

SCHOOL BUS IDLING

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 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 Ticonderoga Central School District school buses and minimize idling time in all aspects of school bus operation.

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 extreme weather or idling in traffic.
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 weather, schools are directed to provide a space inside the school where bus drivers 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 policy at the beginning of every school year.

Reviewed: June 2023
Adopted: July 2023