

(105 ILCS 5/29-5) (from Ch. 122, par. 29-5)

Sec. 29-5. Reimbursement by State for transportation.

Any school district, maintaining a school, transporting resident pupils to another school district's vocational program, offered through a joint agreement approved by the State Board of Education, as provided in Section 10-22.22 or transporting its resident pupils to a school which meets the standards for recognition as established by the State Board of Education which provides transportation meeting the standards of safety, comfort, convenience, efficiency and operation prescribed by the State Board of Education for resident pupils in kindergarten or any of grades 1 through 12 who: (a) reside at least 1 1/2 miles as measured by the customary route of travel, from the school attended; or (b) reside in areas where conditions are such that walking constitutes a hazard to the safety of the child when determined under Section 29-3; and (c) are transported to the school attended from pick-up points at the beginning of the school day and back again at the close of the school day or transported to and from their assigned attendance centers during the school day, shall be reimbursed by the State as hereinafter provided in this Section.

The State will pay the cost of transporting eligible pupils less the assessed valuation in a dual school district maintaining secondary grades 9 to 12 inclusive times a qualifying rate of .05%; in elementary school districts maintaining grades K to 8 times a qualifying rate of .06%; and in unit districts maintaining grades K to 12, including optional elementary unit districts and combined high school - unit districts, times a qualifying rate of .07%; provided that for optional elementary unit districts and combined high school - unit districts, assessed valuation for high school purposes, as defined in Article 11E of this Code, must be used. To be eligible to receive reimbursement in excess of 4/5 of the cost to transport eligible pupils, a school district shall have a Transportation Fund tax rate of at least .12%. If a school district does not have a .12% Transportation Fund tax rate, the amount of its claim in excess of 4/5 of the cost of transporting pupils shall be reduced by the sum arrived at by subtracting the Transportation Fund tax rate from .12% and multiplying that amount by the districts equalized or assessed valuation, provided, that in no case shall said reduction result in reimbursement of less than 4/5 of the cost to transport eligible pupils.

The minimum amount to be received by a district is \$16 times the number of eligible pupils transported.

When calculating the reimbursement for transportation costs, the State Board of Education may not deduct the number of pupils enrolled in early education programs from the number of pupils eligible for reimbursement if the pupils enrolled in the early education programs are transported at the same time as other eligible pupils.

Any such district transporting resident pupils during the school day to an area vocational school or another school district's vocational program more than 1 1/2 miles from the school attended, as provided in Sections 10-22.20a and 10-22.22, shall be reimbursed by the State for 4/5 of the cost of transporting eligible pupils.

School day means that period of time which the pupil is required to be in attendance for instructional purposes.

If a pupil is at a location within the school district other than his residence for child care purposes at the time for transportation to school, that location may be considered for purposes of determining the 1 1/2 miles from the school attended.

Claims for reimbursement that include children who attend any school other than a public school shall show the number of such children transported.

Claims for reimbursement under this Section shall not be paid for the transportation of pupils for whom transportation costs are claimed for payment under other Sections of this Act.

The allowable direct cost of transporting pupils for regular, vocational, and special education pupil transportation shall be limited to the sum of the cost of physical examinations required for employment as a school bus driver; the salaries of full or part-time drivers and school bus maintenance personnel; employee benefits excluding Illinois municipal retirement payments, social security payments, unemployment insurance payments and workers' compensation insurance premiums; expenditures to independent carriers who operate school buses; payments to other school districts for pupil transportation services; pre-approved contractual expenditures for computerized bus scheduling; the cost of gasoline, oil, tires, and other supplies necessary for the operation of school buses; **the cost of converting buses' gasoline engines to more fuel efficient engines or to engines which use alternative energy sources**; the cost of travel to meetings and workshops conducted by the regional superintendent or the State Superintendent of Education pursuant to the standards established by the Secretary of State under Section 6-106 of the Illinois Vehicle Code to improve the driving skills of school bus drivers; the cost of maintenance of school buses including parts and materials used; expenditures for leasing transportation vehicles, except interest and service charges; the cost of insurance and licenses for transportation vehicles; expenditures for the rental of transportation equipment; plus a depreciation allowance of 20% for 5 years for school buses and vehicles approved for transporting pupils to and from school and a depreciation allowance of 10% for 10 years for other transportation equipment so used. Each school year, if a school district has made expenditures to the Regional Transportation Authority or any of its service boards, a mass transit district, or an urban transportation district under an intergovernmental agreement with the district to provide for the transportation of pupils and if the public transit carrier received direct payment for services or passes from a school district within its service area during the 2000-2001 school year, then the allowable direct cost of transporting pupils for regular, vocational, and special education pupil transportation shall also include the expenditures that the district has made to the public transit carrier. In addition to the above allowable costs school districts shall also claim all transportation supervisory salary costs, including Illinois municipal retirement payments, and all transportation related building and building maintenance costs without limitation.

