

Carpool Transportation Info

Organizing A Carpool

2009/01/20

This information is provided solely with the intent to help attendees of Focus Day. The disclaimer up front: anyone wishing to make carpool arrangements with friends or strangers does so by their own prerogative – WSPTA has not made nor will make any arrangements with anyone wishing to carpool. WSPTA is not providing any specific recommendations, warranties, or reimbursements.

This doc compiles generic tips on organizing a carpool – some of this material was pulled from the internet -- no recommendations or warranties made! Please use your best resources and judgment in making decisions. Please pass along any info you discover that you think others would benefit from too -- we are all learning as we go.

Some material is duplicated from other resources available on the Focus Day webpage.

Additional info includes:

- What to know about drop-off/pick-up, and parking at the capitol, etc.
- Your RLC(Regional Legislation Chair) may be able to help "link up some paths enroute" to help fill car seats by stopping a time or two to pick up more riders to share in the cost -- get a feel for what areas are looking at organizing rides.

Online Resources

Check the WSPTA Focus Day webpage for additional resources and info to share on the ride down. Several companion files are on the WSPTA Focus Day webpage for carpool organizers to organize and record rider information: **Template Files for Organizing Carpool & Bus Riders** (in Excel or PDF; *FD09_Transpo_Bus_Carpool_Forms_v1.xls/pdf*).

There are also templates of signs to put in the car windows – messages and identification to find your ride home!

Look at:

www.wastatepta.org/leg/session_09.htm, or

http://www.fundingwaschools.org/index_files/Focus_Day_2009_WSPTA_Funding_WA_K12_Schools.htm

Drivers and Carpools: Get driving directions, parking info and a Campus map off the WA Gov website - <http://www.ga.wa.gov/Park/visitor.htm> (also on the WSPTA website – directions are on the back).

Olympia Parking is 50-cents per hour – bring lots of \$1 bills and quarters. Most parking is uncovered surface lots; there is shuttle service to the more outlying parking.

Carpool Tips

Review these guidelines to get the most out of your carpool arrangement.

Cover the basics

- Clearly define who drives there, who drives back, and who's vehicle is driven.
- Where will you meet?
- When will you meet?
- Clearly state the number of seats available -- the number that counts is the number of full seats available for riders.
- Make sure every driver has a valid license and the vehicle valid auto insurance.
- Get everyone's cell number and e-mail addresses, and emergency backup contact #.
- Be safe – don't meet one-on-one with a stranger.
- Meet at public places – your school building, churches, Park & Rides, etc.
- Tell people with whom you are riding, leave contact info and a schedule.

Additional Do's

- Be on time at the designated meeting place for departure and return.
- Exchange cell phone or tele contact number among every rider within a vehicle.
- Communicate with your fellow carpoolers. If you're running late, call to let them know -- give your carpool partners ample notice to make other arrangements.
- Drivers: contact everyone on your list the day before.
- Drivers: drive safely at all times.
- Drivers: please have your vehicle clean and in good condition.
- Drivers: Make a sign to put in your car window so riders can find the car afterwards!
- Discuss carpool costs - passengers generally chip in to cover gas and parking.
- Respect any behavior restrictions the carpool has agreed on (smoking, eating, etc).
- Get to know your fellow carpoolers -- sometimes it feels more comfortable meeting prospective carpoolers before driving together for the first time. It's OK to plan to talk on the phone or meet at a public place to discuss carpool specifics. If anyone still feels uncomfortable after meeting, say so -- you are not obligated to carpool.
- Establish some rules -- each carpool member should have a chance to express his/her concerns; carpoolers should agree upon on certain ground rules:
 - food, coffee, smoking and perfume/cologne usage
 - radio choices
 - how long drivers will wait for delays
 - who is notified if someone is sick
 - driving safety

Please DON'Ts:

- Don't be late!
- Don't ask to make extra stops along the way to take care of personal errands.
- Don't bring up controversial topics unless you know your fellow carpoolers well. While some people enjoy debating the issues, others may prefer a quieter commute.
- Don't have lengthy cell phone conversations.

Additional Background on Carpooling

How do I find other carpoolers? You can find carpoolers in a number of ways – talk to folks! You can put the word out at school or work that you'd like to carpool, either by sending out an e-mail or posting a notice. Ask your leadership to formally promote carpooling – goal is to have every PTA unit send at least 4 people!

Is carpooling safe? Statistics show carpooling is very safe. However, you must keep your personal safety in mind. If you are considering carpooling with people you do not know, you should meet with them in person beforehand. This meeting will serve two purposes. First, you'll have a chance to discuss your ideas on setting up a carpool without obligating yourself to do it. Second, you'll be able to assess your comfort level with the people. Ask questions and trust your instincts. If you feel uncomfortable about someone, don't carpool with that person. You can simply say that you've decided carpooling won't work for you.

Are carpoolers supposed to take turns driving? They can, but it's not a requirement -- most carpools may include people who will not drive at all. In these cases the "riders" should plan to pay the driver an agreed-upon amount to help out with driving costs.

What are some ways to organize picking up and dropping off people on carpool days? There are a number of different ways to organize the logistics. If carpool members live close to each other, then the driver can simply come by each person's house to pick them up. If that's not feasible, then carpoolers can meet at one of the members' houses or a centrally located public place. Keep in mind that there are also Park-and-Ride lots throughout the region that can serve as meeting points. On the other end of the commute, carpoolers can plan to meet at a centrally located spot for the driver to pick them up if they don't work at the same company.

Are there any insurance or liability issues I need to be aware of? Insurance policies vary, and it may be a good idea to check your policy — primarily the Exceptions/Exclusions portions. General liability insurance covers passengers, and most policies would not exclude carpool members, but it is worth checking.

How much should a non-driver in a carpool pay? It will vary depending on the carpool. However, some guidelines to consider include how much the driver spends on gas and wear and tear. Below is a table provided by AAA to show average operating costs per mile.

Keep in mind that this table does not include parking fees or tolls. Learn more about [AAA's Cost of Driving calculations](#).

	Small Sedan	Medium Sedan	Large Sedan	Average
Operating Costs	per mile	per mile	per mile	per mile
Gas	8.0 cents	9.8 cents	10.7 cents	9.5 cents
Maintenance	4.5 cents	4.9 cents	5.4 cents	4.9 cents
Tires	0.5 cents	0.8 cents	0.7 cents	0.7 cents
Cost per Mile	13.0 cents	15.5 cents	16.8 cents	15.1 cents