

## Background:

The school district appropriates funds for legal purposes in accordance with section 44.105 and section 44.030 of the Texas Education Code. Travel is included in the list of allowed purposes for public funds. In order for travel to be eligible under this section, it must meet one of the following purposes: IT MUST .... (1) further the knowledge and skill of its workforce; and (2) represent the district's interests.

The Texas Education Agency provides guidance for the handling and monitoring of travel expenditures under the FASRG Module. Under this module the district is required to maintain a system of internal controls to adhere to federal and state travel policies and allowable per diems under grant guidelines.

The district is also allowed to establish local policies and procedures for any expenditure above and beyond the maximum allowable costs under the grant guidelines. Circular A-87 of the federal government's Cost of allowable expenditures outlines the allowable costs.

In an effort to maximize resources and utilize sound fiscal planning, the school district has developed financial guidelines. These are reviewed annually and updated for changes in federal and state requirements as well as local policies. These are available in the district's website ([www.laredoisd.org/financialguidelines](http://www.laredoisd.org/financialguidelines))

Supplemental to these guidelines, the district has developed standards and criteria for the approval of out of district travel (in-state and out-of-state).

All district staff is required to adhere to the financial guidelines, criteria and standards listed below for travel.

## Source of Policy:

- CH Legal
- Chapter 44 of the Texas Education Code
- CH Local Board Policies
- Financial Guidelines  
[www.laredoisd.org/financialguidelines](http://www.laredoisd.org/financialguidelines)

## Required Documents

- Travel Forms
- Financial Guidelines (Authorization and reconciliation)
- Supporting documentation for travel request

## Travel Criteria:

1. In order for travel to be eligible for appropriation, it should BE (1) necessary or mandated by federal, state or local laws, (2) eligible for appropriation AND (3) adequately approved through the LISD travel authorization levels.
2. Necessary: The term *necessary* in this context is defined to be a requirement for the achievement of a district goal and objective.
3. Mandated: The term *mandated* in this context is defined to be a requirement of law, agreement or administrative directive.
4. Eligible for appropriation: This term *eligible for appropriation* is defined as the travel being able to further the knowledge and skill of the LISD workforce OR to represent the district's interests.
5. Duly approved: The term *duly approved* in this context is defined as having documentary evidence of approval from his or her immediate supervisor in accordance with allowable standards for travel.
6. Travel paid by an outside agency or the employee (i.e. TEA, etc) may be approved in accordance with the levels of authorization.
7. The Superintendent may assign an employee to attend a conference, seminar or meeting at any of the following levels of authorization. This assignment will not be utilized as a measure to meet any of the levels of authorization.
8. Modifications, exceptions and-or other alternatives to the travel policies may be made in writing by the Superintendent at any time.

9. Employee Travel paid by District Funds shall be approved as follows:

**In-State Travel**

- a. Initiated by employee
- b. Approved by Supervisor
- c. If Applicable approved by Principal or Director
- d. Approved by Program Director (if paid from grant funds)
- e. Verified for funds availability and approved by Finance

**Out-of-State Travel**

Same as in-state above and Superintendent's Approval

**Out-of-the Country Travel**

Same as in-state above and Superintendent's Approval

10. Levels of Authorization.

Level of Authorization for travel: The term Level of authorization for travel in this context is defined as meeting the criteria for travel for an authorized FTE (position).

Every FTE will be assigned a level of authorization to be eligible for travel. These levels will include the following:

	<u>FTE</u>	<u>Approved for:</u>
Level 1	Superintendent Board	Board authorized As needed
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Level 2	Administrative Assistant, Assistant Superintendent, CFO, Executive Directors PG 10 and 11	

Criteria

- Superintendent may approve staff attending an out-of-state conference once every three years
- Superintendent may approve staff attending in-state conferences once every two years
- Staff must be currently working in the related subject area or be responsible for the subject area for which they are requesting travel
- Staff that has provided written notice of resignation or retirement may not travel with district funds

