

Board Policy 7430: Travel Allowances and Expenses

Original Adopted Date: | Last Revised Date: |

Policy

Purpose and Guiding Standards

The Board of Trustees recognizes the importance of ongoing training, compliance, representation, and operational travel for District employees and Board Trustees. The Board also recognizes that public funds are limited and should be prioritized for programs, services, and activities that most directly benefit students.

District travel is not an employee benefit or entitlement. Travel shall be approved only when the District determines that the travel is necessary, reasonable, cost-effective, and connected to student learning, student safety, legal compliance, required certification, grant requirements, Board service, or essential District operations.

Local, in-District, regional, and virtual training options are the District preference and should be considered before travel requiring overnight lodging, airfare, or Board approval is requested. The District may limit the number of employees attending the same event and may require a designated attendee to report back to other staff.

Scope

This policy applies to all District employees and Board Trustees seeking District payment, reimbursement, per diem, mileage, paid travel time, lodging, registration, transportation, or other travel-related expenses while engaged in official District business.

Travel funded by grants, donations, activity funds, association funds, or any other funding source remains subject to this policy unless a stricter law, grant term, Board action, or written agreement applies. The existence of a funding source does not create a right to travel or reimbursement.

Student-trip authorization, student transportation, chaperone requirements, parent/guardian permission, student conduct, student safety, fundraising, and cancellation of student trips are governed by Policy 3460, School-Related Foreign and Extended Travel by Students. Staff travel expenses connected to a student trip may be paid or reimbursed under this policy only after the student-trip approval requirements of Policy 3460 have been satisfied.

General Reimbursement Rule

Every District employee and Board Trustee may be reimbursed for actual, necessary, reasonable, and approved travel expenses incurred while traveling for official District business. Expenses must be reported on District-approved travel forms, vouchers, or successor forms. Employee travel must be approved before travel by the employee's supervisor, the funding administrator when applicable, and the Superintendent or designee. Board Trustee travel shall be approved as required by this policy and Policy 1420.

The District will follow the State of Idaho Travel Policy and applicable federal award requirements, except when this policy, District procedure, grant requirements, or Board action is more restrictive. In that event, the more restrictive applicable standard shall control unless prohibited by law or by a binding grant condition.

Expenses not in compliance with this policy shall not be reimbursed or paid by the District. No registration, airfare, lodging, rental vehicle, non-refundable fee, or other travel expense shall be incurred until final written approval has been granted, except for documented emergency or required travel approved by the Superintendent or designee.

Travel Categories for Approval Purposes

For approval purposes, travel is classified by distance, duration, estimated cost, method of transportation, and student-travel involvement. Whether a destination is within Idaho or outside Idaho may affect reimbursement rates, tax exemption, or documentation, but it does not replace the distance-based approval requirements of this policy. For transition purposes, Regional Staff Travel replaces the prior term "in-radius travel," and Board-Level Staff Travel replaces the prior term "out-of-radius travel."

Category	Definition	Minimum approval and key limits
District Travel	Travel within District boundaries while conducting official District business.	Supervisor approval or notice as required by the supervisor. District vehicles shall be used when available and practical. Meals inside the District are not reimbursable except approved banquets attended to represent the District.
Regional Staff Travel	Travel outside District boundaries but not more than 300 driving miles from the District Service Center in Rupert, Idaho, using the District mileage chart or a generally accepted mapping route.	Prior approval by the supervisor, funding administrator when applicable, and Superintendent or designee. Board approval is not required unless the travel otherwise meets the definition of Board-Level Staff Travel.
Board-Level Staff Travel	Staff travel that meets at least one of these conditions: destination more than 300 driving miles from the District Service Center in Rupert; commercial airfare; international travel; out-of-state overnight travel; estimated District cost above a Board-established amount; or Superintendent determination that Board review is appropriate.	Prior recommendation by administration and Board approval before costs are incurred. Requests must be submitted at least 60 calendar days before travel and early enough for Board agenda placement, unless an emergency or required-travel exception is approved by the Superintendent and reported to the Board.
Student Travel	Travel by or with students for a school-sponsored activity, extended trip, foreign travel, or other student activity.	Policy 3460 controls student-trip approval, student transportation, chaperones, parent/guardian permission, student safety, student conduct, fundraising, and cancellation. This policy controls staff expense approval and reimbursement only.

