

No-Idling Policy: Sample Language for School-Contracted Vehicles

Idling wastes fuel, causes wear and tear on engines and contributes to pollution and health risks. This is especially harmful for kids. Kids' lungs are still developing; they breathe faster and are closer to vehicle tailpipes than adults. Breathing in polluted air can make asthma worse and cause other health problems. **One easy step a school can take to protect student health is to include no-idling language** in contracts with bus companies and other businesses making deliveries to the school. Examples are provided below. Customize the language as needed.

No-Idling Requirement | No exception language:

The contractor will make sure all vehicles turn off their engines right away upon reaching the designated loading and unloading area on school grounds or within 100 feet of a school building and should not restart the engine until they are ready to depart. Idling is not allowed while waiting for passengers to load or offload and while parked during field trips, athletic events or other school-related activities.

Engine Idling Limits | Operational time clause:

Contractor agrees to reduce unneeded idling of all vehicles by prohibiting idling while on school property. Engines must be turned off when parked or waiting for passengers. In extreme weather [**below x or above y degrees**], engines may run only as needed to maintain passenger safety or comfort, not exceeding three minutes, and vehicles should be positioned away from air intakes and open-door locations.

Compliance With Local Law | Use when local policy is in place:

The contractor shall comply with all local and state regulations and Board of Education Policies (specifically Policy [**insert number**]) regarding the restriction of vehicle idling. All vehicle drivers shall be trained annually on the Idle Free policy, and engines should be turned off right away upon arrival at school grounds.

Considerations:

- **Include a definition of idling:** Idling occurs when the engine is running but the transmission is not engaged, or the vehicle is in park.
- **Scope:** Include that the policy applies to all school-related use of the bus(es) such as daily routes, field trips and charter services.
- **Accountability strategies:** Provide the company and drivers with a copy of this policy before the start of each school year or their first trip to the school. They can confirm receipt with their signature.
- **Driver training:** Require the company to train drivers each year on the policy.
- **Exceptions:** Include exceptions for safety (extreme weather, traffic or emergency situations).
- **Enforcement and consequences:** Clearly define penalties for repeat violations or required driver re-training. For example, "Any driver found in violation of the no-idling policy will receive a warning for

the first offense. Further violations by the same driver or company will result in [insert penalty, e.g., removal of the driver from the district route or a monetary deduction from the monthly contract payment]."

- **Signage:** Add language stating that the school will post signs at the drop-off and loading areas saying NO IDLE ZONE (with a graphic showing the back of a bus with an X through the tailpipe).
- **School building air intake and open door locations:** Provide a map of the school that marks all air intakes and entrance and exit locations used at drop-off and pickup times.