



AMERICAN ACADEMY  
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## Carpool Policy

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*This policy was approved by the American Academy Board of Directors on September 21, 2011.*

### **Purpose**

This policy defines American Academy Carpool Procedures and Rules. Safety is the first priority at all times. Adherence to carpool procedures, rules, and attendants' directions is required of all students and families of American Academy.

### **Designated Status**

Each student will have a designated status of "walker", "carpooler", or "vip". The student will be dismissed according to their designated status. Parents may contact the school prior to 3:00 pm to inform the school of an exception or change in designated status.

### **Carpool Status**

By default, all students are designated as "carpoolers." Carpool students may walk home only if the parent informs the school prior to 3:00 pm and there is an approved Walker Form on file.

### **Walker Status**

Students intending to walk or bike to and from school on a regular basis may request "walker" status. Walkers will be dismissed through the walker door every day unless there is a pre-arranged exception for that day. Parents may set up a regular exception or they may contact the school on the day of an exception before 3:00 pm. Only students who can reasonably walk or bike from their home residence to the school will be approved as regular walkers. The school will accept the determination of a student's parent as to whether that student is eligible for walker status.

As a matter of policy and practicality, the school does not attempt to regulate the conduct of parents and students outside of school grounds. The school does, however, request that every parent and student act respectfully when travelling to and from school. All students and parents should be mindful that their actions impact the reputation of American Academy in the community.

### **Emergencies**

Emergency vehicles may need to reach the school during carpool. If this happens, please follow staff instructions. In the absence of staff instruction, make every effort to make way for emergency vehicles on your own. If you are exiting the parking lot, stop and wait for the emergency vehicle to move down Mira Vista. If you are blocking the roundabout, turn right and pull the into gym parking area, staff will get you back in line. Vehicles in the middle up Mira Vista Lane may pull up and over the curb to let an emergency vehicle pass.

### **Carpool Hours**

#### **All Grades K–8**

**Morning drop-off:** 7:35 am – 8:05 am\*. \*Students not in their seats by 8:05 am will receive a tardy slip.

**Afternoon pick-up:** 3:35 pm – 4:00 pm.

### **Carpool ID Cards**

Upon enrollment, each American Academy family is assigned a computer-generated **family number**. Four copies of this family number are printed by the school on authorized Carpool ID cards and distributed to each family during registration. These original ID cards, not copies, must be displayed on the visor, dashboard or windshield of the passenger side of the car and be clearly visible to carpool attendants. Please have your children memorize their family number. If you are carpooling you must have a Carpool ID card for each child being picked up.

Each family must provide a Carpool ID card to anyone else that is authorized to pick up your children. For security reasons, the carpool attendants will not allow a child to enter a car that is not displaying an authorized Carpool ID card. If you do not, or the driver of the car does not, have the student(s)'s Carpool ID card(s), let a carpool attendant know. You will be directed to pass the line, park in the school parking lot and enter the office to show ID before the student will be released to you. No one will be allowed to pick up students with outdated or hand-made cards. Carpool ID cards must be on display until you depart the school from drop-off or pick-up. Valid identification must be shown in order to get a replacement set and a **\$5 fee per set will be assessed**.

### **VIP Passes**

Each spring at the American Academy PTO Spring Gala, the school auctions off a limited number of VIP Passes for the following school year. Parents who purchase these VIP Passes are entitled to special access to the front of the carpool line in the afternoon. VIP Pass owners will be given a VIP Pass in addition to or in place of their family Carpool ID card. If you are a VIP driver, you must display your VIP Pass on the visor, dashboard or windshield of the passenger side of the car clearly visible to carpool volunteers in order to proceed to your designated VIP spot. **VIP cars must be in their designated places by 3:25 pm** or they will need to line up with the other cars. VIP Passes are good for one school year only, and will be open for bid for at the AAPTO Spring Gala every spring.

### **Morning Drop-Off Procedures**

There will be no red flags during morning drop-off, regardless of weather. If there is inclement weather in the morning, please check the school website for delays and cancellations. Make sure your children are dressed appropriately.

**Drivers may begin to line up no earlier than 7:30 am.** As they arrive, drivers will line up single file all the way to the right, starting at the student entrance. As the line grows outside of school boundaries, drivers will continue to line up single file on the right hand side of Mira Vista Lane leaving the left side clear for traffic exiting in the school in the opposite direction.

The designated drop off area, called the "cone zone", is between the student entrance and the cafeteria, and will be delineated using orange cones. The "cone zone" will be monitored by staff members during the designated carpool hours. **Parents may not let students out of the vehicle until a staff member indicates that carpool is ready to begin.**

**Carpool drop-off for all K-8 students begins at 7:35 a.m.** Once directed, cars in the designated drop-off area may release their students from the car from the **right side only**. At no time may students exit a car from the left side. Once children have exited their vehicles, they should enter the building through their designated student entrance and proceed directly to their classrooms. Parents should take care that all of their students reach the sidewalk safely before pulling forward. Students sometimes chase papers, balls, etc., moving unexpectedly to retrieve them, and are not easily seen by drivers.

