

School Vehicle Use Policy

Olivet Academy Amenia | Issued by the Transportation Department

Purpose. School vehicles are provided for approved school activities and limited approved staff airport transportation. This policy defines permitted trips, approved drivers, and when advance permission and a reservation are required. School vehicles are resources entrusted to our community. We ask everyone who uses them to care for them as good stewards and to help keep our students, staff, and one another safe.

Effective date	_____	Approved by	_____
Policy owner	Transportation Department	Review date	_____

1. Permitted use

School vehicles may be used only for the following purposes:

- Transporting students to church worship services and church retreats.
- Taking students to a hospital or medical appointment when arranged or approved by the school. In a medical emergency, call 911 first.
- Transporting students to or from an airport on school-designated departure and return dates for school breaks.
- Taking students shopping only on dates designated by the school.
- Transporting students to or from school athletic activities.
- Another trip specifically approved by the school before the vehicle is used.

To protect our students, our insurance coverage, and the school's resources, school vehicles are not used for:

- Personal errands or personal travel, other than the staff airport trips in Section 2.
- Church or ministry activities other than transporting students to worship services and retreats (for example, visitation, church events, or moving supplies).
- Paid rides or deliveries, or towing a trailer.
- Carrying alcohol, cannabis, illegal drugs, weapons, or hazardous materials.

If you are not sure whether a trip fits, please check with the Transportation Department before using the vehicle.

2. Staff airport transportation

As a school benefit, staff may use a school vehicle for their own airport transportation when traveling to depart from or return to the United States on school-designated dates. Staff must personally pay all fuel and toll costs for this trip, settled as directed by the Business Office (for example, refueling to the starting level and reimbursing any E-ZPass charges). The trip must be scheduled in advance so the school can reserve the vehicle and coordinate an approved driver. Staff must first obtain approval using the Staff Vehicle Use Approval Form and attach it to the app reservation (see Section 9). Family members traveling with the staff member may ride along. The vehicle should go directly to and from the airport and should not be left parked at the airport unless the Transportation Department agrees in advance. The school may apply tax treatment to this benefit as required.

3. Drivers

Only drivers designated by the school may operate a school vehicle. A vehicle reservation or approval does not authorize an otherwise unapproved person to drive. The approved driver for the trip must be identified in the reservation.

Approved drivers may be staff members or volunteers from our community. Every approved driver must:

- Be at least 25 years old and hold a valid U.S. driver's license with at least three years of driving experience.
- Have an acceptable motor vehicle record (MVR), checked before approval and once a year, and be accepted by the school's insurer.
- Complete the school's driver orientation, including instruction on the 14-passenger vans before driving one.
- Complete the school's background screening for adults who transport students.

Volunteer drivers must confirm with the Transportation Department in advance which school vehicles they are approved to drive.

Students may not drive a school vehicle. Please let the Transportation Department know right away if your license status changes, you receive a traffic conviction, or anything else may affect your ability to drive safely. The Transportation Department may pause driving approval when needed for safety.

4. Safe operation

- **Traffic laws.** Obey all traffic laws and speed limits, and drive for the road and weather conditions.
- **Seat belts and capacity.** Everyone wears a seat belt whenever the vehicle is moving. The school has two 14-passenger vans and one 7-passenger van (not counting the driver); never carry more passengers than the vehicle's seat belts or rated capacity.

- **Family members.** Family members of the driver or trip staff may ride on an approved trip when seats are available and students are not displaced; please note them on the reservation. Young children must use a car seat or booster seat as required by New York law.
- **Phones.** Do not hold or use a phone while driving. Set navigation before leaving; if a call is necessary, use hands-free or pull over safely.
- **Fit to drive.** Do not drive after drinking alcohol or using cannabis or drugs, or while taking medication that causes drowsiness. No smoking or vaping in school vehicles.
- **Rest.** Take a break at least every two hours. Trips with more than [4] hours of driving one way, or returning after [11:00 p.m.], need a second approved driver or advance approval from the Transportation Department.
- **Weather.** The Transportation Department may cancel or postpone a trip because of weather or road conditions. If a trip feels unsafe, do not start or continue it; contact the Transportation Department.
- **Luggage.** Keep luggage clear of exits, windows, and the driver's view, and do not load cargo on the roof. In the 14-passenger vans, keep heavy loads forward of the rear axle.
- **Unattended vehicles.** Never leave students alone in a vehicle. Turn off the engine, take the keys, and lock the vehicle when leaving it.