Special education allowable costs shall also include expenditures for the salaries of attendants or aides for that portion of the time they assist special education pupils while in transit and expenditures for parents and public carriers for transporting special education pupils when pre-approved by the State Superintendent of Education.

Indirect costs shall be included in the reimbursement claim for districts which own and operate their own school buses. Such indirect costs shall include administrative costs, or any costs attributable to transporting pupils from their attendance centers to another school building for instructional purposes. No school district which owns and operates its own school buses may claim reimbursement for indirect costs which exceed 5% of the total allowable direct costs for pupil transportation.

The State Board of Education shall prescribe uniform regulations for determining the above standards and shall prescribe forms of cost accounting and standards of determining reasonable depreciation. Such depreciation shall include the cost of equipping school buses with the safety features required by law or by the rules, regulations and standards promulgated by the State Board of Education, and the Department of Transportation for the safety and construction of school buses provided, however, any equipment cost reimbursed by the Department of Transportation for equipping school buses with such safety equipment shall be deducted from the allowable cost in the computation of reimbursement under this Section in the same percentage as the cost of the equipment is depreciated.

On or before August 15, annually, the chief school administrator for the district shall certify to the State Superintendent of Education the district's claim for reimbursement for the school year ending on June 30 next preceding. The State Superintendent of Education shall check and approve the claims and prepare the vouchers showing the amounts due for district reimbursement claims. Each fiscal year, the State Superintendent of Education shall prepare and transmit the first 3 vouchers to the Comptroller on the 30th day of September, December and March, respectively, and the final voucher, no later than June 20.

If the amount appropriated for transportation reimbursement is insufficient to fund total claims for any fiscal year, the State Board of Education shall reduce each school district's allowable costs and flat grant amount proportionately to make total adjusted claims equal the total amount appropriated.

For purposes of calculating claims for reimbursement under this Section for any school year beginning July 1, 1998, or thereafter, the equalized assessed valuation for a school district used to compute reimbursement shall be computed in the same manner as it is computed under paragraph (2) of subsection (G) of Section 18-8.05.

All reimbursements received from the State shall be deposited into the district's transportation fund or into the fund from which the allowable expenditures were made.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any school district receiving a payment under this Section or under Section 14-7.02, 14-7.02b, or 14-13.01 of this Code may classify all or a portion of the funds that it receives in a particular fiscal year or from general State aid pursuant to Section 18-8.05 of this Code as funds received in connection with any funding program for which it is entitled to receive funds from the State in that fiscal year (including, without limitation, any funding program referenced in this Section), regardless of the source or timing of the receipt. The district may not classify more funds as funds received in connection with the funding program than the district is entitled to receive in that fiscal year for that program. Any classification by a district must be made by a resolution of its board of education. The resolution must identify the amount of any payments or general State aid to be classified under this paragraph and must specify the funding program to which the funds are to be treated as received in connection therewith. This resolution is controlling as to the classification of funds referenced therein. A certified copy of the resolution must be sent to the State Superintendent of Education. The resolution shall still take effect even though a copy of the resolution has not been sent to the State Superintendent of Education in a timely manner. No classification under this paragraph by a district shall affect the total amount or timing of money the district is entitled to receive under this Code. No classification under this paragraph by a district shall in any way relieve the district from or affect any requirements that otherwise would apply with respect to

that funding program, including any accounting of funds by source, reporting expenditures by original source and purpose, reporting requirements, or requirements of providing services.

Any school district with a population of not more than 500,000 must deposit all funds received under this Article into the transportation fund and use those funds for the provision of transportation services.

(Source: P.A. 95-903, eff. 8-25-08; 96-1264, eff. 1-1-11.)