



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

PO Box 500

TRENTON, NJ 08625-0500

PHILIP D. MURPHY  
Governor

SHEILA Y. OLIVER  
Lt. Governor

KEVIN DEHMER  
Interim Commissioner

October 1, 2020

Dr. Richard G. Bozza, Executive Director  
New Jersey Association of School Administrators  
920 West State Street  
Trenton, NJ 08618-5394

Dear Mr. Bozza:

The New Jersey Department of Education is in receipt of your letter submitted on behalf of New Jersey Association of School Administrators (NJASA), and workshop co-sponsors, the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) and the Foundation for Educational Administration (FEA), requesting a revision of the waiver of the prohibition on overnight travel in order to facilitate the hosting of the Women's Leadership Conference now scheduled for March 18-19, 2021 in Somerset, New Jersey. A travel waiver was issued on May 10, 2019, for the previously scheduled dates that are no longer available due to Covid-19 virus.

As you are aware, *N.J.S.A.* 18A:11-12 requires that boards of education must ensure that all school district travel expenditures are "in compliance with state travel payment guidelines as established by the Department of the Treasury..." *N.J.A.C.* 6A:23A-7.11(b) and State Department of the Treasury OMB Circular 16-11 Section X.B specifically prohibit reimbursement of in-state overnight travel. However, the circular and *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 NJDOE's website.

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 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.

After carefully reviewing your submission, the NJDOE finds that Women's Leadership Conference scheduled for March 18-19, 2021, in Somerset, New Jersey, meets the criteria of the regulations. Specifically, the conference promises to be broad in scope, of current relevance to New Jersey's School Leaders and will attract attendees representing a wide geographical area. For these reasons, a waiver request for the 2021 Women's Leadership Conferences are granted. Because of this waiver, school districts, charter schools, and renaissance school projects will be able to reimburse eligible attendees for overnight lodging on March 18, 2021, only, 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 16-11 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 2021 Women's Leadership Conference in Somerset, NJ, exceeds 50 miles may obtain reimbursement from their school district, charter school or renaissance school project for overnight lodging for March 18, 2021.

Finally, I want to express my appreciation for the effort of the NJASA, the AASA, and the FEA 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Dehmer', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kevin Dehmer  
Interim Commissioner

c: Senior Staff  
Executive County Superintendent