**Students should be released from the car where the car comes to a stop in the carpool line.** Parents may not drive forward to release students closer to the entrance. Students who absolutely cannot walk to the student entrance from their drop-off point will be deemed unfit for recess and will be given strengthening exercises during recess to get in better shape.

If your student is on crutches or for some other reason is restricted from walking and /or needs an elevator pass, indicate this to carpool staff as you approach the main entrance. The cones will be moved so that you may pull close to the curb and unload your student(s) while other cars pass on the left.

Once the students have been released from the car and it is safe to pull forward, all drivers will proceed, single file and keeping to the right, through the AA parking lot onto Mira Vista Lane and eventually onto Lagae Road to exit car pool. The next group of cars will be directed to move into position in the "cone zone." Parents must pull all the way forward before releasing students.

Once morning carpool commences, all traffic going in and out of the school must be in the carpool lines and cars may not pass on the left on Mira Vista during carpool for any reason.

Tardy slips will be given for students dropped off after 8:00 am as students are required to be in their classrooms and seated at 8:05 am to begin school. If you arrive after the carpool attendants have gone inside for the morning, you must park your vehicle in the parking lot across from the main entrance (not in the carpool lane\*) and escort your child to the office to sign them in. Your child will receive a tardy slip. Should there be inclement weather, the carpool volunteer may stay longer to supervise drop off, and tardy slips may be suspended at the discretion of the office.

**\*Drivers may not park and leave their cars in the carpool lane at any time either during, before or after carpool.**

### **Afternoon Pick-Up Procedures**

Due to limited parking at the school, there are no provisions for inclement weather except for lightning. In the event of lightning, carpool will be suspended, and children and staff will proceed back inside the building. Carpool will resume when the threat is deemed by school security officials to have passed. Please provide your children with clothing appropriate for the weather.

**Drivers may begin to line up at the roundabout under the direction of carpool attendants no earlier than 3:00 pm.**

Drivers will line up single file, as close to the car in front and to the right hand curb as possible. No cars will be allowed to sit in front of the school or on Mira Vista prior to the commencement of afternoon carpool. Carpool attendants will place cones and provide direction on a daily basis. Please note that other drivers (such as employees, delivery vehicles, VIP carpool drivers, and after school car providers), as well as emergency vehicles that need to reach the school may pass on the left. As the line grows outside of school boundaries, drivers will continue to line up single file on the extreme right hand side of Mira Vista Lane leaving the left side clear for traffic exiting in the school in the opposite direction. No passing on the left of the carpool line once carpool begins moving. Parents needing to pull out of the line for emergency reasons may call the Front Office at 720-292-5200. Do not attempt to pull out of the line without the help of an attendant at any time.

**Pick-up will begin promptly at 3:35 pm.** Once afternoon carpool has commenced absolutely no traffic will be allowed to access the school via Mira Vista without joining the carpool lines.

Students will line up between the student entrance and the main/visitor entrance, staying on the sidewalk and watching for their vehicles. Once directed by a carpool attendant, cars may proceed to line up in front of the cone zone. **Students may only be picked up in the area designated by the "cone zone" or as directed by a carpool attendant.** All cars are expected to pull all the way forward in line, following the car in front and filling in all gaps. Parents may not stop when they see their student(s); they must pull forward behind the car in front of them and wait for the student to come to the car.

If your student is not waiting for you when you pull up in line to get them, you will be directed to pull forward towards the student entrance and park all the way to the right so that the carpool line may continue around you while you wait for your student. Your student will be recalled by a staff member with a radio. **While waiting in recall parking, parents must stay inside of, or next to their cars, to wait for their student/s.**

To ensure the continued safety of our students, parents will not be allowed at any time to approach the cone zone to pick up a child. Once the student has appeared, they must wait to be escorted by a carpool attendant across the crosswalk.

Parents arriving after carpool is finished must park their vehicles in the parking lot (not in the carpool lane\*) and go inside to the school office to sign out their child. Students who are picked up more than five minutes after carpool ends more than twice a week or four times during a month will be assessed a late pick-up fee (\$5 after 5 minutes, \$10 after 10 minutes, and \$25 after 15 minutes), which must be paid to the front office before student will be allowed to sign up for any activities.

