the trip. The Board Report must follow the report template (Exhibit C). Board

Members and Superintendent will receive copies of the trip reports.

Failure to turn in completed trip reports will result in non-approval of future trip requests and/or non-reimbursement of incidental expenditures.

It is the Sponsor's responsibility to submit proper receipts for travel expense reimbursement. The Sponsor must provide original itemized receipts as follows:

- Airline passenger receipt/itinerary;
- Vehicle rental receipt must include date(s) of rental and name(s) of driver(s);
- Hotel receipt must be itemized to include hotel name, traveler's name, room rate, and tax charged per day;
- Parking and gasoline receipts;
- Registration payment original registration receipt (if paid at conference site);
- Taxi, tolls, and shuttle receipts;
- Other miscellaneous expenses.

Incomplete reports will be returned for completion and will delay any reimbursements due to the employee. The Travel Expense Forms must be signed by the traveler, immediate supervisor and/or program budget authority if funded by a special program.

Inadequate receipts (i.e., handwritten, written on a napkin, partial receipts, lacking detail, credit card receipt, etc.) are not accepted and reimbursement will not be processed. Credit card receipts are not acceptable as adequate documentation for reimbursement unless they are sufficiently itemized.

Miscellaneous expenses include gas, parking, taxi, tolls, shuttle, phone calls, and Internet usage when associated with business- related travel.

No reimbursement through the travel reimbursement process is allowed for the purchase of classroom aids, souvenirs, or reference materials, such as books sold at the seminars or conferences.

Travel Reimbursements will be processed as follows:

Reimbursements submitted to the Financial Services Division between the 27th day of one month and 12th day of the following month will be processed on the 15th day of the month. For example, if a travel expense report is submitted any day between August 27th and September 12th, the employee's reimbursement will be processed on September 15th.

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Reimbursements submitted to the Financial Services Division between the 13th and 26th day of the month will be processed on the last day of the month. For example, if a travel expense report is submitted any day between September 13th and September 26th, the employee's reimbursement will be processed on September 30th.

Travel expense report (Exhibit B) must be completed in its entirety to include supervisor signatures and all related invoices/receipts must be attached in order to avoid the delay of the employee reimbursement process.

Any outstanding travel expense reports must be submitted ten (10) calendar days after the end of the fiscal year in which the trip was taken. Please note expense reports not submitted following the guidelines will not be reimbursed.