Submission Deadlines

Travel requests must be submitted early enough for review by the supervisor, funding administrator, Superintendent or designee, Business Office, travel coordinator, and Board when Board approval is required. A late request may be denied solely because it is late. A late request does not create an emergency.

Type of travel or request	Minimum submission deadline	Approval path
District travel with no reimbursement, prepaid cost, overnight lodging, or substitute cost	Advance notice as required by supervisor	Supervisor or designee
Regional same-day travel with no overnight lodging and no prepaid/non-refundable cost	At least 10 business days before travel	Supervisor and Superintendent/designee if reimbursement, leave, or District vehicle use is requested
Regional travel requiring registration, reimbursement, substitute cost, District vehicle reservation, prepaid expense, or other District cost	At least 30 calendar days before travel	Supervisor, funding administrator when applicable, and Superintendent/designee
Regional overnight travel	At least 30 calendar days before travel	Supervisor, funding administrator when applicable, and Superintendent/designee
Board-Level Staff Travel	At least 60 calendar days before travel and by the Board agenda deadline for the meeting at which approval is requested	Supervisor, funding administrator, Superintendent recommendation, and Board approval
Staff expenses connected to approved student travel	Follow Policy 3460 deadlines first; staff expense requests should also meet this policy's 30-day or 60-day deadline as applicable	Policy 3460 approval for the student trip; this policy for staff reimbursement

Late, emergency, or required travel may be approved by the Superintendent or designee when the need for travel could not reasonably have been known before the deadline; when travel is required by law, grant, certification,

athletic/activity association responsibility, student safety, or essential District operations; or when denial would create substantial hardship for the District. When the travel would normally require Board approval, the Superintendent shall report the approval, purpose, and estimated cost to the Board at the next regular meeting.

Board-Level Professional-Development Limit

Unless required by a grant, required for certification or legal compliance, necessary for student supervision under an approved student trip, assigned as a District or association responsibility by the Superintendent, or specifically approved by the Board, an employee may receive District payment or reimbursement for no more than one Board-Level Staff Travel event for professional development, conferences, workshops, or trainings per contracted school year, regardless of funding source.

The Superintendent may further limit the number of employees attending the same event, require carpooling or shared attendance, require virtual attendance when available, or designate one or more employees to attend and share learning with other staff.

Overnight Travel

Approval to attend a meeting, training, conference, workshop, activity, or other District-related event does not automatically authorize overnight lodging, meal reimbursement, per diem, or additional paid travel time. Overnight lodging must be specifically requested and approved in advance.

Overnight lodging may be approved only when the Superintendent or designee determines that at least one of the following applies:

- the event is a multi-day event and returning home each day would not be practical, safe, or cost-effective;
- the destination is more than 100 driving miles from the District Service Center, the employee's normal work location, or the employee's residence, whichever is used for the approved trip, and the official start or end time would require unreasonable or unsafe same-day travel;
- same-day travel would require the employee to leave before 6:00 a.m. or return after 9:00 p.m.;
- weather, road conditions, airline schedules, safety concerns, medical limitations, student-supervision needs, or other documented circumstances make overnight lodging reasonable; or
- the Superintendent or designee determines that lodging is in the District's best interest after considering safety, total cost, schedule, and District operations.

Overnight lodging shall not be approved solely for employee convenience. Lodging must be practical, clean, safe, and reasonable in cost. Conference-site lodging may be approved when it is comparable to or less costly than reasonable alternatives, when transportation savings offset the lodging cost, or when the location is necessary for safety, supervision, or full participation in the event.

