

IDLING PROHIBITION FOR BUSES AND OTHER SCHOOL VEHICLES

Allowing vehicles to idle (i.e., stopped with the engine running) produces unnecessary exhaust gas, which contains harmful chemicals and pollutants. In addition to negatively impacting the environment, these substances can cause cancer and other health problems, especially in children. Idling vehicles is not necessary to properly run or maintain vehicles, and in fact increases engine wear and wastes fuel.

Recognizing these factors, the Board of Education shall take steps to reduce the idling of school buses and other school vehicles. In compliance with Education Law §3637 and Commissioner's Regulations §156.3(h), this policy shall govern the idling of school buses and all other school vehicles, whether owned, leased, or contracted for by the district.

Anyone operating a school bus or other school vehicle must turn off the engine (no idling) in the following instances:

- while waiting for passengers to load and unload on school grounds;
- when the vehicle is parked or standing on school grounds, or in front of or adjacent to any school; or
- during sporting and other school events.

However, idling may be permitted under the following conditions:

- when necessary to maintain an appropriate temperature for passenger comfort (if auxiliary heaters are not available);
- when necessary for mechanical work, or to keep the windshield clear of ice; or
- when necessary during emergencies to operate a wheelchair lift.

The district shall provide notice of these requirements to all school personnel within 5 school days after the start of the school year, or within 5 school days of beginning employment in the district.

When operating any school vehicle, drivers are encouraged to allow adequate space between their vehicle and any heavy duty motor vehicle in front of them. This will reduce the effect of exhaust emissions of the front vehicle on the air quality inside the school vehicle. When planning field trips and transportation routes, the Board also encourages using newer school vehicles for longer trips and older vehicles for shorter trips, when newer vehicles have lower emissions.

Bus Loading and Unloading Practices

Each Building Principal is responsible for developing and implementing a plan for loading and unloading buses in a safe and prompt manner that minimizes exposure to bus exhaust emissions.

When designing new or renovated school facilities, projects shall take into account the goal of prompt loading and unloading of buses.

When possible, drivers must park diagonally to minimize exhaust from the bus from entering adjacent buses or school buildings. Additionally, all staff shall instruct students to board the bus promptly in the afternoon to reduce loading time.

Contracts for Student Transportation

If the district contracts with private vendors for student transportation services, any such contract entered into on or after July 1, 2008 shall include a provision requiring compliance by the vendor with the state's bus idling laws and regulations and this policy.

Monitoring and Review

The Transportation Supervisor shall be responsible for monitoring compliance with this policy. At least semi-annually, the district shall monitor compliance with the law and regulations summarized in this policy, and prepare a written report. Such report shall describe the actions taken to review compliance, and the degree of adherence to law and regulations. These reports shall be kept in the district's files for six years, and shall be made available upon request.

The Board shall receive a periodic report on the district's compliance with this policy.

Ref: Vehicle and Traffic Law §142
Education Law §3637
8 NYCRR §156.3(h)
6 NYCRR Subpart 217-3

Adoption date: May 12, 2009