



Approved: 10/8/2026

Student Transportation Policy

Policy No. 5022

Freedom Preparatory Academy (FPA) is not legally required to provide daily transportation to and from school. FPA's approach is to provide safe transportation for school-sponsored activities, and help families find safe, reliable ways to get to and from school.

When FPA does provide transportation, it is required to do so safely and in compliance with federal and Utah law. This policy explains who is eligible for transportation, what transportation FPA offers, and the standards for vehicles, drivers, student conduct, and emergencies.

Definitions

1. **"School Bus"** means a vehicle designed to transport students that meets the federal motor vehicle safety standards for school buses under 49 U.S.C. §30101 et seq. and the Standards for Utah School Buses and Operations incorporated by R277-601.
2. **"Non-CMV Vehicle"** means a vehicle that does not require a commercial driver license (CDL) to operate and does not meet any CMV definition in 49 CFR 390.5.
3. **"FPA Vehicle"** means any vehicle owned, leased, or rented by FPA.
4. **"Private Vehicle"** means a vehicle owned by an employee or approved volunteer and used to transport students for an FPA activity.
5. **"Approved Driver"** means an employee or volunteer who meets the requirements and has been approved by the building principal or designee.
6. **"School-Sponsored Activity"** means a field trip, athletic event, competition, or other activity planned, supervised, and approved by FPA.

Transportation FPA Offers

FPA offers the following transportation:

1. **School-sponsored activities.** FPA provides transportation for field trips, athletics, and other school-sponsored activities using school buses, chartered buses, FPA vehicles, or approved private vehicles, as described in this policy.

2. **Daily transportation to and from school.** FPA offers bus routes that pick students up or drop off at designated stops. Seats are given on a first come basis at a designated time in August that is communicated from the school.
3. **Family transportation support.** Families arrange carpools directly with each other; FPA staff do not organize or supervise carpools.

How Families Learn About and Request Transportation

FPA will describe its transportation options in enrollment materials, the Parent/Student Handbook, and on the school website. Families may ask for transportation help at any time by contacting the front office.

Federal and State Compliance

FPA will follow all federal and Utah laws on school buses, commercial motor vehicles, and student transportation, including:

1. Driver hiring and qualifications (49 CFR Parts 390 and 391).
2. Driver drug and alcohol testing (49 CFR Parts 40 and 382).
3. Commercial driver licensing, including the passenger (P) and school bus (S) endorsements required to operate a school bus (49 CFR Part 383).
4. School bus equipment and operation (Utah Code Title 41, Chapter 6a, Part 13; Utah Admin. Code R909-3; and R277-601, including the Standards for Utah School Buses and Operations).
5. Student transportation standards and procedures (R277-600), if FPA operates bus routes or seeks state transportation funding.

Driver Responsibility and Use of Electronic Devices (R277-601-3)

A school bus driver's first responsibility is always the safety of passengers and the public. While driving, a school bus driver may not use:

1. a cell phone;
2. any other wireless electronic device;
3. any headset, earpiece, or earphones; or
4. any other equipment that might distract the driver.

Two-way radios and mounted GPS units used for route operations are allowed.

Once the bus is stopped and safely secured, a driver may use an electronic device:

1. in an emergency;
2. to assist students with special needs;
3. for behavior management;
4. to coordinate field trips or activity trips;
5. for other FPA business; or
6. for personal use, but only when all passengers are off the bus and at a safe distance.

Drivers of FPA and private vehicles must also follow Utah law on handheld device use while driving.

End-of-Route Inspections (R277-601-3)

After every route, athletic trip, or field trip, the driver must:

1. park the bus in a safe location;
2. walk the full length of the bus interior to confirm every student has exited; and
3. complete this check at the school site when possible, and again after the last student exits.

If a student is found on the bus, the driver will immediately contact the front office and follow FPA procedures to return the student safely to a parent or guardian or to the school. Failure to complete an end-of-route inspection may result in discipline, up to and including termination.

Private Vehicles (Employees and Volunteers)

Private vehicles should be used only when a school bus, common carrier, or public transit is not reasonably available. Drivers using a private vehicle to transport students for an FPA activity must:

1. be at least 21 years old;
2. give the front office copies of a current Utah driver license and proof of auto liability insurance that meets FPA minimums;
3. complete a background check as required by FPA volunteer and employee policies;
4. make sure every passenger uses their own seat belt or required child restraint, with no exceptions;
5. carry no more passengers than the vehicle has seat belts;
6. transport at least two students at a time, or have a second approved adult in the vehicle, unless a parent or guardian has given written consent for one-on-one transport;
7. parent drivers may transport their own children. Transportation of other students is permitted only with prior written consent from the student's parent or legal guardian.
8. drive only the approved route.

A driver's personal auto insurance is the primary coverage in an accident. Students may not drive other students to or from any school-sponsored activity, and staff may not organize student carpools.

Student Conduct and Safety

Riding FPA-provided transportation is a privilege. FPA's student code of conduct applies on all buses, vans, and vehicles, at bus stops, and during activity travel. Students must:

1. stay seated and wear a seat belt when one is provided;
2. follow the directions of the driver and chaperones;
3. keep hands, feet, and objects inside the vehicle;
4. use respectful language and a quiet voice; and
5. not eat, drink, or use vaping or tobacco products in the vehicle.

Drivers will report safety or behavior concerns to FPA administration. Consequences follow FPA's discipline policy and may include loss of riding privileges.

Permission, Supervision, and Emergencies

1. **Permission.** Students may not leave campus for a school-sponsored activity without written parent or guardian permission.
2. **Accidents and emergencies.** The driver will make sure students are safe, call 911 when needed, and contact the front office right away. Administration will notify parents or guardians as soon as possible. The driver or trip leader will complete a written incident report within 24 hours, and FPA will make any reports required by law or by its insurer.
3. **Evacuation drills.** Each bus driving a route will take part in bus evacuation drills as required by the Standards for Utah School Buses and Operations.
4. **Weather and cancellations.** The Executive Director or designee may delay or cancel transportation because of weather, road conditions, or other safety concerns. Families will be notified through school messaging system and email.

Bus Routes and Stops

If FPA operates daily bus routes, FPA will:

1. design routes and stops for safety, using the most direct public route that is practical;
2. post route and stop information for families; and
3. review routes and stops at least once a year for safety and efficiency.

Training, Records, and Inspections

The Facilities Director or designee will keep the following records for at least 3 years, or longer if required by law:

1. driver qualification files, licenses, MVR checks, background checks, and training certificates;
2. drug and alcohol testing records for CDL drivers, as required by 49 CFR Part 382;
3. vehicle inspection, maintenance, and repair records;
4. trip approvals, permission forms, and passenger lists; and
5. mileage, minutes, and trip records.

School buses will be inspected as required by the Utah Highway Patrol and the Standards for Utah School Buses and Operations. Drivers will complete a pre-trip and post-trip inspection for every trip.

References

- Utah Code Title 41, Chapter 6a, Part 13 (school bus equipment and operation), including 41-6a-1308 (advertising)
- Utah Code 53-8-211.5 (vehicles designed for 11 or more passengers)
- Utah Code Title 76, Chapter 10, Part 15 (Bus Passenger Safety Act)

- [Utah Admin. Code R277-600, Student Transportation Standards and Procedures](#)
- [Utah Admin. Code R277-601, Standards for Utah School Buses and Operations,](#)
including R277-601-3
- Utah Admin. Code R909-3 (school bus standards, Utah Department of Transportation,
Motor Carrier Division)
- 49 U.S.C. §30101 et seq.; 49 CFR Parts 40, 382, 383, 390, and 391