

By: Blanco

S.B. No. 681

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 34.0031 to read as follows:

Sec. 34.0031. 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, to the extent practicable:

(1) 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 campus loading or unloading area or bus station, depot, or terminal located on or within one-half mile of a district campus;

(3) require that, before departing a campus loading or unloading area or bus station, depot, or terminal located on or within one-half mile of a district campus, 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

1 departure to the time recommended by the bus manufacturer to heat or
2 cool the bus as necessary;

3 (5) minimize the time students spend on a bus
4 traveling to and from school; and

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

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

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

13 (2) offer training on the policy for bus drivers
14 employed by the district;

15 (3) perform random checks to ensure bus drivers are
16 complying with the policy at:

17 (A) bus stations, depots, and terminals;

18 (B) campus loading or unloading areas; and

19 (C) other areas where idling may occur;

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

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

24 (6) if the school district contracts with a mass
25 transit authority, commercial transportation company, or juvenile
26 board for any part of the district's public school transportation,
27 coordinate with the authority, company, or board to ensure

1 compliance with the policy;

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

5 (8) encourage local governmental entities to adopt
6 idling reduction plans and programs; and

7 (9) publicize the success of the district's policy and
8 any additional district idling reduction programs.

9 SECTION 2. This Act applies beginning with the 2021-2022
10 school year.

11 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
12 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
13 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
14 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
15 Act takes effect September 1, 2021.