



October 2018

ADMINISTRATIVE MEMORANDUM NUMBER FIFTEEN
CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE AND BUSINESS TRAVEL GUIDELINES

To help promote quality education in Granite School District schools, administrative leaders, teachers, and other district employees are encouraged to participate in professional conferences, developmental activities, District business travel, and other similar events (hereafter, Conferences) which provide opportunities to acquire knowledge, learn from and network with other state and national educational leaders, and keep abreast of new educational developments.

A. Conference Attendance

Participation in Conferences shall be administered according to the following guidelines:

1. General Guidelines

- a. In order to minimize expense, District personnel shall strive to take advantage of Conferences conducted within the state of Utah and the intermountain region. When Conferences are scheduled for multiple locations, District personnel should attend at the nearest geographical site when this minimizes expense and accommodates scheduling concerns.
- b. District personnel shall strive to broaden the collective knowledge base of a school or division and avoid duplication of provided information through carefully selected attendance at Conferences.
- c. Individuals who have key leadership responsibilities, who need to keep current on new information, or who are in positions to provide post-conference services to the District, shall receive priority consideration as travel and Conference requests are reviewed.
- d. Individuals elected to national offices or who are invited by Conference committees to participate as speakers or discussion group leaders shall receive priority consideration as travel and Conference requests are reviewed.
- e. Conference participants are expected to share materials and ideas with co-workers through appropriate staff development opportunities.

- f. When a Conference attracts several people from the District, the appropriate Assistant Superintendent(s) (or designee) shall compare the costs, advantages, and disadvantages of Conference attendance with the costs, advantages, and disadvantages of bringing the program/presenters to the district. The Assistant Superintendent(s) will then decide which option is more feasible and act accordingly.

2. Participation and Selection

a. School Administrators

- i. An annual amount up to \$350 is established for each school principal and assistant principal to be used toward approved Conferences.
- ii. School Administrators may attend no more than one (1) out-of-state Conference annually, unless excepted under section A-3.
- iii. School Administrators are encouraged to attend Conferences which will facilitate professional growth and achievement of the school's improvement plans and goals.
- iv. When requesting to attend a Conference, a School Administrator shall submit all required documents (see below, B. Travel Arrangements and Expenses) to the appropriate School Accountability Services Director for approval at least forty-five (45) days in advance of departure. School Administrators may use up to six (6) Professional Leave days during the school year when students are present. This allows for attendance at a more distant or lengthy Conference as well as some local Conferences.
- v. The annual allocation of \$350 may be accrued up to a maximum of \$1,750 in order to facilitate attendance at more costly or distant Conferences; however, a School Accountability Services Director or Assistant Superintendent may limit the number of School Administrators attending Conferences during any given period of time.
- vi. School Administrators working in the same school are not to attend a Conference simultaneously when students are present in the school.

b. District Administrators

- i. District directors, associate directors, assistant directors, and middle managers shall attend Conferences as determined by District needs and critical issues, while staying within budget limitations. Conference attendance shall be coordinated by the appropriate Assistant Superintendent(s), who will also ensure that any affected department retains adequate coverage at the District.
- ii. District Administrators may attend no more than one (1) out-of-state Conference annually, unless excepted under section A-3.

- iii. When requesting to attend a Conference, a District Administrator shall submit all required documents (see below, B. Travel Arrangements and Expenses) to the appropriate supervisory administrator for approval at least forty-five (45) days in advance of departure.
- c. Classroom Teachers
- i. Classroom Teachers' attendance at Conferences when their students are present in the school is not encouraged and should be closely monitored and limited. When the Conference is deemed vital to the District or the School Improvement plans, the appropriate Assistant Superintendent may grant the Conference request if the available funding will cover both the Conference/travel costs and the substitute teacher costs.
 - ii. Teacher Conference travel shall be approved and allocated based on the teacher's school responsibilities in relationship to the school's needs, goals, and improvement plans.
 - iii. When requesting to attend a Conference, a Classroom Teacher shall submit all required documents (see below, B. Travel Arrangements and Expenses) to the appropriate School Accountability Services Director, through the school principal, for approval at least forty-five (45) days in advance of departure.
- d. Other District Employees
- i. Curriculum specialists, program coordinators, Title I specialists, other selected office staff, and PTA members or designated parents on district related assignments shall attend Conferences as determined by District and school needs and critical issues, while staying within budget limitations. Conference attendance shall be coordinated by the appropriate Assistant Superintendent(s), who will also ensure that any affected department retains adequate coverage at the District.
 - ii. "Other District Employees" may attend no more than one (1) out-of-state Conference every other year, unless excepted under section A-3.
 - iii. When requesting to attend a Conference, an "Other District Employee" shall submit all required documents (see below, B. Travel Arrangements and Expenses) to the appropriate supervisory administrator for approval at least forty-five (45) days in advance of departure.

3. Exceptions

Exceptions to the above guidelines must be approved in advance by the appropriate Assistant Superintendent(s) in order to receive funding and professional leave.

