Fact Sheet

May 2023

EPA 2023 Clean School Bus Grant Program

Key Points

- The Environmental Protection Agency's 2023 Clean School Bus (CSB) grant program focuses on the replacement of existing school buses with clean and zero-emission models.
- Approximately $400 million is anticipated to be awarded through the grants.
- A total of approximately 25 to 50 cooperative agreements are expected to be awarded under this announcement, subject to the availability of funds, the quantity and quality of applications received, Agency priorities, and other applicable considerations.
- Electric cooperatives are encouraged to consider the opportunities presented by this grant program.
- Application packages must be submitted **electronically** to EPA by **Tuesday, August 22, 2023, at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time (ET)** to be considered for funding.

Program Details

CSB grants provide funding to eligible recipients so that they may replace existing school buses with clean and zero-emission (ZE) models. Eligible activities include the replacement of existing internal combustion engine (ICE) school buses with electric, propane, or compressed natural gas (CNG) school buses, as well as the purchase of electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE) infrastructure and EVSE installations. For each fiscal year between 2022 and 2026, $500 million is available to fund ZE and clean school buses, and $500 million is available to fund only ZE school buses.

This CSB Grants Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) is a competitive grant program. Unlike the 2022 CSB Rebate Program which utilized a lottery to select winners, this grant competition will require an application that will be scored based on the criteria included in this NOFO. The CSB program anticipates opening another CSB Rebates funding opportunity later this year, which would fund similar activities, though has a shorter application, different selection mechanism, and different program requirements. Information on all CSB programs can be found at www.epa.gov/cleanschoolbus.

IMPORTANT DATES

- Monday, April 24, 2023, Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Opens Wednesday
- Wednesday, July 26, 2023, Final Date to Submit Questions
- Tuesday, August 22, 2023, NOFO Closes – Application Deadline
- November 2023 to January 2024 Anticipated Notification of Selection
- February to March 2024 Anticipated Awards

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EPA anticipates awarding approximately $400 million in CSB funding under this NOFO, subject to the availability of funds, the quantity and quality of applications received, and other applicable considerations. No cost sharing or matching is required under this funding opportunity.

Per-Bus Funding Levels and Prioritization Status

School District Prioritization Status	Replacement Bus Fuel Type and Size					
	ZE* – Class 7+	ZE* – Class 3-6	CNG– Class 7+	CNG – Class 3-6	Propane – Class 7+	Propane – Class 3-6
Buses serving school districts that meet one or more prioritization criteria	Up to $395,000 *(Bus + Charging Infrastructure)*	Up to $315,000 *(Bus + Charging Infrastructure)*	Up to $45,000	Up to $30,000	Up to $35,000	Up to $30,000
Buses serving school districts that are not prioritized	Up to $250,000 *(Bus + Charging Infrastructure)*	Up to $195,000 *(Bus + Charging Infrastructure)*	Up to $30,000	Up to $20,000	Up to $25,000	Up to $20,000

*Funding levels include combined bus and EV charging infrastructure. Recipients have flexibility to determine the split between funding for the bus itself and the supporting infrastructure.

EPA is providing two separate competitions under this single NOFO to address the unique needs and concerns of diverse recipients and encourage participation in the CSB grant programs:

School District Sub-Program

Eligible Entities:

- **Public School Districts**
  1. One or more local or State governmental entities responsible for:
     a. Providing school bus service to one or more public school systems; or
     b. The purchase, lease, license, or contract for the service of school buses.
  2. A public charter school district responsible for the purchase, lease, license, or contract for the service of school buses for that charter school; or
- **Tribal Applicants**
  3. An Indian Tribe (as defined by section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act, 25 U.S.C. 5304), Tribal organization (as defined by the same section), or tribally controlled school (as defined by section 5212 of the Tribally Controlled Schools Act of 1988, 25 U.S.C. 2511) that is responsible for:
     a. Providing school bus service to one or more Bureau-funded schools (as defined by section 1141 of the Education Amendments of 1978, 25 U.S.C. 2021); or
     b. The purchase, lease, license, or contract for the service of school buses.

Applicants in the School District Sub-Program must request a minimum of 15 school buses and can request up to a maximum of 50 school buses.

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Third Party Sub-Program

Eligible Entities:

- **Third Parties**

  1. A nonprofit school transportation association; or
  2. An eligible contractor.

     Eligible contractor, as defined by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, Public Law 117-58 (42 U.S.C. 16091), means any for-profit, not-for-profit, or nonprofit entity that has the capacity (1) to sell, lease, license, or contract for service clean school buses, ZE school buses, charging or fueling infrastructure, or other equipment needed to charge, fuel, or maintain clean school buses or zero-emission school buses, to individuals or entities that own, lease, license, or contract for service a school bus or a fleet of school buses; or (2) arrange financing for such a sale, lease, license, or contract for service. This group generally includes school bus dealers, Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs), school bus service providers, and private school bus fleets that provide student transportation services.

