



Out of District Conference Attendance Process

- The first step for conference attendance is approval from an immediate supervisor and the Director of Teaching and Learning. The Out of District Conference Approval Form and conference agenda must be attached to documentation in iVisions.
 - **Attendance to events and/or conferences will be denied if not pre-approved.**
 - Please note that in providing this professional learning opportunity, the District must be fiscally responsible with federal funds. Therefore, the District has specific guidelines about paying for actual and necessary expenses incurred by the employee while on official District business.
 - **No travel arrangements, hotel stays, conference trips, or meals should be purchased prior to approval. The district will not reimburse or be held responsible for payments and/or deposits made prior to approval.**
 - There are specific guidelines outlined in this document should an employee choose to take family member(s).
 - Plan at least 6 weeks in advance to ensure all travel arrangements, accommodations, and payments are completed successfully.
 - Please avoid using Expedia or booking.com or other discount websites for securing hotels or flights due to their cancellation policies. **Employees who choose to use these discount websites assume responsibility for any issues that may arise.**
 - Conference travel in June or July needs to be pre-approved by the Business Office to ensure reimbursements can be made in the correct fiscal year.
- Approval and securing a substitute (if needed)
 - Employees must fill out the Out of District Conference Approval Form and submit the form to their immediate supervisor for approval.
 - The Out of District Conference Approval Form will then need to go to the Department of Teaching and Learning to determine appropriateness and funding
 - The employee will need to enter the absence into AESOP under Prof. Dev. Training.
 - This will ensure a substitute is secured
 - This will document the absence and PD
- Conference registration expenses
 - If the employee is not pre-registered, the employee completes the conference registration form and gives it to the building secretary along with the conference agenda and Out of District Conference Approval Form.
 - The secretary completes the requisition process by attaching the conference registration form, conference agenda, and Out of District Conference Approval Form in iVisions requesting payment to be mailed directly to the conference for the registration fees.
 - If the employee pre-registers, the employee submits the invoice, conference registration form, Out of District Conference Approval Form, and conference agenda to the building secretary to process for payment.

- The secretary completes the requisition process by attaching the invoice, conference registration form, conference agenda, and Out of District Conference Approval Form in iVisions requesting payment to be mailed directly to the conference for the registration fees.
- If the conference will only accept a credit card for registration, the employee will pay for it using a personal credit card and will be reimbursed through the reimbursement process after returning from the conference.
- If employee is attempting to register and registration can only be completed by entering a PO, please give this information, along with the partially completed registration form, Out of District Conference Approval Form, and conference agenda to the school secretary. When the PO is complete, the secretary will receive a copy of the PO and the employee can enter the PO number and complete the registration. When the invoice is sent to the employee, it should be sent to Accounts Payable for payment.

****It is the expectation that the employee will discuss all travel arrangements with their supervisor prior to booking hotel and flights.****

- Securing and paying for hotel accommodations
 - If an overnight stay is required, the employee will need to book a hotel. Overnight stays are allowable when the event is **over 75 miles** from the District. **Lodging for stays closer than 75 miles need prior approval from the Superintendent.**
 - There are two ways to secure and pay for a hotel.
 - The first option is the District can prepay for a hotel. However, the employee will need to book the hotel, which consists of reserving the room with a credit card. For most hotels, the credit card is NOT charged anything; it is just used to hold the reservation. Please read through all documentation about payment as some hotels will not accept payment via District check.
 - Once the room is booked, the hotel will send an email confirmation. The secretary enters the total hotel bill, Out of District Conference Form, and conference agenda into iVisions as a requisition requesting an *out of line* check to be mailed directly to the hotel. Be sure the confirmation indicates all costs including taxes.
 - The second option is to book the hotel, pay for it with a personal credit card and upon return from the trip, submit the documentation for reimbursement. **If you choose this option and your reimbursement request amount is more than your approved estimate on the Out of District Conference Approval Form, you will be reimbursed the approved cost.**
 - Upon checkout, employees need to obtain an invoice stating their **balance is \$0**. This will be entered with the remaining requests in iVisions.
- Mileage reimbursement
 - When appropriate, employees traveling by car are expected to carpool. The driver will be able to claim mileage to and from the conference. The mileage is reimbursed at the current federal IRS rate.
 - **Mileage is calculated from the school building (not the home address) to the conference.**
 - Please note per Board Policy 5:60, the least expensive mode of transportation shall be used (airfare vs. car). **Consider parking and mileage to the airport as part of**

airfare cost. If you have questions about this, please contact the Business Office.

