



State of New Jersey
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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Governor

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Lt. Governor

KIMBERLEY HARRINGTON
Acting Commissioner

May 3, 2017

Dr. Douglas B. Cleary
Affiliate Director for PLTW at Rowan University
Civil and Environmental Engineering
201 Mullica Hill Road
Glassboro, NJ 08028-1701

Dear Dr. Cleary:

The New Jersey Department of Education is in receipt of your letter submitted on behalf of Rowan University as the State Affiliate for the Project Lead the Way (PLTW) program, for a waiver of the prohibition on overnight travel in order to facilitate the hosting of five individual PLTW Core Training sessions. Two concurrent training sessions for the high school level pre-engineering curriculum are planned for June 19 through June 30, 2017, and will be hosted by Rowan University. Two individual middle school teacher training sessions are planned for June 19 through June 23, 2017, and June 26 through June 30, 2017, also hosted by Rowan University.

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 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 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 Department finds that each of the PLTW Training Conferences planned for June 19 through June 30, 2017, meets the criteria of the regulations. Specifically, I note that the program schedule for the ten day high school training conference offers the mandatory 80 hours of specialized training plus evening homework assignments necessitating an overnight stay for those attendees whose home to event commute exceeds 50 miles. I note similar rigor for the two middle school training conferences encompassing the mandatory 40 hours of specialized training. For these reasons, the waiver requests are granted. As a result of the waivers, school districts charter schools, and renaissance school projects that have adopted the PLTW curriculum, will be able to reimburse those attendees for overnight lodging in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:11-12, as follows, provided that the remaining conditions delineated in this letter are met:

<u>Name of Course</u>	<u>Dates offered</u>
<u>Introduction to Engineering Design</u>	<u>June 19 through June 30, 2017</u>
<u>Principles of Engineering</u>	<u>June 19 through June 30, 2017</u>
<u>Automation and Robotics</u>	<u>June 19 through June 23, 2017</u>
<u>Medical Detectives</u>	<u>June 26 through June 30, 2017</u>
<u>LAUNCH Classroom Teacher Training</u>	<u>June 26 through June 27, 2017,</u>

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. Each of the ten day high school curriculum training conferences includes a weekend break which is covered by the waiver(s) only if the cost to the school district, charter school, or renaissance school project for the individual attendee to remain at the conference site is less than the cost for the individual attendee to travel home for the weekend break. School districts, charter schools, and renaissance school projects should ensure that they approve attendance only of those 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 Project Lead the Way Core Training exceeds 50 miles may obtain reimbursement from their school district charter school, or renaissance school project for overnight lodging for the aforementioned nights only.

Finally, I want to express my appreciation of Rowan University's involvement in Project Lead the Way's effort to provide relevant training opportunities to those who strive to provide quality public education in New Jersey. My best wishes for a successful conference.

Sincerely,



Kimberley Harrington
Acting Commissioner

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c: Senior Staff

Executive County Superintendents