

**MORGAN COUNTY CHARTER  
SCHOOL SYSTEM**

**PROFESSIONAL LEARNING  
HANDBOOK**

**2018 - 2019**

## **PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**

All professional learning should align to the school improvement plan goals which should align to the District Three Year Plan. Since participation in professional learning is an annual responsibility for each instructional staff, including paraprofessionals, in Morgan County, all instructional staff shall participate in a minimum of 10 contact hours.

The Morgan County School System Professional Learning Handbook describes the process for professional learning. Copies of the handbook shall be distributed electronically and reviewed with all instructional staff, including paraprofessionals, during pre-planning each year. Priorities for professional learning activities are outlined in system and school improvement plans. Requests for professional learning must address one or more of these priorities or address individual professional development plans (PDP) in order to be approved for the use of professional learning funds. The school system and each school provide professional learning opportunities aligned with system and school improvement goals. Instructional staff, including paraprofessionals, may also request funding and credit for participation in professional learning opportunities provided outside of the school system. The process for making such requests is outlined in the Morgan County System Professional Learning Handbook. Requests must be submitted through Eduphoria and approved by the Professional Learning Coordinator and the building principal before being submitted to Central Office for approval.

### **APPLICATION PROCEDURES**

- All professional learning activities and classes must have **PRIOR APPROVAL** of the local school professional learning committee, building principal (or designee) and system coordinator.
- An activity or plan of activities must be submitted for in-house professional development. For professional development activities offered outside the school system, an agenda for the activity, or some other description of the activity, should be submitted with the professional learning request.
- A Professional Learning request through Eduphoria prior to the event and approved by everyone in the workflow.

## **STIPENDS**

Before teachers can request a stipend for completed professional learning the following must be completed by the professional learning coordinator:

- Check to be sure that a professional learning request has been completed by the teacher.
- Verify attendance (sign in sheets - form in the back of handbook).
- Verify work completed
- Submit a list to the district PL Chair for teachers who will receive the stipend, how much they will receive and from what fund source(Form in the back of handbook).

After all the above steps are completed:

- Teacher completes a stipend request(**The cut off date for stipend requests is the 15th of the month. Any requests approved after that date, will be paid the next month.**)
- Approve the stipend in Eduphoria

Your approval indicates that all documentation is on file which will be maintained at the school level. Stipend pay is now \$30.00 an hour.

**If a teacher attends a conference during off contract time, and there is a registration fee, the district will pay the registration fee, travel and per diem for food. If a teacher attends a conference during off contract time which does not have a registration fee, the district will pay travel and per diem for food. A stipend, for teachers to attend a conference during off contract days that has no registration fee, will be paid ONLY if the conference is REQUIRED as a part of the school improvement plan. That amount will be 150.00 per day. Anytime a stipend is paid there must be a sign-in sheet, a finished product and/or a redelivery plan.**

## **PROCEDURES RECOMMENDED LIST OF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

A. The following partial list contains activities that may be approved for professional learning.

This list is not all inclusive.

1. School or system-initiated courses/job embedded
2. RESA-sponsored courses
3. College/University-sponsored courses
4. Professional organization-sponsored courses
5. Professional conferences
6. School visits (for a specific purpose)
7. Independent Study Courses
8. College coursework
9. Research and Development Projects for School Improvement

Please login to Eduphoria and submit the stipend request form. **Please do not submit this form until the Professional Learning is completed.** No stipends may be awarded for activities that occur on contract time or have not had prior approval.

## **FUNDING**

A. Funding for school professional learning will come from state professional learning funds, and federal fund sources such as Title 1 and Title II-A.

B. Funds will be allocated equitably to each school based on the student enrollment at each school.

C. ALL school staff should have access to professional learning funds

D. School nutrition, maintenance and custodial staff activities will be funded through the central office allocation

E. It is the responsibility of the school PLC and the building principal to maintain accurate records of funds spent on school professional learning through Eduphoria to ensure the following:

\*all staff have the opportunity to participate in professional learning activities

\*stipends and travel reimbursement allocations are made equitably

\*all professional learning funds are spent during the year

\*that professional learning request are charged to the appropriate fund

## **Procedure for registration payments in Eduphoria:**

**Read your registration instructions to begin your process. Usually, vendors will have method of payment listed with options.**

**- Below are the options for different payment methods for conference registrations.**

**Purchase Order – if you chose purchase order as the method of payment, remember you have to submit a PO request in Softdocs. This is a critical step in getting your PL request completed. A PO# cannot be assigned unless the proper steps are taken in Eduphoria and Softdocs. **This is the only payment method that will require you to do anything in Softdocs.****