Meals and Per Diem

Meal reimbursement or per diem is available only for approved overnight travel, unless the employee or Board Trustee is attending a banquet or official meal as a designated representative of the District and the meal is approved in advance. Meals during same-day travel are not reimbursable.

Meals provided by a conference, hotel, registration fee, sponsor, grant, or other source shall reduce or eliminate the meal reimbursement for that meal period. Choosing not to eat a provided meal does not create a reimbursable expense. Employees are expected to take advantage of meals provided by program sponsors, conferences, hotels, trade shows, and similar sources.

Meal reimbursement shall not exceed the following District maximums unless the Board adopts a different rate schedule. These categories are for meal-rate purposes only and do not determine approval level:

Meal	Idaho destination maximum	Outside Idaho destination maximum
Breakfast	\$16.00	\$16.00
Lunch	\$19.00	\$19.00
Dinner	\$28.00	\$31.00
Daily total	\$63.00	\$66.00

For federally funded travel, grant-funded travel, or travel subject to another applicable rate, the District shall apply the lower of the District rate, the approved trip budget, the State Travel Policy rate, the federal/GSA rate when required, or any grant-specific limit. Per diem does not require meal receipts. Actual-cost meal reimbursement, when approved instead of per diem, requires itemized receipts and may not exceed the applicable maximums.

Documentation of Expenses

Before reimbursement of approved travel expenses, the District employee or Board Trustee must submit receipts or other documentation sufficient for the Business Office to verify the expense, date, amount, and District-related purpose.

For staff and Board travel, receipts, travel expense forms, vouchers, and related documentation shall be submitted to the District Business Office, unless the Business Office directs otherwise. Staff travel connected to approved student travel shall follow this policy for employee reimbursement, but receipts and documentation for student travel accounts, student activity funds, or trip-related student expenses shall be submitted to the building bookkeeper in accordance with District student travel and accounting procedures.

The Business Office may request additional documentation when needed to verify the public purpose, reasonableness, or allowability of an expense.

Claims should be submitted within 10 business days after return and no later than 30 calendar days after return, unless an earlier fiscal-year deadline applies or the Business Office approves a documented exception. Expenses not submitted in accordance with this policy or District procedure may be denied.

Failure to provide a detailed receipt or required written approval will make the expense non-reimbursable unless the Superintendent or Board, as applicable, finds exceptional circumstances. Written documentation explaining the exceptional circumstances shall be maintained as part of the District record of the claim.

Student Travel Alignment

This policy does not independently authorize student travel. A staff travel request connected to student travel shall not be treated as approval of the student trip. Policy 3460 controls student-trip approval, educational rationale, safety and welfare review, student transportation, chaperone requirements, parent/guardian permission, fundraising, student conduct, student medical planning, student-trip cancellation, and report of trip conclusion.

When Policy 3460 requires Board approval for student travel further than 300 miles from Rupert, Idaho, the student-trip proposal must be approved under Policy 3460 before staff expenses connected to that trip may be paid or reimbursed under this policy. Staff members shall not transport students in private vehicles when Policy 3460 prohibits such transportation.

Prepaid expenses for employees accompanying students on an official school-sponsored trip may be arranged only with Superintendent authorization, through the District travel coordinator or Business Office, and only after applicable Policy 3460 requirements have been met or are scheduled for timely Board review. Student-trip deadlines in Policy 3460 are not shortened by this policy.

Non-Reimbursable and Restricted Expenses

- Travel or expenses not approved before the expense is incurred, except documented emergency or required travel approved by the Superintendent or designee;
- Alcohol, bar expenses, entertainment, movies, in-room food or snacks, room service, personal telephone calls, personal travel, personal upgrades, seat upgrades, fines, traffic or parking violations, health facility fees, personal amenities, and other personal expenses;
- Meal costs when the meal is provided by a conference, hotel, sponsor, registration fee, grant, or other source;
- Meals for travel that does not include an approved overnight stay, except approved District-representation banquets or official meals;
- Mileage when the employee chooses a personal vehicle after a District vehicle or approved carpool seat has been made available, unless the Superintendent or designee approves an exception before travel;
- Additional lodging, meals, mileage, paid time, or other costs caused by personal preference, personal travel, or the employee's choice to drive when air travel is the approved lower-cost or more practical option; and
- Any expense that exceeds the State Travel Policy, federal award rules, District rate schedule, approved trip budget, or another more restrictive applicable rule.

