

**TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT:  
SCHOOL BUS IDLING**

The board recognizes that emissions that accumulate from school buses can be harmful to students and bus drivers. The board further recognizes that unnecessary bus idling wastes fuel and financial resources. The board is committed to transporting students on school buses in a manner that is safe and consistent with the board's goal of resource conservation. To this end, the board prohibits all unnecessary school bus idling on school grounds. In addition, the board prohibits the warming up of buses for longer than 5 minutes, except in extraordinary circumstances or circumstances beyond the bus drivers' control.

**APPLICABILITY** This policy applies to the operation of every district-owned school bus, maintenance vehicle and any other vehicle on school grounds.

**RATIONALE** 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 Sharyland ISD school buses such that idling time is minimized in all aspects of school bus operation as well as eliminating all unnecessary idling of all other vehicles on school grounds.

**GUIDANCE**

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. Exceptions include conditions that would compromise passenger safety, such as: (a) Extreme weather conditions; (b) Idling in traffic; and (c) Loading/unloading students with special needs, as necessary.
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. 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 colder or hotter weather, schools are directed to provide a space inside the school where bus drivers who arrive early can wait.
5. 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.
6. All service delivery vehicles shall turn off the engines while making deliveries to school buildings.
7. Transportation Operations staff are directed to revise bus schedules so that school bus caravanning can be avoided and the cleanest buses assigned to the longest routes.
8. All drivers shall receive a copy of this bulletin at the beginning of every school year.

**SIGNAGE**

To the extent practicable, the principal/district will post “no idling” signs to alert bus drivers and parents to turn off vehicles when waiting or parked. The principal will ensure that parents in carpool lanes are informed of the school’s “no idling” policy.

**ADMINISTRATIVE DECISION: APPROVED April 25, 2007**