SCHOOL BUS IDLING POLICY

ACTIONS TO ELIMINATE UNNECESSARY IDLING

I. Morning Delivery in school loading/unloading zones – NO IDLING ZONE
   A. Drivers should cut off engine as ASAP
      i. Lift bus drivers may need to leave the engine running if loading or unloading a wheelchair
      ii. Special needs bus drivers may need to idle for heat or air conditioning to accommodate a medically fragile student
   B. Driver should not start engine again until a check for students and belongings is completed and driver is ready and it is clear to depart (keep radio on for communication)

II. Afternoon Pick-Up in school loading/unloading zones – NO IDLING ZONE
   A. Drivers should cut off engine as ASAP (keep radio on for communication)
      i. If this is driver’s 2nd load then be sure to check for students and belongings upon arrival
   B. If the school is designed for angle parking, then utilization in the afternoon will place the exhaust further away from student walk paths and the school
   C. In cold weather the school may permit drivers to enter the school and go to a designated location to stay warm
      i. Remember to respect the educational environment
   D. OR in cold weather drivers may congregate on one bus (for health and safety) and keep only one engine running while waiting for P.M. dismissal
      i. If drivers gather on one bus be sure the bus is well away from the school and any school building air intakes
   E. Drivers MUST ensure that they are back on their bus prior to dismissal
   F. Driver should not start engine again until driver is ready and it is clear to depart

III. Field & Athletic Trip destinations – NO IDLING ZONE
   A. Drivers should not idle while waiting for students during field or athletic trips
      i. Exception would be for driver/student health and safety under extreme temperature conditions (see #5, “Exceptions”, item “c”)
         a. Minimize idling under these conditions and move the bus to a position well away from the school/building where possible
            i. When idling is required to warm or cool the bus if the driver is required to stay with the bus for security reasons
            ii. When idling is required to warm or cool the bus prior to departure
IV. Pre-Trip Inspection
   A. Drivers should keep idling to a minimum
      i. Limit to the time required for inspecting the bus and the equipment on the bus
         a. No more than 8 to 10 minutes (see #5, “Exceptions”, item “c”)
      ii. Drivers should not routinely start and unnecessarily leave the bus running

V. Exceptions – Provided all reasonable steps are taken to minimize idling, the following exceptions apply:
   A. Idling is sometimes required in freezing weather
      i. For deicing the windshield
      ii. Or to thaw air brake lines
   B. Idling may be necessary for passenger and driver health and safety
      i. If the outside temperature is 32 degrees Fahrenheit or below, then idling MAY be required for adequate heat
      ii. If the outside temperature is 75 degrees Fahrenheit or more, and the climate inside the bus is unsafe, then idling COULD be required for adequate cooling (not to be abused).
         a. BUT the lowering of windows and other measures to minimize or eliminate idling at these warm weather temperatures is highly desired (preferred method)
         iii. Recommend that idling take place outside the school zone in the afternoon (where possible) if there is a requirement to maintain a safe and healthy temperature
            a. In this case you would enter the school zone just prior to dismissal and shut off the engine
   C. Extended idling may also be required for cold weather fleet start-up
      i. If the outside temperature is 20 Fahrenheit degrees or below

Georgia’s 18,000 school bus driver’s actions to eliminate unnecessary idling can make a significant impact. Collectively, they can make a huge difference in creating a healthier and cleaner environment and in protecting THEIR health and the health of THEIR STUDENTS.

Remember – under all conditions, including the exceptions noted, eliminate any unnecessary idling.