

# 2023 EPA Clean School Bus (CSB) Program Grants Fact Sheet

## Short Summary

EPA has announced that \$400 million has been made available for clean school bus grants under a 2023 Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). This NOFO includes two sub-programs, one for school district and Tribal applicants (School District Sub-program) and one for third party applicants (Third-Party Sub-program) to serve at least four school district beneficiaries. The goal of this program is to incentivize and accelerate the replacement of existing school buses with clean and zero emission (ZE) school buses.

This CSB Grants NOFO is a competitive grant program that will be scored based on the criteria included in the NOFO. EPA anticipates awarding a total of approximately 25 to 50 cooperative agreement(s) under this announcement. The CSB program anticipates opening another CSB Rebates funding opportunity later this year, which would fund similar activities, with a shorter application, different selection mechanism, and different program requirements.

## Subprograms Under this NOFO

1. **School District Sub-program:** for school district and Tribal applicants, targeting large single-fleet turnovers that may have been limited by the 25-bus maximum in the 2022 rebate program.
  - a. Must request a **minimum of 15 school buses** and can request a maximum of 50 buses.
2. **Third-Party Sub-program:** for third-party applicants to apply in partnership with school districts, particularly small, rural, Tribal, or low-income beneficiaries that may benefit from third-party technical support, grant administration and coordination (e.g., with utilities).
  - a. Must request a **minimum of 25 school buses** and may request a maximum of 100 buses.
  - b. Third-party Sub-program applicants are required to support at least four different school district beneficiaries in a single application, although there is no minimum number of buses per beneficiary (as long as the total number of buses for the third-party grant is between 25 and 100).

## Eligible Applicants

1. Public School Districts
  - a. One or more local or State governmental entities responsible for:
    - i. Providing school bus service to one or more public school systems; or
    - ii. The purchase, lease, license, or contract for service of school buses;
  - b. A public charter school district responsible for the purchase, lease, license, or contract for service of school buses for that charter school; or
2. Tribal Applicants

- a. An Indian Tribe, Tribal organization, or Tribally-controlled school that is responsible for:
      - i. 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
      - ii. The purchase, lease, license, or contract for service of school buses;
  - 3. Third Parties
    - a. A nonprofit school transportation association; or
    - b. An eligible contractor.
- Applicants falling under categories 1 (public school districts) or 2 (Tribal applicants) must apply under the School District Sub-Program; applicants falling under category 3 (third parties) must apply under the Third-Party Sub-Program.
  - Applicants may submit a total of one application per EPA region under this solicitation.
  - A single application may target multiple fleets, school districts, and/or bus types.

**Priority Funding Districts**

Districts Maintaining Priority Status from 2022 to 2023	Districts <u>Losing</u> Priority Status in 2023
1. Bridgeport School District 2. Hartford School District 3. Ledyard School District 4. New Britain School District 5. New Haven School District 6. New London School District 7. Norwich School District 8. Waterbury School District 9. Windham School District	10. Ashford School District 11. Canaan School District 12. Colebrook School District 13. Columbia School District 14. Cornwall School District 15. Eastford School District 16. Hampton School District 17. Kent School District 18. Lebanon School District 19. Norfolk School District 20. North Canaan School District 21. Salisbury School District 22. Scotland School District 23. Sharon School District 24. Union School District

See: [EPA Prioritization List](#)

The following districts may be eligible to self-certify prioritization status:

- Title I-funded school districts and charter school districts not listed in the Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) dataset.
- Title I-funded large public school districts, defined as districts with more than 35,000 students and/or 45 public schools, that are in SAIPE but do not meet the 20% poverty threshold.

**Project Requirements**

**Eligible activities:** 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.

### **Eligible Existing School Buses**

- Bus must be designed to carry a driver and more than 10 passengers.
- Buses to be replaced must:
  - Be model year (MY) 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 ZE bus replacements, the fleet may either:
    - Scrap 2010 or older non-diesel ICE buses; or
    - Scrap, sell, or donate 2011 or newer diesel or non-diesel ICE buses
  - Have a Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) of 10,001 lbs or more.
  - Be fully 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, excluding COVID-related or disaster-related school closures.
- Applicants applying through the school district sub-program may request an exception to the bus scrappage requirement. To be approved, applicants must:
  - a. be prioritized as low-income; AND
  - b. be seeking to purchase only ZE school buses; AND
  - c. be currently contracting with a private fleet that owns school buses for their school transportation services and the school plans to own the new buses; AND
  - d. attest, in the Budget Detail section of the Project Narrative, that the current contract provider is unwilling or unable to replace buses serving the district with ZE school buses.Note: Third-party applicants are not eligible to apply for this scrappage allowance.

**Eligible Replacement School Buses:** All replacement school buses purchased with grant funding must:

- Have a battery electric, CNG, or propane drivetrain. Biofuels are not an eligible replacement technology.
- Be a new EPA or CARB certified vehicle MY 2021 or newer.
- Have a GVWR of 10,001 lbs. or more.
- Be ordered after receiving official notification of selection for EPA funding.
- Be purchased.
- Serve the school district listed on the application for at least 5 years from the date of delivery, unless the award is to an eligible contractor and the contract with the school district ends before the end of the 5-year period, in which case those school buses may be operated as part of another school district eligible for the same or higher priority consideration.
- 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.