**Invoice – Sometimes vendors will email or mail an invoice to the Board office or to the School. If you choose invoice as your payment method, please make sure that you upload your registration form in Eduphoria. I will send this with a check to insure payment is applied correctly.**

**Pre-pay – If you choose prepayment as your payment, you will pay for your registration with a personal method of payment and request reimbursement when you send your travel reimbursement over the Board office to Jerrie Tice. A reimbursing check will be issued for registration and travel expenses.**

**Other: this is an option for the vendors that prefer checks before the conference actually takes place. Please make sure ALL supporting documents (registration forms) are uploaded for auditing purposes. Copies will also be sent with check.**

**Please remember that all employees must register themselves for conferences. But, all documentation will be sent with payment method chosen to ensure registration is applied properly.**

## **Professional Learning Fund Source**

**NOTE: All professional learning activities, regardless of fund source, must be tied to either the field(s) of certificate held, school/district improvement plan, the system strategic plan, annual performance evaluation, or state/federal requirements.**

## **TITLE 1-A ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT**

**Target Areas:**

- 1. Academic achievement of poor and minority students**

**Allowable Expenditures:**

- 1. Stipends, including FICA benefits for stipends**
- 2. Travel expenses**
- 3. Registrations, dues and fees**
- 4. Supplies for professional learning**
- 5. Substitute teachers for teachers who participate in professional learning**

## TITLE II-A IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY

### Target Areas

1. Improving Teacher and Administrator Quality
2. Recruiting and Retaining Highly Qualified Teachers and Principals

### Allowable Expenditures:

1. Stipends, including FICA benefits for stipends
2. Travel expenses
3. Registrations, dues and fees
4. Supplies for professional learning
5. Substitute teachers for teachers who participate in professional learning

## STATE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Target Areas: Assessed school needs, as determined by the school improvement plan or the annual personnel evaluation process.

### Allowable Expenditures:

1. Stipends including FICA Benefits for stipends
2. Travel expenses
3. Registrations, dues and fees
4. Supplies for professional learning
5. Substitute teachers for teachers who participate in professional learning

## INSTRUCTIONS ON SUBMITTING A PROFESSIONAL LEARNING FORM IN EDUPHORIA:


### Submitting a New Form

To submit a new form, Choose Formspace then under My Forms Tab click **Submit New Form** in the bottom left. This will open a wizard that will walk you through the process.

1. Start by selecting a form category in the list. The category text will turn orange and the forms in that category will appear.


### Select a Category


#### Form Category


 General Forms

 Personnel/HR

 Technology


 General Forms

 Professional Development

 Accounts Payable

 Athletics

 Transportation

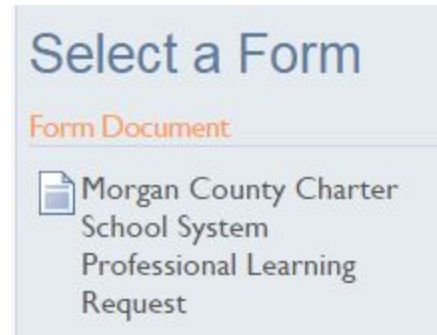
 Finance

2. You will then need to choose a form from the list.

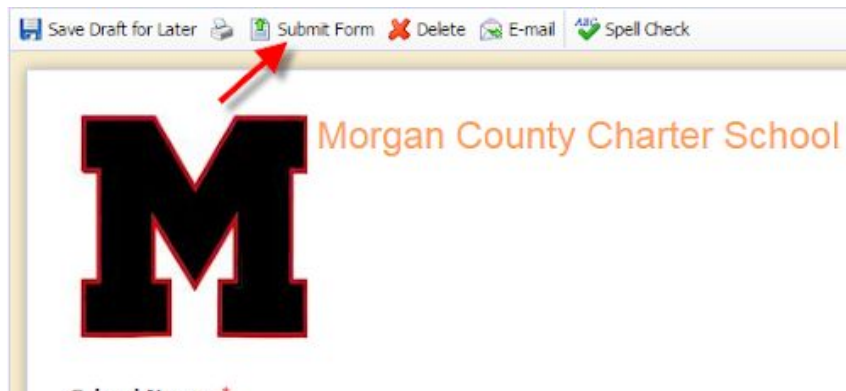
3. If Prompted choose your campus.

