

School Bus Idling Policy

Greene County School District

Policy Number: 3.400 Exhibit A

Effective Date: December 13, 2018

Applicability:

This policy applies to the operation of every district-owned and/or contracted school bus.

Rationale:

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 exhaust can cause lung damage and respiratory problems. Exhaust may exacerbate asthma and existing allergies. Idling buses also waste fuel and financial resources.

Purpose:

Eliminate unnecessary idling by Greene County school buses (including activity buses) and minimize idling time in all aspects of school bus operation.

Guidance:

1. If there is a wait time of more than five (5) minutes when arriving at a loading/unloading zone to pick up or drop off students, school bus drivers 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. Exceptions include conditions that would compromise passenger safety, such as extreme weather, idling in direct traffic, or necessary idling for use of the bus safety lights/equipment or wheelchair type lifts.
2. Limit idling time during early morning warm-up to what is recommended by the manufacturer (generally 3-5 minutes) in all but the coldest weather. Exceptions include idling necessary for pre-trip inspection and idling necessary to defrost windows and mirrors for safe driving.
3. Buses should not idle while waiting for students during field trips, extracurricular activities, or other events where students are transported off school grounds.
4. In cold weather, schools are directed to provide a space inside the school where bus drivers can wait if they have shut down their bus.
5. In colder weather, if the warmth of the bus is an issue, idling is to be at a very minimum and occur outside of the school zone. The "warmed" bus is to enter the school zone as close to the pick-up time as possible to maintain warmth and then shut down if there is a wait time of more than five (5) minutes.
6. All currently employed drivers shall receive a copy of this policy and be trained regarding the policy's requirements. As part of the onboarding and/or new hire

process, all new drivers shall receive a copy of this policy and be trained regarding the policy's requirements.

7. Excessive idling by the driver may result in disciplinary action.

General Exemptions:

The actions outlined in the Guidance section above need not apply for the period(s) during which idling is necessary:

1. While Stopped:
 - a. For an official traffic control device;
 - b. For an official traffic control signal;
 - c. For traffic conditions over which the driver has no control, including, but not limited to, stopped in a line of traffic; or
 - d. At the direction of a peace officer;
2. To ascertain that the school bus is in a safe operating condition and equipped as required by all provisions of law, and all equipment is in good working order, either as part of the drivers daily vehicle inspection, or as otherwise needed;
3. For testing, servicing, repairing or diagnostic purposes by maintenance staff;
4. To cool down a turbo-charged diesel engine for turning the engine off, for a period not to exceed five (5) minutes (as per the recommendation of the manufacturer);
5. To operate:
 - a. A lift or other piece of equipment designed to ensure safe loading, unloading, or transport of persons with one or more disabilities; or
 - b. A heater or an air conditioner of a bus or vehicle that has, or will have, one or more children with exceptional medical needs aboard whose IEP requires such;
6. To operate defrosters, heaters, air conditioners, or other equipment to ensure the safety or health of the driver or passengers
7. To recharge a battery or other energy storage unit of a hybrid electric bus.

Additionally, zero emission electric buses are exempt from this policy as they do not emit harmful exhaust while at idle. Non-electric buses may also be exempt from this policy in the instance that they are equipped with onboard anti-idling technologies (e.g., fuel operated heaters / direct fired heaters).