



THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF SPRINGFIELD R-12

STAFF AND BOARD MEMBER TRAVEL PROCEDURES FY2026

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The Travel Procedures manual encompasses procedures involving Travel.

For a comprehensive listing of Financial Procedures, see the

[Financial Procedures Handbook.](#)

**SCHOOL DISTRICT OF SPRINGFIELD R-12
TRAVEL PROCEDURES**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
GENERAL REQUIREMENTS	4
Authorization for Travel.....	4
Travel Arrangements.....	4
Extended Stay.....	5
Documentation Requirements.....	5
Documentation Required for Use of Federal Funds	5
Foreign Travel.....	5
TRAVEL EXPENSES.....	6
Seminar and Registration Fees.....	6
Meals.....	6
Meals with No Overnight Travel.....	7
Lodging.....	7
Airplane or Other Transportation.....	7-8
Rental Vehicles.....	8
Employee Use of Personal Vehicles for District Business.....	9
Mileage.....	9-10
Other Travel Expenses.....	10
Relocation.....	10
NON-REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES.....	10-11
TRAVEL FORMS AND CONTACT INFORMATION.....	11
Attachment A Travel Request Approval Form.....	12
Attachment B Out of District Mileage Chart.....	13

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

The district will pay for travel expenses for district employees and Board members who travel outside the district for training, professional development, attendance at district-related meetings or for other approved reasons related to their positions with the district.

All persons traveling at the district's expense are expected to use good judgment, differentiate between expenditures for business and those for personal convenience, and avoid unnecessary fees and excessive charges. The district is tax exempt and will not pay Missouri sales or use tax to any vendor or reimburse an employee or Board member for Missouri sales or use tax except for meals.

The following rules will apply to district employees unless the superintendent or designee determines that unusual circumstances justify an exception. Board members will follow this policy as well, unless the Board or the Board president determines that unusual circumstances justify an exception. All exceptions must be documented in writing for auditing purposes.

Authorization for Travel

District employees must obtain prior authorization from a supervisor for district-related travel before the employee is allowed to incur travel expenses. Travel costs that are charged to a federal grant or fund award must first be approved in writing by the superintendent or designee who oversees that particular federal program and, when required, the state or federal contact overseeing the federal funds at Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). The district reimburses individuals for approved, necessary, and reasonable travel expenses incurred while conducting business for the district. The Travel Request Approval Form, Attachment A, may be used to document this prior authorization. This form may be found on the district website under Departments, Business Services, Travel Forms.

Travel for district business is governed by the procedures outlined in this document, regardless of the source of funds. If travel expenses will be paid solely from resources provided by a separate agency, that agency's travel reimbursement procedure would apply; however, district pre-approval for travel is still required.

Travel Arrangements

All travel arrangements including airfare, lodging, registration and rental vehicles should be arranged by designated staff members at the department/school level. District staff members will make travel reservations only for district employees, officials, SPS students, or district representatives. Travel reservations for any other travelers will not be made using district funds. Travel arrangements should be scheduled in a fiscally responsible manner including:

- Carpooling (see Employee Use of Personal Vehicles for District Business section)
- Minimizing the number of nights required for overnight stay
- Minimizing the number of staff attending
- Reasonable and fiscally responsible meal choices
- Comparing costs for mileage vs airfare vs rental vehicle

Extended Stay

Travel is not to be extended at the beginning or end of the conference unless it is more economical to the district for the traveler to remain overnight. If so, reimbursement will be made for the extended trip provided written documentation is included. Travelers who extend a trip for personal reasons are responsible for all expenses caused by the extended stay. If airfare does not coincide with the beginning or end of the conference, documentation needs to be included with the receipt to show the amount of airfare difference.

Documentation Requirements

Whether the travel expenses are paid using a district purchasing card, employee/Board reimbursement request, or purchase order the following items must be forwarded to the Business Services Department:

- Original itemized receipts for all expenses, except mileage
- List of attendees for meal receipts with 2 or more meals purchased
- Conference agenda
- Document such as MapQuest or Google Map showing reasonableness of miles claimed (if mileage chart is not utilized)
- Travel Expense Reimbursement Form - must be submitted within 30 days of the end of the travel
- Purchasing Card Travel Charges Form - if charges are paid with a district purchasing card.