4. Your form will appear for you to begin filling it out.


5. Fill out all required sections of the form. The top toolbar has several options to manage this form. Clicking **Save Draft for Later** will save all of the content in your form but will not submit it to be processed. **Submit Form** will save the form and start the form's workflow. **Delete Form** does just that, but you will have to confirm your selection. **Email** will enable you to email the form to another user within your school or district's School Objects database. You can also check the spelling in your form by clicking on **Spell Check**.



6. When you are done click on Submit Form at the top of the page.



7. Once a form has been submitted, you will be able to see the workflow for that

form by clicking on the  **Workflow** icon in the upper right. The workflow **History** and **Remaining** steps will change as the workflow progresses from approver to approver.

## TRAVEL REGULATIONS

The State Accounting Office, the Office of Planning and Budget and the Morgan County Board of Education have authorized reimbursement for the following expenses associated with employee travel:

Meals associated with overnight lodging;  
Lodging expenses;  
Mileage for use of a personal vehicle;  
Transportation expenses, including parking and toll fees; and  
Certain miscellaneous expenses associated with travel.

The specific policies regarding the reimbursement of travel expenses, as well as expense limits and required documentation are outlined below:

**Travel Forms Must Be Completed in Their Entirety Following These Instructions.**  
**Incomplete/Incorrect forms will be returned to the Employee.**

Fill in Name, Social Security Number and Month (the month during which the expense was incurred).

Fill in Date of Reimbursement Request, Name of School, Name of Conference and Location of Conference. **As of July 1, 2012, employees will no longer be paid for travel done within the county with the exception of employees providing preapproved hospital homebound instructional services.**

**(1) Mileage (As Applicable)**

- a. Auto Tag Number must be filled in and date (s) of travel must be listed.
- b. Times departed and arrived must be listed if meals are claimed.
- c. The name of the conference or training you are attending must be listed.
- d. Beginning and ending odometer readings are required and must be listed.
- e. Mileage is reimbursed at **\$0.58** per mile and must be computed from your workplace, i.e. High School, etc. unless departing from your home when it is closer to your destination. Then actual mileage should be computed based on the closer departure location. Mileage should be totaled and multiplied by **0.58**.

a. Mileage will be reimbursed for travel to and from lodging to conference sight. Employees are not entitled to mileage reimbursement for personal mileage, i.e. travel to restaurants, sight-seeing, entertainment, etc., while on travel status.

**(2) Meals & Lodging (As applicable)**

**Meals Associated with Overnight Travel:**

Employees traveling overnight will be paid a per diem amount designed to cover the cost of meals (including taxes and tips), based on the number of meals per day for which the employee is eligible.



### **How many meals per day?**

Employees traveling overnight are generally eligible for **daily** per diem amounts designed to cover the cost of three (3) meals per day for all days on travel status ***other than the day of departure and the day of return***. To receive per diem for non-overnight travel the employee must be away for more than 12 hours and travel more than 50 miles from home or office, whichever is closer.

Day of Departure and Return: Employees may only receive 75% of allowable total per diem for meals occurring on the day of departure and return. For example, on the day of departure and return the employee is eligible to receive 21.00 in per diem.

\*High cost areas in Georgia are limited to the following counties: Chatham, Cobb, DeKalb, Fulton, Glynn and Richmond counties.

There are also instances in which an employee may not receive per diem for the normally eligible number of meals. If any meal is included as a part of the cost of conference registration, etc., such meal(s) should not be considered eligible in the calculation of per diem. For example, if conference registration includes breakfast and lunch, the employee will only receive per diem for the dinner meal.

Per State of Georgia Statewide Travel Regulations, **alcoholic beverages cannot be reimbursed**. The maximum allowed reimbursement is **\$28.00 per day** for all areas within the state of Georgia outside the high cost areas. **\$36.00 high cost areas**

### **Lodging:**

Lodging cost will only be reimbursed if conference/training is more than 75 miles from Madison AND lasts for more than one day. Lodging will NOT be paid for one day seminars/conferences/training held in the metro Atlanta area, Macon, Augusta, Gainesville, etc. The exception to this rule is when an employee is acting as a chaperone for students at a student event that requires the group to stay overnight within the 75 mile area. Preapproval of this reimbursement must be obtained by the employee before the event and such approval should be noted on the travel request form.

Lodging cost must be listed and receipts are required. Employees are responsible for ensuring the most reasonable lodging rates are obtained. The reasonable lodging rate is \$150 per day plus taxes. Employees should: (1) make reservations in advance, whenever practical, (2) utilize minimum rate accommodations; (3) avoid "deluxe" hotels and motels, and (4) obtain government rates, whenever possible.