- a. District personnel must follow the procedure below in order to request an exception.
 - i. The individual writes a request letter, addressed to the appropriate Assistant Superintendent(s) and immediate supervisor, which includes:
 - A. a list of previous Conference attendance for the current year,

- B. a description of the critical components of the requested conference (narrative form or detailed Conference brochure),
 - C. an explanation of the reasons which make it necessary for the individual to attend this conference, and
 - D. the individual's signature, with the date.
- ii. The individual submits the written request and all other required documents (see below, B. Travel Arrangements and Expenses) to the immediate supervisor for approval, who will sign and date the Conference Travel Authorization form.
 - iii. The supervisor submits the individual's written request and all other required documents (see below, B. Travel Arrangements and Expenses) to the appropriate Assistant Superintendent for consideration.
 - iv. The Assistant Superintendent
 - A. makes a decision regarding the request, based upon the criteria in section A.3.b. below,
 - B. writes the decision on the Conference Travel Authorization form, with the signature and date, and
 - C. notifies the individual by returning a copy of the Conference Travel authorization form to the individual.
- b. Assistant Superintendent(s) will consider the following criteria upon receipt of a request for an exception.
 - i. Conference attendance is at the request of the District Board of Education or the Superintendent's office.
 - ii. Conference attendance is required due to a particular program or grant.
 - iii. Conference attendance meets other critical District needs.

B. Travel Arrangements and Expenses

1. Coordinated Preparation

Travel arrangements will be coordinated through the appropriate Assistant Superintendent(s) and Executive Secretary to ensure uniformity and efficiency.

2. Documentation

All requests for travel shall be accompanied by:

- a. a completed Conference Travel Authorization form,

- b. a complete copy of the conference bulletin which specifies the location and conference date(s) and includes registration, lodging, and other expense information,
- c. a completed Expected Outcomes form, and
- d. a completed Per Diem Worksheet.

3. Registration

- a. Pre-registration for Conference shall always be done if there is a savings to the District.
- b. Special breakfast, luncheon, dinner, or banquet costs shall be included in the registration fee.
- c. Registration for and attendance at special sessions or pre-conference workshops shall be included in the registration payment if approved by the appropriate supervisor and/or Assistant Superintendent(s).

4. Travel

- a. Travel Time

No more than one (1) day each way will be allowed for travel to and from a Conference. When District personnel choose to take more than the one (1) day allotted to travel to or from a conference, vacation, personal leave, or leave without pay must be used. This time limit can be excepted by the appropriate Assistant Superintendent(s) when an extended stay would actually create lower overall costs.

- b. Air Travel

- i. All air travel arrangements shall be made by the Executive Secretaries using the State of Utah contract agency. NOTE: There may be occasions when an air fare is available that is lower than the single fare offered through the contract agency. These fares may be two for one, companion fares, or other promotions and may or may not offer a direct flight. District personnel desiring to travel at the lower air fare rate, will still be required to work with the designated Executive Secretary to secure their air travel tickets.
- ii. For official business travel, round-trip coach-class fare for one person is authorized.
- iii. Reservations should be requested well in advance (at least forty-five [45] days) to qualify for the best coach rate possible. Travel arrangements will be made obtaining the best available and most convenient direct route.
- iv. Air travel other than at the coach-class rate will be authorized by the appropriate Assistant Superintendents(s) when needed to provide legally required accommodations.

c. Automobile Travel

- i. Travel by automobile will be reimbursed equal to the lowest air fare (as outlined above in B.4.b.) or mileage (direct, regular highway route), whichever is lower. Automobile mileage will be provided in accordance with current IRS standards for business use of a vehicle.
- ii. If applicable, employees should use their District assigned vehicle for in-state travel. If employees choose not to use an assigned vehicle, a comparable mileage reimbursement will apply. (Average cost/gallon minus tax, divided by 20 miles/gallon, times the number of miles.)

5. Lodging

- a. Authorization is for the single occupancy rate and associated taxes and user fees.
- b. Hotel or motel allowance will be determined according to the advanced Conference bulletin or other information obtained from the conference headquarters.
 - i. Participants are encouraged to stay in the hotel or motel where the Conference will be conducted; however, if this is not possible, the cost of the lodging at another site must not exceed the cost of the Conference hotel. If the participant chooses to stay at more expensive lodging, the individual will pay the difference in cost.
 - ii. The number of nights of lodging included should provide for arrival the night before the conference begins and departure the afternoon or early evening of the day the conference ends (assuming the conference is scheduled to end at mid-day). Additional nights of lodging may be authorized when conference-related programs (such as special seminars or school visits) are attended, the conference is scheduled to end late in the day, or an extended stay would actually create lower overall costs.
- c. Per Diem
 - i. A daily per diem is provided to cover the cost of meals, tips, local travel (except from the airport to the place of lodging and return to the airport), and incidental expenses. This daily per diem rate will be the current federal standard meal allowance/M&IE rate, including adjustments for designated high-cost areas, (with modifications for Alaska and Hawaii). It is not necessary for the traveler to submit receipts for this daily per diem.
 - ii. If meals are included as part of the conference registration, the per diem amount will be adjusted accordingly.
 - iii. If a third party provided the per diem to District personnel traveling on District time or District business which is less than the District per diem, the District will provide an amount equal to the difference between the third party per diem and District per diem.

d. Other Expenses

- i. Automobile rental shall be authorized in advance and when circumstances warrant. Automobile rental associated with normal Conference travel usually will not be approved. Automobile rental must usually be associated with special projects or school visits. For insurance purposes, all arrangements for car rentals shall be made through the appropriate Executive Secretary using the State of Utah contract.
- ii. The traveler will be reimbursed for actual out-of-pocket costs for toll fees, airport parking, baggage charges, and airport transportation (travel from the airport to the lodging site and subsequent return from the lodging site to the airport) upon presentation of a receipt to the appropriate Executive Secretary. To qualify for the airport transportation reimbursement, the traveler shall obtain the most reasonable form of transportation, taking into account both cost and personal safety; however, the traveler shall use courtesy transportation service furnished by the hotel or motel whenever available.

/s/

Dr. Martin W. Bates
Superintendent