Classified Staff Payroll and Travel Time

Overtime, compensatory time, stipends, or other compensation for classified staff during travel must be submitted and approved in accordance with Policy 594.00, Classified Staff Payroll, applicable wage and hour requirements, and any applicable employment agreement. Approval of travel is not approval of overtime or additional compensation unless specifically authorized in writing.

When an employee elects to drive instead of using approved air travel, any additional time needed for automobile travel beyond the time that would have been reasonably necessary for air travel may be charged to annual leave, unpaid leave, or other leave as approved by the supervisor and consistent with law and District policy.

Implementation Procedure

Travel Request Form and Approval Workflow

The District Business Office shall maintain travel procedures, forms, rate schedules, and approval workflows consistent with this policy. The current Travel Request Form or successor form shall be used for reimbursed travel, prepaid expenses, per diem, shuttle, baggage, airfare, lodging, registration, District vehicle reservations, and other District-paid travel costs.

The employee shall provide the necessary information to the building, department, or District Travel Coordinator so an accurate travel request may be completed. The employee remains responsible for the accuracy of the information, compliance with the approved itinerary and budget, and timely submission of receipts and post-trip reporting. Travel arrangements shall generally be made by the building, department, or District Travel Coordinator, not independently by the employee.

The request must be approved by the immediate supervisor, funding administrator when applicable, Superintendent or designee, and Board when Board approval is required. Once approved, the request shall be sent to the Business Office for processing and travel arrangements. No reimbursement for per diem, shuttle, baggage, airfare, lodging, registration, or other travel cost will be made without a completed and approved travel request unless a documented emergency exception is approved by the Superintendent or designee.

Routine Meetings and Notice-Only Travel

Administrators attending regularly scheduled Regional Staff Travel state or regional meetings do not need to complete a travel request form unless requesting reimbursement, per diem, prepaid expense, District vehicle reservation, substitute cost, or other District-paid expense; however, they must notify the Superintendent in advance and minimize travel costs.

Principals, coaches, athletic directors, and activity directors attending official association business, including IHSAA-related responsibilities, must notify their supervisor in advance. A travel request form is required if reimbursement, per diem, prepaid expense, District vehicle reservation, substitute cost, or other District-paid expense is requested. In all cases, employees shall share rides when possible and otherwise minimize travel costs.

Lodging Procedure

- Rooms should be practical, safe, clean, and reasonable in cost. Extravagant or overly expensive lodging shall be avoided.
- Exceptions may be approved for lodging at the hotel where the program, seminar, conference, or student-supervision obligation is held when the location is reasonable and cost-effective in light of schedule, safety, transportation, and participation needs.
- Employees shall request sales-tax exemption for in-state lodging when applicable.
- Original itemized lodging receipts must show the dates of stay, daily rate, taxes, and separate charges. Credit-card receipts alone are not acceptable documentation.
- The District will not pay for extra items added to the lodging bill, including phone calls, health facility fees, meals, water, movies, in-room food or snacks, room service, and other incidentals. Internet or connectivity charges may be reimbursed only when required for work assignments and approved.

Meal Procedure

- Meal reimbursement is based on the approved overnight travel period away from the employee's normal workstation.
- Meal reimbursement will not exceed the District meal schedule or applicable lower rate.

- Meals included in conference registration, lodging, sponsorship, or another source must be deducted from the meal allowance.
- Meals are not covered for travel that does not constitute an approved overnight stay. If lunch is not provided as part of a same-day full-day conference or workshop, the District will not reimburse lunch unless a separate approved banquet or official representative meal exception applies.
- Alcohol and bar expenses are not reimbursable under any circumstance.