State and local government officials and employees traveling within the state on official business are **exempt** from paying the county or municipal excise tax on lodging ("hotel/motel" or "occupancy" tax). [OCGA 48-13-51 (a)(1)(C)(ii)]. Employees are required to submit a copy of the hotel/motel tax-exemption form when they register at a hotel/motel. A copy of this form is available at your school's administrative office or at central office and is also available for download at:

[https://www.audits.state.ga.us/internet/nalgad/hotel-motel\\_tax\\_exemption\\_form.pdf](https://www.audits.state.ga.us/internet/nalgad/hotel-motel_tax_exemption_form.pdf). This exemption does not apply to an out-of-state hotel/motel.

In any instance where the lodging is paid by a school or system government check, a sales tax exempt form should also be obtained and presented at check-in. The hotel/motel should not collect any taxes associated with the lodging expenses in this instance.

**If an employee fails to obtain and/or present tax exempt forms to the hotel at check-in, the tax costs will not be reimbursed.** Should a hotel refuse to accept the form, in order to be reimbursed for the tax, the employee must provide central office with the following information: employee name, date(s) of lodging; name, address, telephone number of hotel, and documentation from the hotel of their refusal to omit the excise tax for forwarding to the State Accounting Office and the Georgia Department of Revenue.

### **(3) Misc Expenses (As applicable)**

List other transportation and/or lodging costs as applicable, i.e. airline tickets, taxi, car rentals, parking etc.

Receipts for these must be attached. Parking, etc. will NOT be reimbursed unless receipts are attached.

**Fees for valet parking will not be reimbursed if public/self-parking is available.**

Registration fees required for participation in workshops, seminars or conferences that an employee is directed and/or authorized to attend will be allowed when supported by a paid receipt or a copy of the check showing payment. This expense will be reported by Central office accounting as a "fee" and not charged to travel

### **(4) Total Request**

Multiply total miles by **\$0.545** and fill in total mileage (1); total meals(receipts not needed) and lodging (2); total all misc expenditures for which you have receipts (3); and **enter total on line (4).**

### **(5) Forms must be signed and dated**

It is the responsibility of the employee to be familiar with all travel expenses regulations and limitations as contained in The Fiscal Management for Georgia Local Units of Administration. All Expenses exceeding limitations must be explained in writing. For further information contact the Administrative Office.

**(6) Give to Supervisor or Staff Development Committee for approval:**

Grant Supervisor(s) and/or the School's Staff Development Committee should show what grant or account is to be charged for the travel expense; sign and date the form and turn in to Central Office.

**(7) Reimbursement**

Travel reimbursement is done by vendor check and distributed twice per month - the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month and the last working day of the month. Reimbursements done on the last business day will be attached to that month's payroll check. Reimbursement requests must be received by Central Office by the 10<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, respectively, to be processed for the next check run.

**All travel expense statements must be turned in to Central Office within 30 days of the incurred expense. Any reimbursement requests received after the grant or fiscal year has closed will not be processed.**

**Any incomplete, incorrect and/or unsigned requests will be returned to the employee before processing.**





Professional Learning

Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_ Administrator \_\_\_\_\_

When these documentations have been submitted, all teachers should submit a stipend request

**Before teachers can request a stipend for completed professional learning the following must be completed by the professional learning coordinator:**

- a. Check to be sure that a professional learning request has been completed by the teacher. We will not approve a stipend unless there is an approved PL request.
- b. Verify attendance (sign in sheets)/hours worked
- c. Verify work completed
- d. Submit a list to the district PL chair(Jean or Tammy)of teachers who will receive the stipend, how much they will receive and from what fund source. This should be submitted AFTER the above tasks have been completed.

**After all the above steps are completed:**

- e. Teacher completes a stipend request.
- d. PL chair approve the stipend in Eduphoria

Your approval indicates that all documentation is on file which will be maintained at the school level. Please let me know if you have questions.

**Things to remember before approval:**

Make sure the PL request has all the required information - research, fund amount, correct name of school, etc. PL chair needs to review the request carefully to ensure everything is completed correctly.

Make sure the stipend request is submitted AFTER the work is complete.

Make sure there is a PL Request BEFORE you approve a stipend request.

Make sure you approve the correct fund source. CTAE, PE, Counselors cannot be paid with Title I or Title II money.

The fund source has been added to the Stipend Contract for the principal to add and it must match the approved fund source on the PL request approval page.

The name of the professional learning on the PL request should match the name on the stipend request.

No invoices will be paid without prior approval - PL Request.

The PLU request section has been taken out. No longer applies.