Type of Travel

- A. One (1) out-of-state every three years

- B1. Mid Winter TASB and/or Fall TASA (In-state conference)
- B2. One (1) In-State conference in one educational field only every two years
- C. Seminars in their professional function (as needed)
- D. Region One meetings (as needed)
- E. Special Meetings and events as approved by Superintendent Or Supervisor or required by TEA or Grant

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Level 3 Directors in PG 6 to 9  
and all Principals in PG 6 to 10

Criteria

- Supervisor must rotate staff attending an out-of-state conference once every three years
- Supervisor must rotate staff attending in-state conference once every two years
- Staff must be currently working in the related subject area or be responsible for the subject area for which they are requesting travel
- Staff that has provided written notice of resignation or retirement may not travel with district funds

Type of Travel

- A. One (1)out-of-state every three years
- B. One (1) in-state conference in one educational field only every two years
- C. Seminars in their professional function (as needed)
- D. Region One meetings (as needed)
- E. Special Meetings and events as approved by Superintendent or Supervisor or required by TEA or Grant

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Level 4 Coordinator, Assistant Principal  
(Admin PG 1 to 5)

Criteria

- Supervisor must rotate staff attending an out-of-state conference once every three years
- Supervisor must rotate staff attending in-state conferences once every two years
- Staff must be currently working in the related subject area or be responsible for the subject area for which they are requesting travel

- Staff that has provided written notice of resignation or retirement may not travel with district funds

Type of Travel

- A. One (1) out-of-state every three years
- B. One (1) in-State conference in one educational field only every two years
- C. Seminars in their professional function (as needed)
- D. Region One meetings (as needed)
- E. Special Meetings and events as approved by Superintendent Or Supervisor or required by TEA or Grant

Level 5    Teacher, Librarian, Nurse, Counselor OR other personnel on teacher salary schedule

Criteria

- Principal must rotate teacher attending an out-of-state conference once every three years
- Principal must rotate staff attending in-state workshops once every two years
- Staff must be currently working in the related subject area or be responsible for the subject area for which they are requesting travel
- Staff that has provided written notice of resignation or retirement may not travel with district funds

Types of Travel

- A. One (1) out-of-state conference for a school
- B. One (1) in-state conference every two years
- C. Seminars in their professional function (as needed)
- D. Region One meetings (as needed)
- E. Special Meetings and events as approved by Supt. or Supervisor or required by TEA or Grant

Level 6    Para-professionals

Criteria

- Supervisor must rotate staff attending an out-of-state conference once every three years
- Supervisor must rotate staff attending in-state conference once every two years
- Staff must be currently working in the related subject area or be responsible for the subject area for which they are requesting travel

- Staff that has provided written notice of resignation or retirement may not travel with district funds

Type of Travel

- A. One (1) out-of-state every three years
- B. One (1) In-State conference in educational field only every two years
- C. Seminars in their professional function (as needed)
- D. Region One meetings (as needed)
- E. Special Meetings and events as approved by Superintendent Or Supervisor or required by TEA or Grant

**Additional Travel Procedures:**

2. All travel requested must be **duly approved** through the established District chain of command.
3. Any staff traveling is **expected to conduct a workshop or seminar-staff development (in service) to other staff based on learning derived from the seminar or conference attendance either at the campus or department level or district wide.**
4. Seminars and meetings included in the grant agreement as a **condition of award** can be attended by any staff member with supervisor approval and Superintendent if the travel is out of state.
5. Training related to **software or curriculum** that is out of state must be approved by the Superintendent but will not count as a national (out of state) conference. Train the trainer model will apply and every effort must be made to minimize cost.
6. Funds must be **available in the line item** for in-state or out of state travel prior to travel. If there are no funds in the line item, no advance check for travel will be approved.
7. Individuals requesting travel must be **current** with travel procedures in order to travel (i.e. no outstanding receipts).
8. Supervisors should review all travel requests and determine that the cost of the conference or seminar will be **beneficial to the district** and at a reasonable cost (i.e. do not pay for the entire fee for a conference and attend only one day).
9. In an effort to reduce cost, departments and campuses may allow staff **to share lodging** and method of transportation for travel.