Transportation Procedure

- District vehicles shall be used instead of personal vehicles whenever available and practical. If a District vehicle is used, mileage must be clearly documented on the vehicle mileage log.
- When multiple employees attend the same event, a District vehicle shall be used if available; if not available, all reasonable efforts to carpool shall be made. The director or administrator over the funding source may determine how many employees or vehicles will be reimbursed for mileage.
- If an employee chooses to use a personal vehicle when a District vehicle is scheduled to go to the event and there is room available in the District vehicle, the employee will not receive mileage reimbursement unless the Superintendent or designee approves an exception before travel.
- Mileage reimbursement for approved personal vehicle use shall use the District-approved mileage rate. In January of each year, the mileage reimbursement rate shall be updated to the Federal mileage rate unless the Board adopts a different District rate.
- Mileage reimbursement shall not exceed the mileage reported between cities and towns on the District Mileage Chart or the approved route. Mileage should be calculated from the District Service Center in Rupert, the employee's official work location, or the employee's permanent residence, whichever results in the lowest reasonable mileage to the approved destination, unless the Superintendent or designee approves a different calculation that benefits the District.
- When air travel is the most appropriate or cost-effective means of travel, the District will pay for the cost of one round-trip coach or basic economy-equivalent airline ticket for each employee approved to travel. A person choosing to drive instead will be paid the lesser of the approved mileage reimbursement or the cost of one round-trip coach airline ticket to the same destination.
- In no instance will mileage reimbursement exceed the cost of an airline coach ticket when airfare is the approved comparable method. If more than one employee travels by car, reimbursement shall not exceed the cost of the appropriate number of coach airline tickets or the approved number of vehicles, whichever is less.
- The traveler must document the cost comparison when choosing to drive instead of fly. Meals and lodging caused by choosing to drive shall be allowed only within the time frame that would have been necessary for air travel unless an exception is approved in advance.
- Air travel allowance is limited to coach, basic economy-equivalent, or the least expensive reasonable fare that meets District schedule and safety needs. Air travel arrangements shall be made by the District Travel Coordinator or designee. Airfare purchased directly by an employee is not reimbursable unless the Superintendent or designee approved the purchase method before the expense was incurred.
- Cab fare, bus fare, shuttle, baggage, parking, tolls, or economy-class rental vehicles to and from airports, hotels, or required work locations may be reimbursed when reasonable, necessary, approved, and supported by receipts. Cab fare is authorized only when no other reasonable transportation is available. Rental cars should be economy class unless a larger vehicle is needed for multiple employees, student-supervision needs, equipment, accessibility, safety, or other documented District purpose.

Registration Fees and Prepaid Expenses

A purchase order or approved District payment process must be used by the department, building, or District Travel Coordinator before submission to the Business Office to pay registration fees. Once approved, fees may be paid using a District credit card or other approved payment method.

Advanced per diem payment may be issued only for Board-Level Staff Travel or travel that includes more than two overnight stays, unless the Superintendent or designee approves an exception for documented extenuating circumstances. All other travel expenses will be reimbursed after travel upon submission and approval of required documentation.

With authorization from the Superintendent or designee, employees accompanying students on official school-sponsored trips may arrange for prepaid employee or chaperone expenses through the District travel coordinator or Business Office. Student-trip approval and student-related trip expenses must comply with Policy 3460.

Post-Trip Reporting and Sharing of Learning

Employees attending conferences, workshops, trainings, or professional-development events with any District payment or reimbursement are expected to share what they learned with their department, grade-level team, building staff, District staff, Superintendent, or Board as appropriate. The request should identify when and to whom this report will be made. The report should generally occur within 30 calendar days after the employee returns.

The Superintendent or designee may require a written summary, copies of materials, staff presentation, Board report, or implementation plan as a condition of approval or reimbursement.