Applicants in the Third-Party Sub-Program must request a minimum of 25 school buses and may request up to a maximum of 100 school buses.

EPA anticipates awarding a total of approximately 25 to 50 cooperative agreement(s) under this announcement, subject to the availability of funds, the quantity and quality of applications received, Agency priorities, and other applicable considerations.

Eligible Buses to Replace

- Be a vehicle model year 2010 or older diesel-powered school buses that will be scrapped if selected for funding.
- If a fleet has no eligible 2010 or older diesel school buses and is requesting zero-emission school bus replacements, the fleet may either:
  - Scrap 2010 or older non-diesel internal combustion engine buses, or
  - Scrap, sell, or donate 2011 or newer diesel or non-diesel internal combustion engine buses.
- Have a Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) of 10,001 lbs or more.
- Be fully operational at the time of application submission. Operational vehicles should be able to start, move, and have all necessary parts to be operational.
- Have provided bus service to a public school district for at least 3 days/week on average during the 2022/2023 school year at the time of applying.

Replacement Buses

- Have a battery electric, CNG, or propane drivetrain. Biofuels will not be included as an eligible replacement technology for this funding opportunity.

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- Be a new EPA or California Air Resources Board (CARB) certified vehicle model year 2021 or newer. EPA's engine emission standards may be found at: www.epa.gov/emission-standards-reference-guide/all-epa-emissionstandards.
- Have a Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) of 10,001 lbs. or more.
- Be ordered after receiving official notification of selection for EPA funding.
- Be purchased, not leased or leased-to-own.
- Serve the school district listed on the application for at least five years from the date of delivery.
- Meet federal safety standards and be maintained, operated, insured, registered, and charged/fueled according to manufacturer recommendations and state requirements.
- Not be manufactured or retrofitted with, or otherwise have installed, a power unit or other technology that creates air pollution within the school bus, such as an unvented diesel passenger heater.
- Not be purchased or otherwise subsidized with other federal grant funds.

Infrastructure

- Charging equipment (such as alternating current (AC) Level 2 charging equipment, direct-current (DC) fast charging equipment, or vehicle-to-grid (V2G) enabled equipment).
- Design and engineering; installation costs such as trenching, wiring and electrical upgrades, labor, and permitting; and related intelligent equipment and software designed to monitor bus and infrastructure performance (such as telematics or charge management software).
- Funds can be used for battery energy storage systems (BESS) associated with new electric school buses funded in the program, as well as renewable on-site power generation systems that power the buses and equipment. To be eligible, these systems must be on the customer's side of the electrical meter.
- EPA funds ***must not*** be used for any infrastructure costs associated with work on the utility's side of the electrical meter.
- All electricians installing, operating, or maintaining EVSE must meet one of the following requirements:
  - (i) Certification from the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Training Program (EVITP), OR
  - (ii) Graduation or a continuing education certificate from a registered apprenticeship program for electricians that includes charger-specific training and is developed as a part of a national guideline standard approved by the Department of Labor in consultation with the Department of Transportation.
- Applicants should be aware that Build America, Buy America requirements apply to eligible vehicle charging infrastructure equipment.

Application Process

Application packages must be submitted **electronically** to EPA through Grants.gov (www.grants.gov) no later than **Tuesday, August 22, 2023, at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time (ET)** to be considered for funding.

Application Information: https://www.epa.gov/cleanschoolbus/clean-school-bus-program-grants

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Contact Information

For further information, applicants should email written questions to: cleanschoolbus@epa.gov.

EPA will respond to questions from individual applicants regarding threshold eligibility criteria, administrative issues related to the submission of the application, and requests for clarification about any of the language or provisions in the announcement through the questions and answers document. Information regarding this NOFO obtained from sources other than these Agency Contacts may not be accurate. Please type "Clean School Bus NOFO Question" in the subject line of your email. All questions submitted via email will be answered and posted in the online FAQ document.

The deadline for submitting questions via email is **Wednesday, August 9, 2023, at 11:59 p.m. (ET)**. The final posting of the questions and answers document will be Wednesday, August 16, 2023.

All applicants are encouraged to review the questions and answers document posted at https://www.epa.gov/cleanschoolbus/clean-school-bus-program-grants for further clarification of this NOFO.

Related NRECA Resources

- **Infrastructure Resource Hub**
- **Electric Vehicle Consortium – CAVE: Cooperative Approach to Vehicle Electrification**
- **Electric Vehicles Website**
- **Contact for Electric Vehicle Related Questions**

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