



State of New Jersey  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
PO Box 500  
TRENTON, NJ 08625-0500

CHRIS CHRISTIE  
Governor

KIM GUADAGNO  
Lt. Governor

DAVID C. HESPE  
Commissioner

September 4, 2015

Mr. Bruce DuBoff  
2015 Conference Chair  
New Jersey Association of School Librarians  
20 Niamoa Drive  
Cherry Hill, NJ 08003

Dear Mr. DuBoff:

The New Jersey Department of Education is in receipt of your letter submitted on behalf of the New Jersey Association of School Librarians (NJASL), requesting a waiver of the prohibition on in-State overnight travel in order to facilitate the hosting of the NJASL 2015 Annual Fall Conference planned for November 15, 16 and 17, 2015, in Long Branch, New Jersey.

As you are aware, *N.J.S.A. 18A:11-12* requires that boards of education must ensure that all travel expenditures are "in compliance with state travel payment guidelines as established by the Department of the Treasury..." State Department of the Treasury *OMB Circular 12-14* Section X.B specifically prohibits reimbursement of in-State overnight travel. However, the circular authorizes the Commissioner of Education "to grant waivers for overnight travel for school board members and school district employees to attend in-State conferences pursuant to guidelines issued by the Department of Education," *OMB Circular 12-14 Section I.B.8*.

The Department's regulations at *N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.11(c)* authorize the Commissioner to grant overnight in-State travel waivers only in extremely limited circumstances, where the sponsoring organization can demonstrate that the conference is broad and multidisciplinary in scope, comprised of content-rich educational programming with important professional development opportunities and/or required training. In addition, the sponsoring organization must demonstrate that the conference's content, structure, scheduling and anticipated attendance necessitate that it be held on multiple consecutive days with overnight lodging. The travel regulations are posted on the Department's web site at: <http://www.state.nj.us/education/code/current/title6a/chap23a.pdf>.

Pursuant to the regulations, waivers will not be granted for reimbursement of lodging prior to the first day of the event or after check-out time of the last day of the event. Moreover, waivers will be considered only where the sponsoring organization can demonstrate that the conference is broad in scope and comprised of content-rich educational programming with important professional development opportunities and/or required training. In addition, the sponsoring organization must demonstrate that the conference's content, structure, scheduling and anticipated attendance necessitate that it be held on multiple consecutive days with overnight lodging.

Mr. Bruce DuBoff  
Page 2  
September 4, 2015

After carefully reviewing your submission, the Department finds that the NJASL 2015 Annual Fall Conference planned for November 15, 16 and 17, 2015, in Long Branch, New Jersey, meets the criteria of the regulations. Specifically, I note that based upon the content of your submission, the conference promises to provide three full days of workshops that will provide attendees with a variety of services and educational opportunities for School Library Media Specialists serving public, private, parochial and charter schools. Finally, I note that the program schedule for each of the three days offers multiple concurrent workshops from early morning through late afternoon, necessitating an overnight stay for those three-day attendees. For these reasons the waiver request is granted. As a result of this waiver, school districts, charter schools and renaissance school projects will be able to reimburse attendees for overnight lodging on November 15 and 16, 2015, provided that the remaining conditions delineated in this letter are met. Reimbursement for registration fees, mileage and meals, subject to the limitations and conditions set forth in *OMB Circular 12-14* and *OMB Circular 11-09*, may also be permissible. School districts, charter schools and renaissance school projects should ensure that they approve attendance only of board members, trustees, and employees whose duties are related to the purposes of the conference or who are required to attend to meet continuing education requirements as a condition of continued employment.

Moreover, please be advised that the waiver of the prohibition for reimbursement for overnight lodging covers only those attendees whose home to event commute exceeds 50 miles. In other words, only those individuals whose one-way commute to the NJASL 2015 Annual Fall Conference planned for November 15, 16 and 17, 2015, exceeds 50 miles may obtain reimbursement from their school district, charter school or renaissance school project for overnight lodging for November 15 and 16, 2015, pursuant to their registration. As mentioned earlier, waivers will not be granted for reimbursement of lodging prior to the first day of the event or after check-out time of the last day of the event.

Finally, I want to express my appreciation of NJASL efforts to provide professional development opportunities to those who strive to provide quality public education in New Jersey. My best wishes for a successful conference.

Sincerely,



David C. Hespe  
Commissioner

DCH/KD/pl/Y:\Referrals\2015\Travel Waiver Requests\NJ Assoc School Librarians\NJ Assoc School Librarians 2015.doc  
c: Senior Staff  
Executive County Superintendents