Cancellation, Failure to Attend, and District-Initiated Cancellation

Once a travel request has been approved and costs have been incurred, the employee must immediately notify the building, department, or District Travel Coordinator if the employee cannot attend or if the itinerary changes.

An employee may be responsible for avoidable costs caused by voluntary cancellation, failure to provide prompt notice, failure to follow the approved process, or personal changes to the approved itinerary. The Superintendent or designee may waive employee responsibility when cancellation is caused by illness, family emergency, weather, safety, District operational need, event cancellation, or other circumstances beyond the employee's reasonable control.

The Superintendent or designee may cancel District travel due to weather, safety, world events, public health concerns, road conditions, event changes, fiscal concerns, or local school need when cancellation is reasonably cautious, prudent, or necessary for effective District operations. For student trips, Policy 3460 also governs cancellation and financial responsibility for students and parents/guardians.

Travel Costs Under Federal Award

Travel costs under a federal award are expenses for transportation, lodging, subsistence, and related items incurred by employees who are in travel status on official business of a grant recipient or subrecipient. Such costs may be charged on an actual cost basis, on a per diem or mileage basis, or on a combination of those methods, provided the method is applied to an entire trip and not selected days of the trip and the charges are consistent with the District's written travel reimbursement policy for comparable non-federally funded activities.

Costs incurred by employees and officers for travel, including lodging, subsistence, and incidental expenses, shall be considered reasonable and otherwise allowable only to the extent those costs do not exceed charges normally allowed by the District in its regular operations under this policy. If the costs are charged directly to the federal award, the District shall maintain documentation justifying that:

1. Participation of the individual is necessary to the federal award; and
2. The costs are reasonable and consistent with this policy and any related procedures.

Temporary dependent-care costs above and beyond regular dependent care that directly result from travel to conferences may be allowable only when the costs are a direct result of the individual's travel for the federal award, are consistent with this policy and any related procedures, and are temporary, lasting only during the travel period. Travel costs for dependents are unallowable, except for travel of duration of six months or more with prior approval of the federal awarding agency.

In the absence of an established written policy regarding travel costs, rates and amounts established under applicable federal travel and subsistence rules must apply to travel under federal awards. Because this policy establishes written District rates and limits, federally funded travel shall follow the District policy unless a stricter federal or grant-specific rule applies.

Commercial airfare costs in excess of basic, coach, or the least expensive reasonable accommodations class offered by commercial airlines are unallowable except when such accommodations would require circuitous routing, require travel during unreasonable hours, excessively prolong travel, result in additional costs that would offset the transportation savings, or offer accommodations not reasonably adequate for the traveler's documented medical needs. The District must justify and document such conditions on a case-by-case basis.

Travel costs by District-owned, leased, or chartered aircraft, if any, include the cost of the lease, charter, operation, personnel, maintenance, depreciation, insurance, and related costs. The portion of these costs that

exceeds the cost of allowable commercial airfare is unallowable under a federal award unless specifically authorized by applicable federal rules.

Administration, Audit, and Supersession

The Superintendent or designee shall administer this policy, maintain current forms and procedures, and may issue additional guidance consistent with this policy. The Business Office shall review claims for compliance before payment. The District may deny, reduce, or recover reimbursement for expenses that are unsupported, unapproved, unreasonable, personal, excessive, or inconsistent with this policy.

Upon adoption, this policy supersedes and replaces Policy 546.00 Staff Travel and Procedure 546.00P Staff Travel Procedure. References in District forms, handbooks, or procedures to Policy 546.00 or 546.00P shall be treated as references to this Policy 7430 until those documents are updated.

Legal References

Idaho Code Section 33-701	Fiscal Year - Payment and Accounting of Funds
2 C.F.R. Section 200.475	Travel Costs under Federal Awards
State of Idaho Controller's Office	State Travel Policy
ISBA Policy Services	Model Policy 7430, Travel Allowances and Expenses

Cross References

Code	Description
1420	Trustee Expenses
3460	School-Related Foreign and Extended Travel by Students
594.00	Classified Staff Payroll