10. In-state and out-of-state travel must be reflected in the **campus or department needs assessment** and the campus or department improvement plan.
11. Absolutely **no public funds** will be used for entertainment, alcoholic beverages or travel with no benefit to LISD".
12. **Train the trainer** model should be used for all seminars and workshops to maximize resources.
13. Every effort should be made to attend Region One Seminars or Meetings **virtually** by contacting the Region One Center at the *Laredo Airport location*.
14. It should be noted that an **agenda** should be attached to a travel request for attending any regional meetings for Directors or Coordinators.
15. Agendas that include **entertainment** as the sole purpose of the meeting or conference are deemed to be not necessary and not allowable. If the agenda includes entertainment, it must be incidental to the major educational purpose of the conference or meeting. LISD will not pay any public funds for participating in after-hours entertainment.
16. **Reconciliation** of all travel should be completed within 5 days after the travel. Failure to reconcile outstanding travel may preclude staff from traveling. Any advance travel not reconciled may be deducted from the employee's check. The reconciliation form also includes a space to identify the **benefits derived from the trip**. No additional travel advances will be processed if un-reconciled travel advances are outstanding. Failure to reconcile or provide receipts may result in the travel advance or payment becoming a **personal liability**. (See travel forms).
17. **All travel requests** should also be submitted to the respective Accounting Clerks for budget availability and coding verification. Funds must be available prior to processing. Conference brochure or flyer is required as supporting documentation. If no brochure is available, travel justification form must accompany travel request. All travel requests other than the meals per diem and mileage paid will require receipts. No copies of receipts or faxes will be accepted.
18. Travel requests for **Employees** must follow the **per diem** allowances established annually by the District.
19. **Travel request for Board Members** will be based on reasonable per diem of **\$50** per day for meals. Any

amount above the per diem for meals will require an original receipt. Actual receipts will be required for lodging. Other expenses will require actual receipts. All travel requests and reimbursements will require the Superintendent's review and approval.

20. The employee shall attend as many training sessions as possible at conferences. When multiple sessions are offered at the same time and there is two or more staff members in attendance, plans should be made to provide maximum coverage of the topics presented.
21. The maximum number of hours to be utilized for travel and professional development is **40 hours** per fiscal year. This includes categories A to C. **Exceptions can be approved by the Superintendent.**
22. Travel may not be sponsored by a vendor in violation of any procurement policy, fraud policy, or conflict of interest policy.
23. Donations are allowed from a community member to be used for travel purposes. Donations must be approved by the Chief Financial Officer or the Superintendent.

#### **Accounts Payable Steps:**

As federal and state updates are received, these will be incorporated into the travel policies outlined in the financial guidelines of the district.

For additional travel procedures, please check the website for financial guidelines at [www.laredoisd.org/financialguidelines](http://www.laredoisd.org/financialguidelines)

#### **Forms: (see above)**

See Travel Forms under the Financial Guidelines.

### Matrix of travel information

Type of Travel	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
A. Out of state every 3 years	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
B1. Mid Winter TASA	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
B2. In State conference in one educational Field -every 2 years	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
C. Seminars in professional field	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
D. Region One Meetings	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
E. Special Meetings and events as approved by Supt. and supervisor	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
F. Out of Country	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Type of authorizations					
Level 1 Supt- Board					
Level 2 Admin Assistant Asst. Supt. CFO, Exec Dir. PG 10 and 11					
Level 3 Directors Principals PG 6 to 9					
Level 4 Coordinators Curr. Specialist Asst. Principal PG 1 to 5					
Level 5 Teachers Librarians Counselors Nurses Anyone on teachers salary schedule					
Level 6 Paraprofessional					

These are the categories of travel to be used when using the workflow software. The software will require that an employee uses these combinations only.

- 1) Out of state = A C or E
- 2) Students- Out of state = A C or E
- 3) In State = B, C, D, E
- 4) Students In State = B, C, D, E