5. Caring for students on the road

- Carry a passenger list and emergency contact information for each student, and count students before leaving and before each return leg.
- Please avoid transporting one student alone with one adult. When this cannot be avoided (for example, a medical appointment), let the Transportation Department or the dorm staff on duty know the departure and expected return times, take a direct route, and have the student sit in the rear seat. This protects both the student and the adult.
- Students follow the driver's directions. Please share any safety concerns about student behavior with the Transportation Department after the trip.
- A staff member who takes a student to a hospital or medical appointment stays responsible for that student until the student is back under school supervision or with an authorized adult.

6. Vehicle care and return

- Before each trip, do a quick walk-around: tires, lights, mirrors, fuel, and dashboard warning lights. If something looks unsafe, do not use the vehicle and tell the Transportation Department.
- Record starting and ending mileage, and any problems, in the vehicle log or reservation system.

- Return the vehicle on time and clean, with at least [one-half] tank of fuel, to its designated parking spot, and return the keys and fuel card.
- Report any damage or mechanical problem, even a small one, so it can be fixed before the next trip.

7. Accidents and breakdowns

- Stop in a safe place, turn on hazard lights, and make sure everyone is safe. Call 911 if anyone is hurt or if police are needed.
- Contact the Transportation Department as soon as it is safe to do so.
- Exchange information with other drivers, take photos, and use the insurance card kept in the vehicle. Please do not admit fault or discuss liability at the scene.
- Complete the school's incident report within 24 hours. The school will handle insurance and any required New York DMV reports.

8. Traffic tickets and damage

Traffic tickets and parking fines received while driving a school vehicle are the driver's responsibility. If damage results from careless use or from not following this policy, the Transportation Department will talk with the driver about covering the cost.

9. Advance approval and reservations

Every use of a school vehicle must be reserved in the Vehicle Reservation app in OAc Connect. Please reserve at least one day in advance when possible; reservations can be made at any time, including the same day, when a vehicle is available. The reservation should show the trip purpose, destination, date and times, passengers (including any family riders), vehicle, and driver.

- **Urgent situations.** If a reservation cannot be made in the app, contact the Transportation Department coordinator, Matthew Na, and reserve verbally before using the vehicle. The reservation will then be recorded in the app.
- **Staff use.** Staff who wish to use a school vehicle for their own travel, including airport trips under Section 2, must first get approval from the designated approver using the separate Staff Vehicle Use Approval Form. Attach the approved form to the reservation in the app.
- **Other purposes.** A trip for a purpose not listed in Section 1 needs approval from the Transportation Department before it is reserved.

The Transportation Department may assign the vehicle and driver based on availability and the approved trip.

10. Scope and responsibility

A school vehicle may not be used for an unlisted or unapproved purpose. The person requesting the trip must provide accurate trip details and follow the approved schedule and any directions given by the school. Any change in purpose, destination, timing, passengers, vehicle, or driver must be reported to the Transportation Department and approved before the changed trip proceeds. Please update the reservation in the app, or contact the coordinator if the change is urgent.

If this policy is not followed, the Transportation Department may pause or withdraw driving approval, and serious or repeated concerns will be shared with the School Administration.

Questions or requests for an exception should be directed to the Transportation Department before the vehicle is used.

The Transportation Department will review this policy each year, and after any serious incident, together with the school's insurer.

11. Driver acknowledgment

I have read this School Vehicle Use Policy and agree to follow it. I understand that driving a school vehicle is a trust given to me by our school community, for the safety of our students and one another.

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____