

## **BOARD MEMBER COMPENSATION AND EXPENSES**

*Policy Code:*

**1330**

---

### **A. COMPENSATION**

Watauga County Board of Education (the “board”) members will be compensated for the performance of official school system business. The amount of compensation will be established according to applicable laws.

### **B. EXPENSES FOR CONFERENCES, CONVENTIONS, AND OTHER BOARD DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES**

Subject to budgetary limitations, the board will defray reasonable out-of-pocket expenses incurred by board members for professional and board development. In accordance with policy 1323, Board Member Opportunities for Development, funds for board member participation in development activities will be budgeted annually. The board chair will monitor expenditures to ensure that expenditures do not exceed the funds allocated in the budget.

#### **1. Authorization to Attend Professional and Board Development**

All professional and board development expenses to be paid with school system funds must support school system objectives and be reasonable in cost.

Board members’ use of school system funds to attend professional development shall be authorized through a blanket authorization form signed by the board chair

Board members who attend a conference, convention, or other professional development activity will provide a report of the event to other board members.

#### **2. Reimbursable Expenses**

The board intends that its members exercise good judgment in incurring travel expenses when pursuing professional and board development opportunities. Members are expected to exercise the same care in incurring expenses that a prudent person would exercise if traveling on personal business and expending personal funds. School system funds are not to be used to pay excess costs or additional expenses that are for the convenience or personal preference of a board member or to pay for expenses incurred by family members or other guests of a board member.

School system funds may be used to pay the following expenses incurred by a board member for attendance at an approved conference, convention, or other professional development activity.

a. Conference Registration Fees

The board will pay registration fees for approved conferences and other events. Ordinarily, registration is arranged through the superintendent's office and prepaid. If not prepaid, registration fees will be reimbursed in accordance with the requirements of subsection D.1.

b. Lodging Expense

Hotel reservations will be scheduled through the superintendent's office. Hotel expenses not prepaid will be reimbursed in accordance with the requirement of subsection D.1. The allowance for lodging will be limited to reasonable actual and necessary expenses. A board member sharing a room with a family member or guest will be limited to the single occupancy rate. Tips for room service, valet, and other hotel services are not reimbursable. Personal services available at the hotel, such as spa services, laundry, child care, and other personal services, are not reimbursable.

c. Meals

The total daily allowance for meals while traveling overnight on official school system business will be limited to the current state allowances. No reimbursement will be provided for meals for family members or other guests of the board member. Alcoholic beverages are not reimbursable.

d. Travel by Private Vehicle

Mileage for out-of-county travel will be reimbursed at the current state rate, using the board member's home as the origination point. Parking fees and tolls are also reimbursable. Reimbursement for travel within Watauga County shall be paid through the supplement approved by the Board.

e. Air Travel

If air travel is necessary, airline reservations will be scheduled through the superintendent's office and paid by the school system in advance. Reservations will be for coach fare only. Airline reservations for traveling companions may be booked at the same time if the board member provides a personal credit card or makes other advance arrangements with the finance officer for personal payment. Taxi or other reasonable and necessary transportation fees for travel to and from airports are reimbursable. Rental car fees will be reimbursed when it is more reasonable to rent a car than to use a taxi or other transportation option.

3. Personal Expenses

All other travel and related expenses not covered in these guidelines, including, but not limited to, expenses for laundry, entertainment, between meal snacks, pet boarding, and toiletries or other personal items, are considered personal expenses and are not reimbursable.

4. Cancelled Trips and Missed Events

If a board member cancels a trip or otherwise fails to attend an event for which the school system has prepaid or incurred other expense, the board member is responsible for reimbursing the school system for all funds advanced or expended on the member's behalf, including any cancellation fees.

A board member will not be required to reimburse the school system for expenses paid on the member's behalf if the member is not able to travel because of a medical emergency or death in the immediate family or an emergency work situation.

**C. OTHER BUSINESS EXPENSES**

1. Purchase of Merchandise or Products

Board members should not ordinarily find it necessary to purchase merchandise or other products to carry out official school business. In circumstances when it is reasonable for a board member to make such a purchase, the member should notify the board chair and superintendent in advance of any purchase in an amount greater than \$50. Requests for reimbursement for the expenditure of personal funds for merchandise or other products must follow the procedures established in subsection D.1 below, and any additional procedures requested by the finance officer.

2. Other Expenses Incurred in the Conduct of Official Board Business

The board chair may approve reimbursement of other reasonable and necessary business expenses incurred by board members. The vice-chair may approve reimbursement of other reasonable and necessary business expenses incurred by the board chair. All reimbursements will be made in accordance with subsection D.1, below.

**D. PROCESS FOR REIMBURSEMENT, TRAVEL ADVANCES, AND LIABILITY INSURANCE**

1. Reimbursements

Board members will be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses incurred in the performance of their duties as provided in Sections B and C. All reimbursements

are contingent upon funds available.

Board members should submit requests for reimbursement, along with documentation of the expenses, within 60 days of incurring the expenses.

All claims for reimbursement of expenses must (1) be in writing, itemized, and supported with original detailed receipts, except that no receipt is required for meals that will be reimbursed at the state-approved flat rates; (2) document the official school business purpose for which the expenses were incurred; (3) be signed by the board member; and (4) be approved by the board chair (or vice-chair for requests submitted by the board chair). Claims for reimbursement of expenses that required prior approval must also include a copy of the prior written approval. Claims related to attendance at a conference, convention, or other board development activity must also include a copy of the event agenda if meal reimbursement is being requested. Claims involving an event hosted by a board member must also include a list of the individuals in attendance.

## 2. Liability Insurance

Board members shall be covered by professional and general liability insurance in the minimum amount of \$1,000,000 annual aggregate per claim.

Legal References: G.S. 115C-38; 138-6; 153A-92

Cross References: Board Member Opportunities for Development (policy 1323), Employee Travel and Other Expense Reimbursement (policy 7650)

Other Resources: *North Carolina Budget Manual*, Section 5 (Office of State Budget and Management), available at <https://www.osbm.nc.gov/budget/budget-manual>

Adopted: October 12, 2015

Revised: July 11, 2016; December 12, 2022 (Legal references only)

Replaces: Board policy 1.02, Membership of the Board (in part)