

Breathe Better Program

Rollings Robo Knights

Rollings Middle School of the Arts will be participating in an anti-idling program called Breathe Better (B2) starting this month (December '08). B2 is a voluntary anti-idling program which will help reduce the amount of air pollution your children are exposed to from school buses and vehicles while on school grounds. To protect public health, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) sets standards for several outdoor air pollutants, including particulate matter (PM) and ground-level ozone. These two pollutants are of particular concern in South Carolina and both are the focus of B2.

Many local factors can contribute to PM and the formation of ground-level ozone, like emissions from vehicles and industry, wood burning and lawn maintenance. Our school will be addressing several factors that can help reduce some of these emissions. These actions may include reduction of idling vehicles in the school parking lot and carpool lane, tree planting to help filter airborne PM and landscaping to reduce the mowing area on the school grounds, thereby reducing emissions from mowers. We will also be working with our school bus drivers to implement a similar anti-idling strategy while buses are on the school grounds.

We hope that you, as a parent, will support this effort by turning off your vehicle's engine during morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up. We believe that this action will have a positive impact on your child's health. Children are at a higher risk from air pollution exposure because they often spend a large part of their time playing outdoors, and they breathe more than adults do. Children are also more likely to have asthma, which may be aggravated by certain air pollutants. Asthma in children is one the most common causes of school absences.

Look for the new voluntary anti-idling policy in the student/parent handbook and for the new anti-idling signs around the school campus. Reducing idling should help create a better learning environment for everyone!

Thank you for your cooperation.

Lucia Dantzler & the Rollings Robo Knights