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Help Your School Buy Electric Buses



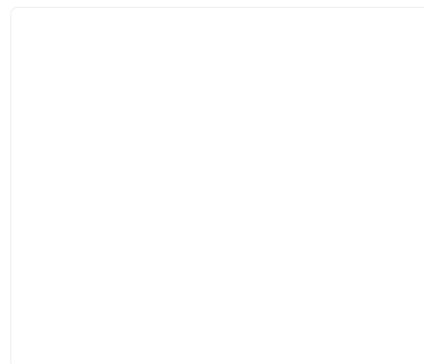
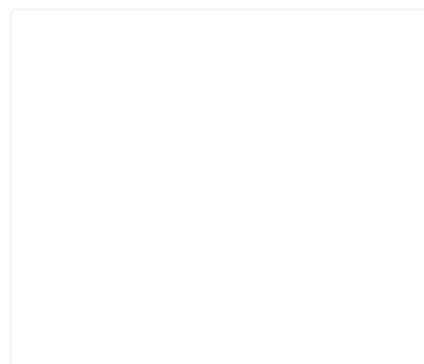
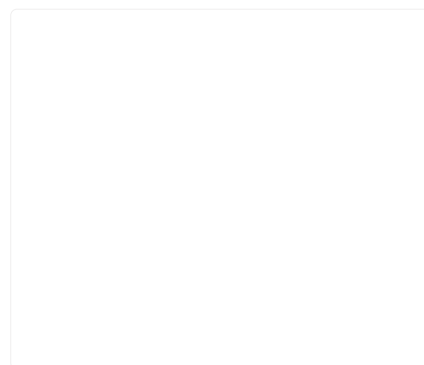
By [Gemma Alexander](#)

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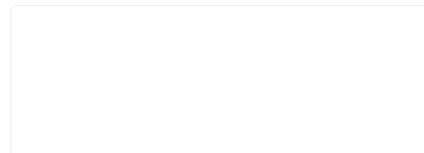
[bus, electric vehicle](#)



Depending on where you live, you might not see a lot of electric vehicles on the road. Combustion engine cars still outnumber EVs by nearly **a hundred to one**. But there is no question that EVs are **on the rise**. California plans to **ban the sale** of new combustion engine vehicles by 2035. General Motors recently announced it will **only sell zero-emission vehicles** by 2035. It's only a matter of time before the American auto fleet goes completely electric. You might live in a neighborhood dotted with charging stations. Or the sight of a Tesla might still raise eyebrows where you live. But it's a safe bet that your



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community's school buses are still belching diesel fumes.

Electric Buses

A single school bus emits more than **54,000 pounds** of greenhouse gases in a year. Air quality inside a diesel bus is five times worse than the air outside, and children who are exposed to the polluted air on diesel school buses receive **lower test scores**. Electrifying the entire **fleet** of U.S. school buses would reduce greenhouse gas emissions by approximately **8 megatons per year** and reduce emissions from all U.S. buses by 35%. But until recently, **electric school buses** were so expensive (costing about double the price of a diesel bus), that school districts rarely even considered replacing retired diesel buses with new electric ones.

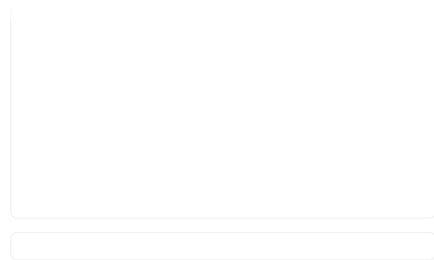
Federal Funding for Zero-Emission Buses

The bipartisan infrastructure investment package passed in January commits to a \$5 billion investment for low and zero-emission school buses over the next five years. Now, the **first \$500 million** has been made available for school districts and other eligible school bus operators and contractors to begin replacing the nation's fleet of school buses with American-made, zero-emission buses. The EPA will also launch a grant competition later this year. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law will fund additional competitions every year over the next five years.

Help Your School Get Electric Buses

For this first round of funding, EPA is currently accepting applications online through the **Clean School Bus** program. In addition to public school districts, tribal organizations and/or BIA-funded schools, some contractors, and nonprofit school transportation associations are eligible to apply. Districts wishing to participate must register a SAM.gov account and submit their application by August 19. The application process differs from prior EPA school bus rebate programs. A series of webinars are scheduled through the summer. They will provide additional information about the program and how to apply for funding. Recordings of past events appear to be available. But with the deadline fast approaching, schools should not wait to start their applications.

For school administrators preoccupied with safety issues like mass shootings and COVID, cleaner transportation may not be on the radar this summer. But no school administrator wants to leave funding on the table. And schools have to replace their



bus fleet on a regular schedule; buses last from 12-15 years, with a current average age of 10 years. Reach out to your local school district offices and school board to make sure they know that this money is available now.

Questions about applying may be directed to

CleanSchoolBus@epa.gov.

advertising



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8 Sustainable Packaging Labels



By [Gemma Alexander](#)

Gemma Alexander has an M.S. in urban horticulture and a backyard filled with native plants. After working in a genetics laboratory and at a landfill, she now writes about the environment, the arts and family. See more of her writing [here](#).

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