



SCHOOL BUS NO IDLING POLICY

Breathe Better Maine Applicability: This policy applies to the operation of every fossil fuel powered school bus. **Rationale:** According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), exposure to diesel exhaust, even at low levels, is a serious health hazard and can cause respiratory problems such as asthma and bronchitis in young children. Diesel emissions are well-documented asthma triggers and may increase the severity of asthma attacks. Asthma is currently the number one cause of missed school days for American children with more than 1 in 10 children in New England reporting asthma attacks. In addition to the Maine Department of Education, The Maine Department of Environmental Protection and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency support this initiative. The American Lung Association and the Maine Association for Pupil Transportation also endorse this no idling policy.

The _____ (School District) and _____ (Contractor) agree to undertake the following steps immediately:

- School bus drivers shall shut off bus engines immediately upon reaching destination, and buses will not idle while waiting for passengers. This rule applies to daily route travel, field trips, and transportation to and from athletic events. School buses will not be restarted until they are ready to depart and there is a clear path to exit the pick-up area.
- School bus companies and drivers will limit idling time during early morning warm-up to the manufacturer's recommendation-generally 3-5 minutes in all but the coldest weather. Below are recommended guidelines, however, in warmer months idling is not necessary.

If the outside temperature is: Above 20 degrees F: 5 minute maximum Between -10 and 20 degrees F: 15 minute maximum Below -10 degrees F: as necessary

- Schools will provide an indoor waiting space for drivers who arrive early and need to keep warm. This reduces the need for bus idling.
- Transportation operations staff will evaluate and shorten bus routes whenever possible, particularly for buses with the least effective emissions control technologies (often older buses). _____ (Contractor) will review bus purchasing schedules and routing to further improve emission reduction. It is important to note that a reduced rider eligibility standard is not the intention of this policy.
- School district bus drivers will complete a "no idling" training session. All bus drivers should receive a copy of this policy or equivalent educational materials at the beginning of every school year.
- To reduce engine warm-up time, avoid starting difficulties, and help defrost windows, block heaters that plug into electrical outlets (where available) or, inline auxiliary fuel



fired heaters will be utilized. New bus specifications should include auxiliary heat technology that reduces the need to operate the bus engine while parked during periods of cold weather.

- If a bus currently needs the engine to be running to run flashing lights during longer duration loading and unloading, _____ (Contractor) will install a heavy duty battery system, an extra battery and/or change the circuit configurations to power lights by battery without running the engine.
- Exceptions to this policy are granted only when running the engine is necessary to operate required safety equipment or to maintain a safe environment for students with special health needs.

Agency or Company Representative: _____

Name of Individual Authorizing Implementation: _____

Date Accepted: _____