### **Eligible Infrastructure**

- Must be behind the meter (meter to charger).
- All Level 2 chargers must be Energy Star certified.
- Funds can be used for battery energy storage systems as well as renewable on-site power generation systems that power the buses and equipment on the customer's side of the electrical meter.
- Electricians installing/maintaining EVSE must meet certification or educational requirements.

### **Ineligible Costs**

- Leased vehicles/equipment.
- Repowers.

### **Eligible Costs**

- Costs directly related to the implementation, management, and oversight of the project.
  - Infrastructure costs associated with work on the customer's side of the meter.
  - Charge management software and telematics.
  - Bus delivery costs.
  - Driver/mechanic training and certification.
  - Consulting on bus deployments.
  - Bus warranties.
- Buy America sourcing requirements require that all iron, steel, manufactured products, and construction materials used in federally funded infrastructure projects must be produced in the United States.

### **Funding Levels**

- EPA Region 1 total anticipated funding: \$27,393,700
- Awards are dependent on the bus fuel type, bus class size, number of buses being replaced, and prioritization status as shown in the table below.
- Since the 2022 program, funding levels have:
  - Stayed the same for priority district ZE - Class 7+ and all CNG buses;
  - Increased for priority district ZE - Class 3-6 and all propane buses; and
  - Decreased for non-priority district ZE buses.

Table 1: 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 <i>(Bus + Charging Infrastructure)</i>	Up to \$315,000 <i>(Bus + Charging Infrastructure)</i>	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 <i>(Bus + Charging Infrastructure)</i>	Up to \$195,000 <i>(Bus + Charging Infrastructure)</i>	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.

### **Funding Type**

- Grants or cooperative agreements will be funded under this solicitation.
- EPA awards cooperative agreements for those projects in which it expects to have substantial interaction with the recipient throughout the recipient’s performance of the project.

### **Cost Sharing or Matching**

- Although cost sharing/matching is not required, EPA will award evaluation points for applicants that demonstrate that they have leveraged or plan to leverage additional external funds (leveraged resources), such as public-private partnerships, grants from other entities, or the issuance of school bonds.
- Unlike funding awarded as part of this funding opportunity, leveraged resources do not need to be spent on eligible or allowable costs.

### **Important Dates**

Activity	Date
<a href="#">Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)</a> OPEN	Monday, April 24, 2023
NOFO Information Sessions	The first Information Session will be on Wednesday, May 10, 2023, at 3:00 p.m. (ET). Webinar links and dial-in information for the information sessions can be found at: <a href="https://www.epa.gov/cleanschoolbus/clean-school-bus-program-grants">https://www.epa.gov/cleanschoolbus/clean-school-bus-program-grants</a> . Additional information sessions while the NOFO is open will be scheduled and listed at <a href="https://www.epa.gov/cleanschoolbus/clean-school-bus-program-grants">https://www.epa.gov/cleanschoolbus/clean-school-bus-program-grants</a> and shared via the Clean School Bus Newsletter.

Activity	Date
	Questions and answers from these information sessions will also be posted in the questions and answers document located at <a href="https://www.epa.gov/cleanschoolbus/clean-school-bus-program-grants">https://www.epa.gov/cleanschoolbus/clean-school-bus-program-grants</a> .
Deadline for Submitting Questions	Wednesday, August 9, 2023, at 11:59 p.m. (ET)
<b>NOFO Closes - Application Deadline</b>	<b>Tuesday, August 22, 2023, at 11:59 p.m. (ET)</b>
Anticipated Notification of Selection	November 2023 to January 2024
Anticipated Awards	February to March 2024

### **Period of Performance**

- The estimated project period will be up to 24 months; however, initial project periods of up to 36 months will be allowed if justified by the information detailed in the workplan.
- The estimated project period of performance will begin starting April 1, 2024.

### **Application and Submission Information**

- Must apply through Grants.gov by the application deadline (8/22/2023).
- Applicants must have an active SAM.gov registration.
- Mandatory Documents:
  - Standard Form 424, Application for Federal Assistance.
  - Standard Form 424A, Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs
  - EPA Form 4700-4, Pre-Award Compliance Review Report o EPA Form 5700-54, Key Contacts Form
  - Project Narrative Attachment Form, Project Narrative - Applicants must use the Project Narrative Attachment form in Grants.gov. Narrative cannot exceed 15 single-spaced typewritten pages.
  - Applicants should use the “Other Attachments” Form in Grants.gov to attach and submit the following mandatory documents:
    - Applicant Fleet Sheet
    - Documentation of Third-Party Approval (for Third-Party Applicants only)
- Optional Attachments - not included in the project narrative page limit.
  - Documentation of Partnership with Utility
  - Self-Certification of Prioritization
  - Leveraged Resources Commitment Letter(s)
  - Project Team Biographies
  - Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, if applicable
  - Partnership Letter(s)

### **Contact Information**

For further information, email questions to: [cleanschoolbus@epa.gov](mailto:cleanschoolbus@epa.gov). Type “Clean School Bus NOFO Question” in the subject line of the email.

### **Links**

EPA Website: [Clean School Bus Program Grants | US EPA](#)

NOFO: [2023-csb-grant-nofo-4-20-23.pdf \(epa.gov\)](#)

Q&A Document: <https://www.epa.gov/cleanschoolbus/clean-school-bus-program-grants>