Documentation Required for Use of Federal Funds

When federal funds are used for travel, the district must be able to justify the necessity of the travel to the federal program and demonstrate that the costs incurred were reasonable and consistent with the district's travel policy. Therefore, district staff or Board members using federal funds for travel must provide sufficient documentation to the designee who oversees the applicable federal program. Such documentation may include but is not limited to:

- An agenda of the event attended
- A list of attendees at the event
- A written statement justifying the expense
- Evidence of prior written approval for the expense

Travelers should contact the designee who oversees the applicable federal program for further guidance on specific procedures and forms.

Foreign Travel

Expenses for foreign travel should be translated into U.S. dollars at the exchange rate at the time the expense was incurred. Conversion rates should be included as part of the required documentation.

TRAVEL EXPENSES

Seminar and Registration Fees

Employees and Board members should register for seminars and conferences in advance so that the district may pay directly for the registration. Any requests for reimbursement must be accompanied by an original itemized receipt. The district will only pay for late registration fees when there is a valid reason the Board member or employee did not register earlier.

Meals

Employees will be reimbursed the actual cost of the meal(s) as long as the expense is reasonable given the traveler's geographical location. Since these rates vary, travelers should become familiar with the per diem meal reimbursement rates at their destinations prior to departure. The per diem rates for geographical locations can be found at www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates. The per diem rate includes taxes and tips and will be assessed on a per meal basis.

Each meal review takes into account the location, a general review of per meal cost (Example: \$10-B/\$15-L/\$25-D), any special circumstances surrounding the travel or employee, any unexpected circumstances that may arise while they are traveling, and an overall assessment of whether the employee used good judgement regarding their expenditures before they are deemed excessive. If the meal is deemed excessive, the per diem limits for that area are applied and the employee is requested to reimburse the district all excess charges. The per diem rate will be assessed on a per meal basis.

If the full amount was charged to a district purchasing card, the traveler will be expected to reimburse the district for the excessive portion. If the employee does not voluntarily remit the reimbursement, a payroll withholding will be processed per the "Authorization to Collect for Unauthorized Purchasing Card Charges" that each cardholder must sign before being issued a district card.

Detailed original receipts are required for all meal purchases regardless of whether an employee reimbursement is requested or paying with a district purchasing card. If a group meal is purchased, the names of all travelers attending the meal must be documented on the meal receipt. The district will not pay for alcohol purchases.

Grocery purchases in-lieu of dining out are permissible as long as the expense is reasonable and detailed receipts for the purchases are submitted. Meals for spouses, children, or guests are not reimbursable. Meals will not be reimbursed or allowed if they are provided by the conference, unless special dietary needs cannot be accommodated otherwise.

Any reimbursement for gratuity is reimbursable up to 20 percent of the cost of the meal. Meals on the first and last days of travel will be paid as follows: on departure day, all three meals are allowed only if the traveler departs from home prior to 7:00 a.m.; on return day, all three meals are allowed only if the traveler arrives home after 7:00 p.m.

Meals with No Overnight Travel

Meals are allowable under the above guidelines only when they are part of a meeting or activity where district business is discussed and the following conditions exist:

- The employee is representing the district in an official/professional capacity
- There is a clear business purpose
- Documentation of the business purpose must be provided with the itemized receipt

If a group meal is purchased, all persons (groups) present at the meal must be identified and submitted with the itemized receipt. Meals associated with administrative supervision when there is no overnight travel involved, are only allowable if the function being supervised is outside the district boundaries.

Lodging

The district will not pay for hotel expenses unless an overnight stay is necessary to attend the function or returning would be unsafe or cause the traveler to travel late at night. Lodging arrangements must be made prior to departure and paid by the district directly or through the use of a district purchasing card. If advanced planning is not possible, the district will reimburse employees and Board members for the reasonable cost of single occupancy hotel accommodations and a reasonable amount of gratuities. Conference or corporate rates must be utilized when available.

