COLUMBUS CITY SCHOOLS

Columbus Education Association

Columbus City Schools/ Columbus Education Association

Certificated Professional Leave Guidelines & Schedule 2026-2027

Contact information:

ProfessionalLeaves@columbus.k12.oh.us

Master Agreement (2025-2028)

702.16 The Professional Leave Committee established by a "Memorandum of Agreement" in 1986 will continue to function as set forth in said memorandum and as agreed to by the parties. Further the Board will provide $200,000 per school year to fund this professional leave provision.

Certificated Professional Leave Guidelines and Schedule

The committee will review requests and provide decisions in compliance with the guidelines below and the committee schedule.

1. CEA Professional Leave Applications are submitted via CCSDAS.
2. Application window opens August 3, 2026.
3. Requests received after the activity has occurred will be denied. No exceptions.
4. Preference will be given to workshops offered in the Columbus area and in the state of Ohio.
5. Submit conference/activity travel requests for approval according to the committee schedule below.
6. Trips outside the continental United States are not eligible for approval.
7. Summer activities (2027) are encouraged provided there are funds available from the current fiscal year.
8. Professional leave cannot be used for activities to obtain college credits or certification.
9. Applicants are limited to $1,800 over a two year period. Employees may use their discretion as to how many activities they request to attend as long as the total is $1,800 or less for the two year period. The two year period is defined as two fiscal years with each fiscal year beginning July 1 and ending June 30 of the following year.
10. Preference will be given to staff who have not utilized the fund within the last two years.
11. Any costs above the approved amount are the responsibility of the employee.
12. The cost of a substitute is deducted from CEA Professional Leaves funding.
13. No more than two teachers per building will be approved for a particular activity.
14. The total number of teachers attending an out-of-state conference will be limited to five or fewer across the district.
15. If the professional leave dates overlap district professional development days, staff will be required to make up the district professional development within the workday. District calendars can be accessed on the district website.
16. Expenses will not be approved in conjunction with personal leave use. When a request is denied due to substitute availability (or any other reason), expenses will not be authorized if the individual elects to use personal leave.
17. Travel costs (hotel, per diem, etc.) will only be considered for travel outside of the local boundaries set by district policy.
18. Membership in a professional organization is not reimbursable from this program unless such membership reduces the cost of the conference registration by an amount equal to or greater than the cost of such membership and is included as part of the registration cost.
19. Permission to attend a professional activity which requires neither funding nor a substitute should be approved with the immediate supervisor and will not be considered through the Professional Leave Committee.
20. Requests must be approved by the employee's supervisor. Any changes to the approved requests must be cleared through the Professional Leave Committee and the supervisor.
21. After the committee meets, staff will receive email notification, including next steps in the process if approved.

Supervisors will consider the below criteria for eligibility:

- Must be an active employee
- No more than two teachers per building for the same activity
- Not on an unpaid leave of absence
- District/state testing
- Other criteria at the discretion of and review by the committee

Committee and Submission Schedule

Request Must be Submitted by 4:00 p.m. on:	For Review at the Committee Meeting on:
August 27, 2026	**September 3, 2026**
September 24, 2026	**October 1, 2026**
October 29, 2026	**November 5, 2026**
November 30, 2026	**December 3, 2026**
January 4, 2027	**January 7, 2027**
January 28, 2027	**February 4, 2027**
February 25, 2027	**March 4, 2027**
April 5, 2027	**April 8, 2027**
April 29, 2027	**May 6, 2027**

Columbus City Schools Office of the Treasurer Employee Travel Reimbursement Guidelines

Per Board Policy 6550 – TRAVEL PAYMENT & REIMBURSEMENT

Travel expenses incurred for official business travel on behalf of the Board of Education shall be limited to those expenses necessarily incurred by the employee in the performance of a public purpose authorized, in advance, in accordance with administrative guidelines.

Payment and reimbursement rates for mileage shall be in accordance with the Federal IRS prescribed mileage rate.

Employees are expected to exercise the same care incurring travel expenses that a prudent person would exercise if traveling on a personal business and expending personal funds. Unauthorized costs and additional expenses incurred for personal preference or convenience will not be reimbursed.

Unauthorized expenses include but are not limited to alcohol, movies, fines for traffic violations, and the entertainment/meals/lodging of spouses or guests.

All travel shall comply with the travel procedures and rates established in the administrative guidelines.

Effective 7/1/15

Per Diem

- $ 65 per diem will be paid to employees for each night spent in a hotel on business. One night = $65, two nights = $130, etc. No exceptions.
- Per Diem reimbursement always requires an overnight stay.
- Receipts are not required for reimbursement. Tips are covered by per diem.
- You will not be reimbursed to travel (ex: Uber/taxi) for your meals/entertainment.

Hotel Stay

- Hotel stay is limited to the length of the out of town (outside 60-mile radius) conference. [NOTE: HR documents and CCSDAS need to be consistent with this.] For example, three-day conference = three nights allowed in a hotel.
- Hotel choice is limited to a conference hotel (unless sold out). For other than conference hotel, maximum rate should not exceed GAO guidelines. https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates

Airport Transportation at Destination

- Transportation to/from the conference airport is limited to the cost of a round-trip shuttle. Visit the destination airport website or www.shuttlefare.com. Look for a link to ground transportation for reservations and/or rates. Employees electing to secure other modes of transport are limited to the shuttle rate for reimbursement.
- Transportation to/from John Glenn Intl (CMH) airport is limited to the cost of parking a vehicle in CMH blue lot parking for duration of the flight schedule which pertains to the conference.

Transportation to/from hotel will be reimbursed if a conference shuttle is not provided and the hotel is not within walking distance.

Car Rental

- Car rental is approved only under exceptional circumstances, such as visits to multiple schools, excessive distance from airport to destination, etc. A detailed justification/rationale must be submitted to your Executive Director for approval. If approved for a rental car, attach the approved memo/letter to the conference request. The daily limit for reimbursement is up to $80, which includes all associated costs: rental fee, gas, tolls, etc. Optional insurance will not be reimbursed.

Driving Personal Vehicle Out of Town

- Maximum reimbursement for all driving expenses (mileage and tolls) is up to $300.
- Include copy of Google Map of mileage from home to conference site and conference site to home.
- Google IRS Mileage Rate to see the current rate on date of travel at: (http://www.irs.gov/Tax-Professionals/Standard-Mileage-Rates)

Miscellaneous

- Reimbursement limit of one checked bag each way (up to $50/per bag).
- John Glenn Intl (CMH) airport parking reimbursement limit = Blue lot rate (up to $ 11/day currently).
- Failure to attend conference will result in the employee being held responsible for repayment of any non-refundable charges paid by or invoiced to CCS on behalf of the employee.

Exceptions

- Any exception to the above requires appropriate justification, advance notification, and approval in writing.

REVISED January 1, 2024