

WATAUGA COUNTY SCHOOLS EMPLOYEE TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT GUIDELINES

Purpose: To provide specific guidelines concerning travel reimbursement expenses.

Following are some of the more common guidelines relative to expenditures which are reimbursable as allowed under Policy Number 7650 in the Watauga County Board of Education Policy Manual. This should not be considered as being “all inclusive”; if you are confronted with a questionable expenditure, please contact the Finance Office for clarification prior to commitment.

As stated in the State Budget Manual, “An employee traveling on official business is expected to exercise the same care in incurring expenses that a prudent person would exercise if traveling on personal business expending personal funds. Excess costs, circuitous routes, delays or luxury accommodations and services unnecessary or unjustified in the performance of official business are not acceptable under this standard. Employees will be responsible for unauthorized costs and any additional expenses incurred for personal preference or convenience.”

For travel involving mileage only, please use the Mileage Only Form. For all other reimbursement requests, please use the State Travel Form. For the most up-to-date forms, please visit <http://www.watauga.k12.nc.us/>.

- All reimbursement requests must have an approved Prior Approval Form attached to cover any out-of-county travel. *The purpose of the Prior Approval Form is to obtain supervisor approval prior to incurring estimated expenses.*
- Reimbursement for overnight lodging must be substantiated by a receipt showing payment and indicating a zero balance due.
- Reimbursement for meals:

Meals will be reimbursable at the current State Budget Manual per diem rates. *Actual times of departure and return must be indicated on the reimbursement request. No receipts are necessary but agendas must be submitted for meal reimbursement requests.*

The destination must be located at least 35 miles from the employee's regularly assigned duty station or home, whichever is less, to receive approved reimbursement.

Employees may be reimbursed for meals for partial days of travel when in overnight travel status and the partial day is the day of departure or the day of return.

Breakfast: depart duty station prior to 6:00 am and extend the workday by 2 hours.

Lunch: depart duty station prior to 10:00 am (departure day) or return to duty station after 2:00 pm (return day). Allowances cannot be paid to employees for lunches if travel does not involve an overnight stay.

Dinner: depart duty station prior to 4:00 pm (departure day) or return to duty station after 8:00 pm (return day) and extend the workday by 3 hours.

- If there is not a county vehicle available for use, the use of a personal vehicle for official business is reimbursable at the current Internal Revenue Service standard mileage rate. If there is a county vehicle available for use but the employee chooses not to use the county vehicle, the use of an employee's personal vehicle will be reimbursable at a reduced rate.
- Parking fees and gas purchases (only if required) are reimbursable and only if receipts are submitted.
- All reimbursement requests must have **original signatures** of claimant and appropriate approving authority. All receipts and agendas must be attached. The purpose of the agenda is to determine eligibility for meals. *If there was not an agenda provided for the event, a statement by the claimant will be required to document provided meals.*
- All travel reimbursement requests must be submitted by the 10th of the month to be paid that month and can cover up to two prior months. For example, expenses for a workshop occurring on a given day in September 2016 must be claimed by November 10, 2016.