



# Program Announcement

## Clean School Bus USA: Tomorrow's Buses for Today's Children



*The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has launched a new initiative called **Clean School Bus USA: Tomorrow's Buses for Today's Children**. The goal of this national initiative is to improve air quality in communities and protect the health of school children and the general public. EPA believes this goal can best be achieved through a partnership of government, community, business, educational, health and environmental leaders. The partners will work to encourage activities that will help to reduce emissions. These include the adoption of policies and practices to eliminate unnecessary public school bus idling, upgrading ("retrofitting") buses that will remain in the fleet with better emission control technologies and/or fueling them with cleaner fuels, and replacing the oldest buses with new, less polluting buses.*

### Background

School buses are the safest way for children to get to school. However, pollution from diesel vehicles has health implications for everyone—especially the 24 million children in the United States who ride a bus to and from school every day. By working together, we can reduce the pollution from public school buses making them also a very clean way for children to get to school.

On average, school buses drive more than 4 billion miles each year with students spending an hour and a half per weekday on a school bus. In addition, it's common practice for buses to idle for long periods of time, sometimes right beside school grounds where children gather. By reducing the amount of time that buses idle, school bus fleets will use less fuel, save money, and limit exposure to diesel exhaust.

Older school buses on the road today pollute up to six times more than clean technology buses. Currently, EPA is working aggressively to reduce pollution from new heavy-duty diesel trucks and buses by requiring them to meet tougher and tougher emission standards in the future. However, because diesel engines are durable and long-lasting, it will take a long time for new diesel buses to replace the existing fleet of public school buses currently on the road.

Clean School Bus USA is designed to jump-start the process by upgrading the nation's public school bus fleet so that this generation of school children can reap the benefits of technologies that are available now to reduce emissions.

## **Initiative Overview**

Clean School Bus USA is a public-private environmental partnership that seeks to reduce children's exposure to air pollution from diesel school buses. The program emphasizes three ways to reduce public school bus emissions:

- Encouraging policies and practices to eliminate unnecessary school bus idling.
- Upgrading ("retrofitting") buses that will remain in the fleet with better emission control technologies and/or fueling them with cleaner fuels.
- Replacing the oldest buses in the fleet with new, less polluting buses.

The goal of Clean School Bus USA is to reduce both children's exposure to diesel exhaust and the amount of air pollution created by school buses.

Children are vulnerable to the effects of diesel emissions which can cause respiratory disease and exacerbate long-term conditions such as asthma. Air pollution from diesel vehicles has health implications for everyone, but children may be more susceptible because they breathe 50 percent more air per pound of body weight than do adults.

Implementing EPA's Clean School Bus USA program will result in substantial health benefits including: fewer cases of lower respiratory symptoms in healthy children; fewer cases of upper respiratory and asthma symptoms in asthmatic children; and fewer cases of acute bronchitis.

In addition to helping EPA formulate a comprehensive plan to address public school bus emissions, Clean School Bus USA partners are lending specific resources, know-how, and expertise to the campaign. By working together, we can reduce pollution from public school buses making sure that school buses are also a very clean way for children to get to school.

### **For More Information**

For more information about Clean School Bus USA, visit our Web site at:

[www.epa.gov/CleanSchoolBus](http://www.epa.gov/CleanSchoolBus)

or send an email to:

[CleanSchoolBusUSA@epa.gov](mailto:CleanSchoolBusUSA@epa.gov)