



# PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION :: Howard N. Lee, *Chairman*

WWW.NCPUBLICSCHOOLS.ORG

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION :: Janice O. Davis, *Interim Officer*

July 22, 2005

## MEMORANDUM

TO: All Superintendents  
All Transportation Directors

FROM: Philip Price, Associate State Superintendent  
Derek Graham, Section Chief, Transportation Services

SUBJECT: Reduced Idling: Fuel Conservation and Student Health

Training resources are being provided so that personnel in your LEA – especially school bus drivers and transportation staff – can receive important information about how to help your LEA save fuel and help reduce student exposure to harmful emissions. This is particularly important in light of three critical factors:

1. **FUEL COST.** Statewide diesel fuel costs averaged \$1.45 per gallon during 2004-2005 and the current average price is over \$1.85 per gallon. While the state budget is not yet finalized, the proposed 2005-2006 budget for school transportation is based on an average price of \$1.05 per gallon. We anticipate that there will be a deficit in the budget for diesel fuel this year. While we will work diligently to identify additional resources to ease this financial burden, any efforts – including reduced idling - to decrease fuel consumption will help the situation.
2. **HEALTH EFFECTS.** Idling buses on school grounds generates harmful emissions in areas where students are waiting for buses and entering or exiting the school building. Shutting off the engines on school grounds creates a healthier environment for children.
3. **PENDING LEGISLATION.** House Bill 1502, the School Children's Health Act, requires the State Board of Education to *"Establish guidelines to reduce students' exposure to diesel emissions that can occur as a result of unnecessary school bus idling, nose-to-tail parking, and inefficient route assignments."* Further it requires that *"Local boards of education shall adopt policies and procedures to reduce students' exposure to diesel emissions."* This legislation has passed the House and has been referred to the Senate Education Committee. Any actions taken by your LEA to address items (1) and (2) above will put your Board of Education in a better position to develop a local policy if this legislation is passed.

## TRAINING MATERIALS

New training materials are now available at [www.ncbussafety.org](http://www.ncbussafety.org) (under *Reduced Idling Materials*). This information is very straightforward and will be useful information for transportation staff and school bus drivers, as well as school administrators.

School Administrators. In discussing these issues with school administrators, please consider using one or both of the following:

- A PowerPoint presentation entitled SAVE FUEL AND BREATHE EASIER is available for your use with administrators and bus drivers. It is a short presentation (only 16 slides) that can be covered in 10 minutes or so. This presentation was developed by DMV School Bus and Traffic Safety, DPI Transportation Services and the N.C. Division of Air Quality. From <http://www.ncbussafety.org/idling.html> RIGHT CLICK on the title of the PowerPoint and SAVE the file to the laptop that you will use for the presentation.
- A six minute Pennsylvania video entitled A HEALTHIER RIDE for administrators and transportation staff is available to be played from the Internet or downloaded to a laptop or CD. From <http://www.ncbussafety.org/idling.html> RIGHT CLICK on *A HEALTHIER RIDE* to save the file to a laptop.

School Bus Drivers. During your in-service training session with school bus drivers prior to school opening, please consider using the following:

- The same PowerPoint presentation was designed for use with school bus drivers. From <http://www.ncbussafety.org/idling.html> RIGHT CLICK on the title of the PowerPoint and SAVE the file to the laptop that you will use for the presentation.
- A six minute EPA video entitled REDUCING SCHOOL BUS IDLING is enclosed (transportation directors only). To download - from <http://www.ncbussafety.org/idling.html> RIGHT CLICK on REDUCED IDLING to save the file to a laptop.

## OTHER MATERIALS

Reduced Idling Stickers. Last year we issued dashboard stickers to remind school bus drivers to eliminate unnecessary idling. Enclosed with the transportation director copy of this memo are additional stickers for buses placed in service since the initial mailing of the stickers.

Clean School Bus USA. Enclosed are two brochures from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that contain additional information that you may find useful as you address school bus idling in your LEA.

If you need additional information regarding reduced idling and its benefits, please contact DPI Transportation Services at 919/807-3570.

PP:DG

Enclosures

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