

By: Blanco

H.B. No. 2661

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to requiring school districts to adopt a policy regarding the idling of the engine of a school bus.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Chapter 34, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 34.0032 to read as follows:

Sec. 34.0032. BUS IDLING POLICY. (a) In this section, "idling" means allowing an engine to run while the motor vehicle is not engaged in forward or reverse motion.

(b) The board of trustees of each school district shall adopt a policy that minimizes the amount of time that drivers of buses operated or contracted for operation by the district spend idling the bus engine. The policy shall:

(1) to the extent practicable, require a bus to be engaged in forward or reverse motion when the bus engine is running;

(2) require that a bus driver promptly turn off the bus engine on arrival at a loading or unloading area;

(3) require that, before departing a loading or unloading area, the bus driver not start the bus engine until the bus is prepared to engage in motion;

(4) require a bus driver to limit idling time before departure to the time recommended by the bus manufacturer to heat or cool the bus as necessary;

(5) to the extent practicable, minimize the time

1 students spend on a bus traveling to and from school; and

2 (6) require a sign with the words "No Idling" to be  
3 posted on each district campus in each area where students are  
4 regularly dropped off or picked up.

5 (c) To maximize the effectiveness of a policy adopted under  
6 Subsection (b), a school district may:

7 (1) review any federal, state, or local regulations  
8 relating to engine idling to ensure the district's policy is  
9 consistent with those regulations;

10 (2) offer training on the policy for bus drivers  
11 employed by the district;

12 (3) perform random checks at bus depots, loading  
13 areas, unloading areas, and other areas where idling may occur to  
14 ensure bus drivers are complying with the policy;

15 (4) use technology designed to reduce idling to  
16 optimize fuel economy, equipment operation, and student comfort;

17 (5) develop strategies to recognize bus drivers who  
18 successfully reduce idling of the bus engine;

19 (6) if the school district contracts with a mass  
20 transit authority, commercial transportation company, or juvenile  
21 board for any part of the district's public school transportation,  
22 coordinate with the authority, company, or board to ensure  
23 compliance with the policy;

24 (7) develop and implement educational programs for  
25 students on strategies for preventing and reversing air pollution,  
26 including methods to reduce engine idling;

27 (8) encourage local governmental entities to adopt

1 idling reduction plans and programs; and  
2 (9) publicize the success of the district's policy and  
3 any additional district idling reduction programs.

4 SECTION 2. This Act applies beginning with the 2019-2020  
5 school year.

6 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
7 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as  
8 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
9 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
10 Act takes effect September 1, 2019.