**\*Drivers may not park and leave their cars in the fire lane in front of the school building at any time either during, before or after carpool. Drivers must park in the school parking lot.**

## **Carpool Rules**

The following rules apply to both morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up, and all carpool drivers are required to abide by these rules:

- **Do not exceed 10 mph on school property at any time for any reason.**
- **Do not block the crosswalk.**
- **Prepare your child for drop-off before you arrive at carpool.** Coats should be on or in hand, backpacks and lunchboxes should be packed, on laps or easy-to-reach, and when possible, children's seating order in the car should match the order in which they will exit the car. Make sure your child's backpack can be carried or maneuvered by that child.
- **Parents are expected to release their student(s) where the car stops in the carpool line.** Parents may not drive forward to release students closer to the entrance.
- **Respect the attendants and follow their direction at all times.** Staff and volunteers do their best every day to uphold the rules of the school and to make carpool run as smoothly and safely as possible.
- **Do not exit your car at any time, once you have entered the carpool line.** If your student requires assistance exiting or entering the car, you must wait for a carpool attendant or staff member to assist them.

**Parents must turn off cell phones when carpool is in progress.** Do not text, dial or talk on a cell phone during carpool. For everyone's safety, drivers must give driving their undivided attention.

- **Do not approach the carpool line on foot to pick up your child.** You will not be permitted to pick up your child this way.
- **Do not allow your student to enter or exit your car on the left side at any time.**
- **Do not line up prior to 7:30 am for morning carpool or 3:00 pm for afternoon carpool.**
- **Do not hold up the line by chatting with a staff member or carpool attendant.** Carpool is not the time or place for impromptu parent/teacher discussions.
- **Do not attempt to pass the car(s) in front of you at any time during carpool. Follow the car in front at all times.**
- **Do not hold up the carpool line if your child is not in the loading area.** Move forward to the recall area and pull as close to the curb either in front of or behind waiting cars so carpool line can continue you around you.
- Do not park and leave your vehicle in the carpool line or in the fire lanes. The school reserves the right to have any unattended vehicle immediately towed if the vehicle is impeding carpool or the arrival of an emergency vehicle.
- **Parking in the carpool cone zone is prohibited at all times.** This area is for loading and unloading only.

- **Do not at any time open the trunk of your car while in carpool.** If you must retrieve something from the back of your car, you must do this prior to entering carpool or after exiting.
- **Once carpool has begun, all traffic must travel with the carpool lines in and out of the school.**
- **Please use patience and courtesy with all other drivers, volunteers and students and staff members.**  
Respectful behavior is expected at all times of our students, our staff AND our parents!

### **Parking**

There is no overnight parking permitted in the American Academy parking lot. Do not park and leave your vehicle in the carpool line or in the fire lanes. The school reserves the right to have any unattended vehicle immediately towed if that vehicle is illegally parked or could impeded the progress of carpool.

### **Early Pick-Up**

If you need to pick your child up from school early for a doctor’s appointment or another pre-arranged reason, you must park in the parking lot and come to the front office to sign your child out. **Please note that early pick-up ends at 2:45 pm**—if you arrive after 2:45 pm, you will need to pick up your child in the carpool line. Early pickup is intended to be used as an exception and will not be allowed on a regular basis. Routine early dismissal is disruptive to the student(s) and the entire class. The office reserves the right to deny early pick-up.

### **Inclement Weather and Special Circumstances**

In the event of lightning or other extreme circumstance during afternoon pick-up, pick-up will be suspended and all staff members brought inside until it is safe to resume. Parents will wait in line in their cars for carpool to resume. Walkers will also be held until it is safe to release them.

### **Emergency Lock Down**

In the case of an emergency which requires the school to be locked down (e.g. criminal in area, crime scene next door, tanker truck spill), parents will be notified via email. Parents are not allowed into the building until the conditions have improved and the “all clear” has been given by the school. Parents will be notified when it is safe to pick up their children.

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#### **POLICY HISTORY**

*Original:* approved by the BOD on October 11, 2005

*Revision 1:* approved by the BOD on June 19, 2006

*Revision 2:* approved by the BOD on December 12, 2006

*Revision 3:* approved by the BOD on July 14, 2008

*Revision 4:* approved by the BOD on August 20, 2008

*Revision 5:* approved by the BOD on August 31, 2009

*Revision 6:* approved by the BOD on September 17, 2009

*Revision 7:* approved by the BOD on August 17, 2010

*Revision 8:* approved by the BOD on August 17, 2011

#### **SUMMARY OF REVISION 1**

Updated times for the 2006-2007 school year.

Integrated the 2006-2007 Kindergarten program

#### **SUMMARY OF REVISION 2**

Updated times for the main carpool line.

Added emergency lock down procedures.

**SUMMARY OF REVISION 3**

Compliance with 2008-09 facility lease: parking, driving speed, no left turn onto Park Meadows Drive  
Grade 8 included in policy.

**SUMMARY OF REVISION 4**

Revised kindergarten carpool hours and added the 8th grade procedure.

**SUMMARY OF REVISION 5**

First policy at new school location

**SUMMARY OF REVISION 6**

Minor corrections for the new school location

**SUMMARY OF REVISION 7**

Minor corrections after a year at the new school location

**SUMMARY OF REVISION 8**

Removal of references to the flag system