



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

PO Box 500

TRENTON, NJ 08625-0500

CHRIS CHRISTIE
Governor

KIM GUADAGNO
Lt. Governor

KIMBERLEY HARRINGTON
Commissioner

December 8, 2017

Mr. Keith Gourlay, Executive Director
New Jersey School Buildings and Grounds Association
PO Box 376
Newton, NJ 07860

Dear Mr. Gourlay:

The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) is in receipt of your letter submitted on behalf of the New Jersey School Buildings and Grounds Association (NJSBGA) requesting a waiver of the prohibition on overnight travel in order to facilitate the hosting of the 2018 NJSBGA Expo & Conference planned for March 12-14, 2018, in Atlantic City, New Jersey.

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](http://www.state.nj.us/education/code/current/title6a/chap23a.pdf) <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 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.

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After carefully reviewing your submission, the NJDOE finds that the 2018 NJSBGA Expo & Conference planned for March 12-14, 2018, meets the criteria of the regulations for a portion of the conference. Specifically, based upon the content of your submission, the conference will provide important programming, professional development and educational programs of current relevance to New Jersey's educational facilities managers and will attract attendees representing a wide geographical area. For this reason, a waiver request for the 2018 NJSBGA Expo & Conference is granted. Because of this waiver, school districts, charter schools and renaissance school projects will be able to reimburse attendees for overnight lodging on **March 12 and 13, 2018** 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 2018 NJSBGA Expo & Conference in Atlantic City, New Jersey, exceeds 50 miles may obtain reimbursement from their school district, charter school or renaissance school project for overnight lodging for **March 12 and 13, 2018**.

Finally, I want to express my appreciation for the effort of the NJSBGA 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 cursive script that reads "Kimberley Harrington".

Kimberley Harrington
Commissioner

c: Senior Staff
Executive County Superintendents