

School Bus Idling Policy

8410.5
5731

Mahopac Central School District
Policy Number:
Effective Date:

Applicability:

For purposes of this policy, an "idling school bus" shall mean a school bus that is parked or stopped at a school or other location and has its engine running. This policy applies to the operation of every district-owned and/or contracted school bus.

Rationale:

The Board of Education recognizes the need to promote the health and safety of District students and staff and to protect the environment from harmful emissions found in bus exhaust, in particular diesel exhaust, by eliminating the unnecessary idling of all school buses on school property including all schools within the District or at any school or school related activities to which District students are transported. Diesel exhaust from idling school buses can accumulate in and around the bus and pose a health risk to children, drivers and the community at large. Exposure to diesel exhaust can cause lung damage and respiratory problems. Diesel exhaust also exacerbates asthma and existing allergies, and long-term exposure is thought to increase the risk of lung cancer. Idling buses also waste fuel and financial resources.

Purpose:

Eliminate all unnecessary idling by district school buses such that idling time is minimized in all aspects of school bus operation.

Guidance:

In accordance with the Rules and Regulations of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), excessive idling of certain vehicles is illegal in New York State.

1. When school bus drivers arrive at loading or unloading areas to drop off or pick up passengers, they should turn off their buses as soon as possible to eliminate idling time and reduce harmful emissions. The school bus should not be restarted until it is ready to depart and there is a clear path to exit the pick-up area. No school bus shall idle for more than five (5) consecutive minutes when not in motion. Exceptions include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - A. The bus is forced to remain motionless because of the traffic conditions over which the driver has no control.
 - B. Idling due to sub 25-degree weather. Such idling should take place in designated areas outside the school zone as outlined below.
 - C. Auxiliary function such as wheelchair lifts if the operation requires the engine to continue running.

- D. When operation of the vehicle is required for maintenance, including necessary pre-trip safety inspections.
 - E. Emergency circumstances
2. At school bus depots, limit the idling time during early morning warm-up to what is recommended by the manufacturer (generally 3-5 minutes) in all but the coldest weather.
 3. Drivers of each school bus shall:
 - A. Instruct pupils on the necessity to board the school bus promptly in the afternoon in order to reduce loading time;
 - B. Whenever possible, park the school bus diagonally in school loading areas to minimize the exhaust from adjacent buses that may enter the school bus and school buildings; and
 - C. Turn off the bus engine while waiting for students during field trips, extracurricular activities, sporting events or other events where students are transported off school grounds.
 4. In colder weather, if the warmth of the bus is an issue, idling is to be at a very minimum and occur outside the school zone. The "warmed" bus is to enter the school zone as close to pick-up time as possible to maintain warmth and then shut down.
 5. All service delivery vehicles shall turn off the engines while making deliveries to school buildings.

Publication of District Policy/Bus Driver Training:

1. This policy shall be posted at the Transportation Department and bus garage.
2. Signs shall be prominently posted at each school and facility entrance(s) stating: "No Idling Zone". Please do not idle for more than 5 minutes on school campus.
3. The Director of Transportation shall provide training to District bus drivers/transportation personnel on the District's idling reduction program and other practices for environmentally friendly bus operations to reduce school bus emissions and minimize exposure to bus exhaust.
4. All drivers shall receive a copy of this bulletin at the beginning of each school year, and shall acknowledge awareness of this policy.
5. As may be applicable, the District shall ensure that each vendor/contract bus company receives a copy of the District policy regarding idling of school buses and shall provide any educational materials, regulations and/or procedures developed by the District with regard to meeting training requirements of the District's idling reduction program.

- A. The vendor/contract bus company shall receive all of the above documents as part of the bid process and shall provide training for all currently employed bus drivers/transportation personnel.
 - B. The vendor/contract bus company must also ensure that newly hired bus drivers, upon employment, are informed of the District policy.
 - C. The provisions of this policy shall be incorporated by reference in all transportation contracts and agreements.
6. All Administrators shall post a copy of this bulletin in their respective buildings at the beginning of each school year, and make employees and students aware of this policy.
 7. All students with On-Campus Parking Permits shall receive a copy of this bulletin at the beginning of each school year, and shall acknowledge awareness of this policy.

Monitoring, Reporting and Sanctions for Violations of District Policy:

1. The District will periodically, but at least semi-annually, monitor and enforce compliance with this policy; and any person may report incidents of noncompliance by contacting the Director of Transportation
2. The District shall prepare a written report of such review, which shall describe the actions taken to review compliance and the degree of adherence found with the provisions of the applicable law.

Cross Reference:

State Regulations 6 NYCRR § 217-3; Education Law § 3637; Commissioner's Regulation 156.3(h)

FINAL 10/21/10
POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
APPROVED: 12-14-10