When two or more staff share the same room, the total claimed for reimbursement may not exceed the total paid for the room. Additional costs associated with higher-than-single-occupancy rates (spouse, children, or guest accompanying employee) are not reimbursable and must be paid by employee prior to check out. Personal expenses such as guest meals, in-room movies, liquor, spa services, etc. are not reimbursable and must be paid by the employee prior to check out. Original, itemized lodging receipts are required documentation for lodging reimbursements. Missouri state sales tax is not reimbursable on lodging stays, however, lodging tax is allowable.

Airplane or Other Transportation

Employees and Board members are required to secure the lowest available fares for commercial airplane, train or other transportation services unless the fare would:

- Require circuitous routing
- Require travel during unreasonable hours
- Excessively prolong travel
- Result in additional costs that would offset the transportation savings
- Not meet the reasonable medical needs of the employee or Board member

If a Board member or employee relies on one of the listed exceptions, that exception must be approved and documented.

Unallowable charges for airline travel include the following:

- Baggage fees for more than 1 checked bag/person, unless extenuating circumstances have been documented and approved
- Baggage fee additional cost for gate check in vs counter check in
- Baggage fees over the airlines allowable weight limit
- Baggage fees for oversized bags
- First class, preferred, or premium seating such as extra legroom or stretch seating
- Priority boarding
- Early Bird check in fees
- In-flight food or beverages
- In-flight Wi-Fi

The district's purchasing card should be used to purchase airfare whenever possible. All transportation arrangements including bus, airplane, train, and rental vehicles should be secured at the minimum cost for achieving the purpose of the trip.

Travelers should seek to obtain the most reasonable parking and ground transportation arrangements consistent with safety and travel timelines. Airport shuttles, taxis, or two round trip local mileage trips to and from the airport to drop off and pick up a traveler in lieu of parking are reimbursable expenses. An original receipt is required for transportation reimbursements.

Rental Vehicles

Employees and Board members may drive district-owned vehicles or rental vehicle only if they are appropriately licensed to drive the vehicle and insured as required by law. Employees and Board members transporting students must follow the laws and district policies regarding the transportation of students.

When renting a vehicle for district use, the employee should use a district purchasing card and indicate district use or the district name on the rental agreement whenever possible. Rental vehicles should be limited to mid-class or smaller economy vehicles unless a larger vehicle is needed to accommodate the number of persons attending or the price is the same or less to use a larger vehicle.

Employee and Board members who have been issued a purchasing card should use the card when purchasing fuel for district-related travel expenses using district-owned or rental vehicles; otherwise, the district will reimburse them for fuel purchased. The beginning and ending odometer reading for the trip must be included with the reimbursement request.

The employee must purchase from the rental agency the following coverages:

- Loss Damage Waiver (LDW), sometimes called collision damage waiver (CDW)
- Supplemental Liability Insurance (SLI), sometimes called additional liability

Employees should not purchase personal effects coverage. Vehicles rented should not have a seating capacity of more than eight (8) passengers, including the driver.

Employee use of Personal Vehicles for District Business

The vehicle owner's insurance policy provides the primary coverage for auto damage and liability. The district's coverage is secondary and for liability coverage only. This means that the district's insurance coverage will only pay claims made against the employee by third parties involved in an accident, and only after the vehicle owner's insurance policy has paid its maximum benefit. The district's coverage will NOT pay for damages to the owner's vehicle.

Employees are responsible for ensuring the following prerequisites are met prior to using their personal vehicle to conduct district business:

- Meet all vehicle operator requirements specified in your job description
- Possess current vehicle registration and state inspection
- Possess current auto insurance, with the limits as required by state law, or if transporting students, as required per the District driver verification process

Individuals who are traveling to the same destination should share transportation to reduce travel costs to the District whenever possible, unless an exception is granted by the superintendent or designee or unless the employee or Board member is willing to travel at his or her own expense. Exceptions should be documented on the Travel Reimbursement Form. When sharing transportation, only the person whose vehicle is used may claim mileage.

Travelers choosing to carpool with other employees when conducting district business do so at their own risk. The district does not verify driving records of employees who are not required to drive as part of their job description, has no means of verifying the safety of personal vehicles, and does not verify insurance coverage on such vehicles. Travelers who do not wish to carpool should request an exception prior to departure. Exceptions should be documented and forwarded with the Travel Reimbursement Request form.