• Meal reimbursement

- If meals are covered through the conference, meals will not be reimbursed.
- Full day travel will be paid at a daily per diem rate of \$60.00. Meal receipts are not required.
- The District shall not reimburse for tips and gratuities in excess of 20%.
- Partial days will be reimbursed at the per meal rate listed below.

| <u>Meals</u> | <u>Depart Before</u> | <u>Return After</u> | <u>Amount</u> |
|--------------|----------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| Breakfast | 6:00 AM | 11:00 AM | \$10.00 |
| Lunch | 11:00 AM | 2:00 PM | \$15.00 |
| Dinner | 5:00 PM | 8:00 PM | \$35.00 |

- *Per IRS guidelines, meals will be reimbursed for trips requiring overnight stay. Day trips will be reimbursed as applicable per Board Policy 5:60 with itemized receipts*

• Airfare expenses

- If airfare is necessary for the conference, the employee will need to book flights through the local Atlas travel agency (217-429-2929). They will assist with finding and securing flights. The secretary enters the total bill, Out of District Conference Form, and conference agenda into iVisions as a requisition requesting an *out of line* check to be mailed directly to Atlas.
 - *In the event the employee is unable to attend the conference, they may be responsible for reimbursing the District for the cost of the flight.*
 - *In the event the employee changes the flight departure or arrival time thus resulting in additional cost or fees, the employee may be responsible for those expenses.*
 - Please note per Board Policy 5:60, the least expensive mode of transportation (airfare vs. car) shall be used. **Consider parking and mileage to the airport as part of airfare cost. If you have questions about this, please contact the Business Office.**

• Miscellaneous expenses

- If there are miscellaneous expenses such as tolls, taxi/shuttle from airport to hotel and back, baggage fees, etc., the employee must obtain a receipt and submit it as documentation to be reimbursed.
- The District shall not reimburse for tips and gratuities in excess of 20%.
- See the conference expense reimbursement form for a full list of allowable and non-allowable miscellaneous expenses.

- Reimbursement process

- Within 10 days of returning from the conference, each employee must fill out a conference expense reimbursement form and submit it in iVisions, with an **official agenda, hotel receipt with zero balance, Out of District Conference Approval Form, and any other supporting documents**. Failure to submit the reimbursement request in a timely manner may result in a delayed or loss of reimbursement to the employee.
- Conference expense reimbursement forms can be found on the District website.
- **Completed employee reimbursements that are submitted and receive final approval by the 20th of the month will be processed for payment that month and a direct deposit will be released after the first Board of Education meeting the following month. Employee reimbursements received after the 20th of the month become a monthly bill payable typically in 6-8 weeks.**
- Link to iVisions: <https://tyler-decaturschooldistrict61il.okta.com/>

- Traveling with family members

- Please remember this is a professional learning opportunity the District is providing for the employee. It is not a vacation. The District cannot cover excess or luxury expenses.
- Reimbursed items should represent actual and necessary monies expended and incurred by the *employee* while on District business, *absolutely no expenses incurred by the family members are reimbursable*.

- Travel dates

- Employees may travel one day ahead for a conference that starts before 5:00pm the next day.
- Employees may return the day after a conference if the conference ends after 1:00pm.

Decatur Public Schools
Request for Approval for Out of District Conference & Travel

Instructions: This form along with the conference agenda must be submitted at least six weeks prior to the conference registration deadline. This form will be returned if it is not filled out completely.

Print Your Name Clearly _____

Name of School or Department _____

Name of Conference _____

Provider _____

Location _____

Date(s) _____

Brief Description

Conference Website

Expenses

| | <u>ESTIMATED COST</u> | <u>APPROVED COST</u> |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Registration Fee..... | \$ _____ | \$ _____ |
| Transportation/Mileage..... | \$ _____ | \$ _____ |
| Lodging Per Night \$ _____ | Total \$ _____ | \$ _____ |
| Meal Reimbursement..... | \$ _____ | \$ _____ |
| Total Cost | \$ _____ | \$ _____ |

Is a Substitute Required? ____ Yes or ____ No

**Approved cost filled out by Director of T&L*

Staff Member's Signature: _____
Signature *Date*

Principal/Supervisor: _____
Signature *Date*

Director of Teaching and Learning: _____
Signature *Date*