

Policy: District Staff In-Person Presence and Travel Reimbursement

I. Purpose

This policy establishes clear expectations for in-person work presence, notification timelines, and travel reimbursement for district staff. The policy ensures operational continuity, equitable treatment of staff, fiscal responsibility, and compliance with regulations.

II. Scope

This policy applies to all full-time and part-time district employees, whether working in-state, out-of-state, remote, hybrid, or on-site.

III. Work Presence Designations and Primary Work Locations

To ensure compliance with IRS "tax home" regulations and provide a sustainable "bright line" for travel, the following designations define an employee's **Primary Work Location**:

- A. On-Site Essential Staff: Employees whose duties require regular physical presence (e.g., facilities, student-facing services).
 - **Primary Work Location:** The assigned district facility (e.g., Crosslake site).
 - **Expectation:** Report on-site per assigned schedule.
- B. Hybrid Staff: Employees assigned a rotating or partial in-person schedule.
 - **Primary Work Location:** The assigned district facility.

- **Expectation:** Follow published hybrid calendar and attend in-person meetings with proper notice.
- C. Fully Remote Staff: Employees approved for full remote status.
 - **Primary Work Location:** The employee’s residence or an approved remote workspace.
 - **Expectation:** Maintain availability during district hours and attend required in-person events per notification timelines.

IV. Required In-Person Presence

In-person attendance may be required for board meetings, strategic planning, emergencies, professional development, and student-impacting events. Supervisors must ensure these requirements are mission-critical and not reasonably replaceable via virtual participation.

V. Notification Timelines

To support travel planning, the **District Office or Department Supervisor** must provide the following minimum notice:

Event Type	In-State Staff	Out-of-State Staff
Planned Meetings (Board, PD)	14 calendar days	21 calendar days

Major Events (Audit, Retreats)	21 calendar days	30 calendar days
Emergencies	As soon as practicable	As soon as practicable

Failure to provide required notice by the supervisor/office may result in approved virtual attendance or additional district-funded travel costs.

VI. Travel Reimbursement and Caps

The district reimburses reasonable and necessary expenses for travel **outside** the employee's assigned **Primary Work Location**.

A. General Provisions

- **Commute vs. Travel:** Travel from a remote/hybrid employee's home to a district site is considered reimbursable travel. Travel from an on-site employee's home to their assigned district site is considered a non-reimbursable commute.
- **Approval:** All travel must be pre-approved in writing.

B. Reimbursement Caps and Predictability

To maintain budget predictability, the following caps apply to remote staff:

- **Annual In-Person Days:** Contracts/calendars for remote/hybrid staff will specify a maximum

- number of required in-person days.
- **Trip Caps:** Reimbursement for mileage or airfare may be capped at a maximum dollar amount per trip based on current market rates.
 - **Radius Clause:** Staff residing beyond a 300-mile radius of the district office may be granted the option of virtual attendance for non-essential events at the supervisor's discretion.
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VII. Remote Leadership Presence

Leadership employees residing outside the immediate district service area must:

- Maintain reliable communication and attend in-person events per notification guidelines.
 - Consolidate trips to minimize disruption and cost.
 - **Annual Presence:** The Board of Directors shall set or delegate to the Superintendent the authority to establish a maximum number of district-funded visits or a scheduled quarterly cadence for leadership presence.
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VIII. Equity and Cost Control

- **Inherent Cost Differences:** The district acknowledges the inherent cost differences in serving remote vs. in-person staff. To balance fiscal responsibility with equity, **consolidation of in-person days** is the primary mechanism for cost control.
 - **Consistent Application:** Reimbursement policies apply consistently regardless of rank.
 - **On-Site Parity:** Remote designation does not exempt staff from required duties. On-site staff are not eligible for mileage for their routine commute to their primary work location.
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IX. Exceptions and Compliance

- **Exceptions:** Must be documented with fiscal justification and approved by the Superintendent (for staff) or Board Chair (for the Superintendent).

- **Compliance:** Failure to comply may result in denial of reimbursement or corrective action.
- **Review:** This policy will be reviewed annually.