Mileage

Out of District

Automobile mileage is reimbursable at the applicable Internal Revenue Service (IRS) rate at the time of travel for miles driven. The mileage allowance rate represents full compensation for the costs of operating the vehicle, including fuel costs. Mileage claimed should not exceed the actual distance traveled. Refer to Attachment B for an Out-of-District Mileage Chart of frequently used destinations. If the destination is not listed, a MapQuest, or similar, printout indicating the distance traveled should be attached to show reasonableness of miles claimed. A short statement justifying any miles driven in excess of the Chart or MapQuest miles should be included with the reimbursement request.

Intra-District

Automobile mileage reimbursement for daily travel between buildings, to meetings within the district, or any mileage for district business purposes within the boundaries of the Springfield School District that has been approved by administrator responsible for overseeing budget should be reported monthly on the Intra-District Mileage Reimbursement Request form using the Intra-District Mileage Chart. Travel from home to first building of duty each day does not qualify for travel pay nor does travel home from last building each day. Employees beginning their work day at a location other than their primary work location may be reimbursed based on mileage calculated from the primary work or home location to the location where the work day begins, whichever is

the lesser mileage. Employees ending their work day at a location other than their primary work location may be reimbursed based on mileage calculated from the location where the work day ends to the home or primary work location, whichever is the lesser mileage. Mileage reimbursement requests should be submitted in a timely manner according to the guidelines listed below:

- Mileage reimbursements should be turned in on a monthly basis.
- Mileage reimbursements should be submitted through December 31 of any given year due to changes in the IRS reimbursement rate.
- Mileage reimbursement requests through June 30 (the end of the fiscal year) should be submitted to the Business Services Department by July 30th.

Other Travel Expenses

The following expenses are considered other travel expenses and may be reimbursed. Reimbursable travel expenses must be business-related and necessary for the travel.

- Faxes
- Wi-Fi access
- Parking and road toll fees
- Baggage fee limited to one bag, unless for extended trips of five days or more
- Taxi fares
- Shuttle service
- Laundry services for extended trips of five days or more
- Postage for business purposes
- Supplies and materials necessary for business purposes

Original, itemized receipts are required for these expenses.

Relocation

The district will not pay for or reimburse an employee for relocation travel expenses unless such expenses are included as part of an employee's benefit package as approved by the Board

NON-REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES

The following expenses are not reimbursable, either by law or by the constraints of district policy or procedure. This list is not intended to be all inclusive. Should you have specific questions regarding reimbursable items, please contact the Business Services Department.

- Alcoholic beverages (including tax and tip associated with the purchase)
- Personal items (incidentals) including candy, snacks, tobacco, toiletries, and personal telephone calls
- Airline charges to choose seat and/or change seat assignment, unless an exception is approved by Business Services
- Above charges listed under unallowable charges for airline travel in section above.
- Snacks and beverages outside of regular meals
- Postage for personal purpose
- Unauthorized car rentals

- Gifts
- Tips exceeding limits stated within these guidelines
- Mileage to and from home
- Expenses for spouse, children or other non-employee traveling companions (including room surcharges)
- Non-business related entertainment (including in-room movies, tickets for sporting events, theatre performances, or concerts, etc.) unless they are agenda items on approved student trips
- Expenses for travel extending beyond the time required for the meeting or trip (unless it is in the district's financial interest to extend the travel for an additional night due to certain rate advantages)
- Late registration fees (unless there is a valid reason why the registration was late)
- Fines for parking or traffic violations
- Fuel or other expenses for a personal vehicle
- Physical damage to a private vehicle or loss of its personal property contents
- Business cancellation or trip life insurance
- Missouri sales tax
- Expenses submitted without itemized receipts
- Care for a Board member or employee's dependent during the course of the travel

TRAVEL FORMS AND CONTACT INFORMATION

All travel forms are located on the District's website under Departments-Business Services-Travel Forms.

For additional assistance or procedural clarification, please contact the Business Services Department.

References: [Board Policy DLCA](#)