



AMERICAN ACADEMY
EDUCATE | INNOVATE | EXPLORE

Carpool Policy

This policy was approved by the American Academy Board of Directors on July 15, 2010.

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.

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. Parents/others without an authorized card will be directed to the front office to request a replacement card. 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. All vehicles next to the cones must release their students.

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.

Students not in their seats by 8:05 am will be marked tardy. If you arrive after 8:05 am, 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

There is limited parking at the school so there are no provisions for inclement weather except for lightning. Please provide your children with clothing appropriate for the weather.

Drivers may begin to line up no earlier than 3:00 pm. As they arrive, drivers will line up single file, as close together as possible, starting behind the “cone zone.” No cars will be allowed to sit in front of the “cone zone” prior to the commencement of afternoon carpool. The line will continue in front of the school and then pick up again along the extreme right-hand side of Mira Vista Lane. Do not line up in front of the school service entrance or along the roundabout. Please note that other drivers (employees, deliveries and VIP carpool drivers) and 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.

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 in the area designated by the orange cones (the “cone zone”). Once directed by a carpool attendant, cars may proceed to line up in front of the cone zone. Drivers may not block the crosswalk in the cone zone at any time. **Students may only be picked up in the area designated by the “cone zone”.**

If your student is not in the “cone zone” when you pull up in line to get them, you will be directed to pull into a designated recall parking space in the school parking lot to wait for your child so that the vehicles behind you may continue to exit the loading area. Once you begin moving, do not stop, even if you see your child. Proceed to recall parking so an attendant can safely get your child to you. **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. Families will be assessed a late fee per the Extracurricular Activities Policy.

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

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.
- **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.
- **Turn off your cell phone when carpool is in process.** Do not text, dial or talk on a cell phone during carpool. Parents seen texting or talking will be asked to place their phone down before entering the cone zone area.

- **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 7:35 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 the process.** Do not pull forward until the car in front of you does.
- **Do not hold up the carpool line if your child is not in the loading area.** Please move to the recall area quickly to keep the line moving. Once moving, **do not stop** to collect or wait for your child – move to recall parking.
-
- **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. 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, a red flag will be placed outside the front door of the school, children will be directed into the cafeteria, gym or school hallways and afternoon pick-up will be suspended 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), a **black flag** will be displayed notifying parents of the lock down. During a black flag lock down, parents are not allowed into the building until the conditions have improved and the "all clear" has been given by the school. Parents should park in the parking lot, stay in their cars and periodically check their phone messages for an update from the school.

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 6:* approved by the BOD on July 15, 2010

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