

**Sample School District Policy
Regarding the
Idling of School Buses and Other Vehicles on School Property**

Be it resolved that the Board of Education, recognizing the importance of the safety and health of the district's students and staff, does hereby adopt the following policy regarding the idling of school buses on school property.

Background and Intent

The health impacts of exposure to diesel exhaust and diesel particulate matter are significant and well documented. They include asthma and other respiratory illness, lung and breast cancer, and heart problems. Children are particularly vulnerable due to their narrow airways and rapidly developing bodies. The purpose of the policy is to reduce student, staff and driver exposure to harmful emissions found in diesel exhaust by eliminating the unnecessary idling of school buses on school property.

Application

This policy shall apply to all school buses operated by or for the district for the purpose of transporting the district's students to or from school or school related activities, whether the buses are owned by the district or by an independent vendor.

Implementation

1. The driver of a diesel school bus must turn off his engine upon arrival at a school. The engine must remain off until the bus is loaded (or unloaded) and is ready to depart from school property.
2. If more than one bus is involved in the boarding process, all buses must be loaded and doors closed before engines are started.
3. The district shall communicate this policy to all parents, administrators, teachers and other staff or district employees involved with transportation. Appropriate signage shall be posted at each school and inside buses to remind drivers and school staff of the policy. The provisions of this policy shall be incorporated by reference in all transportation contracts and agreements.
4. School bus drivers, whether employed by the district or by an independent vendor, will be informed of the district's policy and advised of the requirements of the drivers.

Exemptions

The provisions of this policy shall be suspended under the following conditions:

1. If the outside temperature at the school is less than 20 degrees Fahrenheit, buses shall be permitted to idle for up to five minutes, or as much time as local regulations permit, whichever is shorter.
2. When bus engines are required to operate special equipment for disabled students.
3. When the use of defrosters, heaters or other equipment is required for safety or health considerations, as determined by the district's Director of Transportation.
4. When use of the bus headlights or four-way flasher warning lights is required for visibility purposes; or for other traffic, safety or emergency situations.

Additional Applications

This no-idling policy shall also apply to all cars and any other vehicles operating on school properties during school hours (except when engines are required for operation of equipment). The district shall inform parents, staff and district vendors of the policy, and the policy should be referenced in all new contracts and service agreements.

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This sample policy was developed by Grassroots Environmental Education, a science-based non-profit organization. The policy is part of the EPA award-winning ChildSafe School program. More information is available at www.TheChildSafeSchool.org.

