CLEAN SCHOOL BUS PROGRAM

Thanks, in part, to support from Idaho Senators Crapo and Risch, Congress passed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act in 2021. In addition to making critical investments to improve our roads, bridges, broadband access, clean water supplies, and electrical grid, this landmark bill included $5 billion to upgrade our nation’s school bus fleets. Opening on May 20th, 2022, the Clean School Bus Program will fund low and no-emissions buses, saving school districts much needed funds and protecting our clean air and water.

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Photo by DenisseBLeon
**PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

The Clean School Bus Program provides $5 billion over five years (FY22-26) for the replacement of existing school buses with low- and zero-emission school buses (electric, compressed natural gas, or propane).

Districts who apply will be selected via a lottery system, with prioritization given to high-need districts, low-income areas, rural communities, and tribal school districts. With funding guaranteed for every state, interested Idaho districts should apply in the year one cycle.

**Program Timeline**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2022 CSB Rebates open. EPA begins accepting applications submitted via online form</td>
<td>May 2022 – August 2022</td>
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<tr>
<td>EPA reviews applications and begins the selection process</td>
<td>September 2022</td>
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<tr>
<td>EPA notifies applicants of selection status. Selectees can proceed with purchasing new buses and eligible infrastructure.</td>
<td>October 2022</td>
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<tr>
<td>Selectees submit Payment Request Forms with purchase orders demonstrating that new buses and eligible infrastructure have been ordered</td>
<td>Date of selection to April 2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project period deadline for selectees to receive new buses, install eligible infrastructure, replace old buses, and submit Close Out Form</td>
<td>October 2024</td>
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**Program Overview:** The EPA and partners have hosted multiple Webinars and Events to explain the details of the program. For an in-depth overview, potential applicants can see the Program Guide.

**Application Requirements:** The full list of requirements and the link to submit an application can be found here.

**Technical Assistance:** The EPA Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Resources page includes video overviews of charging basics, as well as additional resources and information about managing an electric fleet. School districts should also contact their local utility representative for district-specific assistance and coordination.
PROGRAM FUNDING & COST SAVINGS

The program’s maximum funding amount per bus is dependent on bus type and prioritization status (see below). Districts are also eligible for $13k-$20k in charging infrastructure per electric bus (ZE-Class 3+).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School District Prioritization Status</th>
<th>Replacement Bus Fuel Type and Size</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ZE – Class 7+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priority</td>
<td>$375k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eligible</td>
<td>$250k</td>
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</table>

Transitioning a fleet is a fiscally smart choice after the grant program ends as well. The Graph below shows that the saving of a LionC Electric Bus is lower than diesel even without the inclusion of grant funding.\(^1\)

\(^1\) "Lion Electric TCO Overview"
HEALTH & ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

**Air Quality:** Low and no-emission buses make air quality cleaner and safer for students, staff, and drivers. One study found that concentrations of air pollution were 4 to 12 times higher inside school buses than outside air quality.\(^2\) Another study found that while on buses, students experienced PM10 levels at levels 5 to 10 times higher than ambient air.\(^3\) The graph of one child’s backpack monitor is shown below.

![Graph of a child's backpack monitor showing particle pollution during bus ride](image)

**Academic Performance:** When exposure to emissions decrease students experience better overall health, perform better academically, and have higher attendance rates.\(^4\) In 2019, Georgia State University Researchers found that emission lowering retrofits raised English and Math scores.\(^5\)

**Noise levels:** According to Brad Redmond of the West Fargo, ND Public Schools’ transportation director: “Learning to drive the bus was easy, but one of the biggest benefits has been how much better the students behave due to the reduction in the bus noise levels.”\(^6\)

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PERFORMANCE & CHARGING

Electric buses are quiet, easy to drive, have as much or more power than standard diesel engines and perform well in extremely hot urban climates like Phoenix, Arizona to very cold and snowy rural communities like Tok, Alaska. More information about the electric buses and their specification guides can be viewed on their websites linked below:

Website:
- Lion Electric
- Blue Bird
- Thomas Built/Proterra

Specification Guide:
- Lion Electric
- Blue Bird
- Thomas Built/Proterra

Estimating your Fuel Savings:
Idaho Power has developed a fleet conversion tool for school districts to understand the fuel savings associated with switching over to electric. The conversion tool can be customized with your fleet size and charging times:

Fleet Conversion Fuel Savings Estimator

This Fuel Savings Estimator tool is designed to help you understand how much you might save on fuel costs when you convert your fleet from gasoline or diesel to electricity. Review various charging cost scenarios with different rate programs below. Begin by adding information about one of the vehicle types in your fleet, then add additional vehicle types to get a full picture of your savings opportunity.

**STEP 1: Select a Vehicle**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vehicle Category</th>
<th>Vehicle Class</th>
<th>Vehicle Count</th>
<th>Avg Miles/Day Per</th>
<th>Miles/Year/Vehicle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Bus</td>
<td>Type C</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>9,386</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Select Gas/Diesel Vehicle

| School Bus (Type C) - Diesel - National Average - All Types - (7.0€ - |
| Local fuel price/gal | Est. MPG of vehicle | Gallons/Year/Vehicle |
| $ 3.90           | 24               | 391             |

Select Electric Vehicle

| 2020 - Lion Electric - LionC All-Electric Type |
| Est. mile/kWh |
| 3.07       |
The conversion tool is available on Idaho Power’s website. Districts in Idaho Power’s service territory can get more information by contacting their Idaho Power representative or emailing ev@idahopower.com. Districts outside Idaho Power’s service area will experience different, yet comparable, savings.

**CLEAN BUSES IN IDAHO AND NATIONWIDE**

Several transportation services in Idaho have already switched over to electric buses, including Idaho National Laboratory, Valley Regional Transit, and Mountain Rides. Multiple districts throughout the state, including Twin Falls and West Side, have also added propane buses to their fleet.

2022 has seen a boom in U.S. school districts switching to electric buses, motivated by the savings and health benefits. As of February 2022, 354 districts across the nation have incorporated 1,800 electric school buses into their fleets. This represents a 50% growth over the last 6 months. ⁷

**MORE INFORMATION**

Contact CVI Program Manager Ryan McGoldrick at ryan@cvidaho.org for more information.

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