

Governor Phil Murphy

ICYMI: EPA \$19 Million Grant Will Put Clean School Buses on the Streets of New Jersey

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UNION CITY, NJ – The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) is transforming how New Jersey children get to school, accelerating the transition to zero-emission vehicles and producing cleaner air for our communities. That is the message delivered today by EPA Chief of Staff Olivia Glenn, Senator Cory Booker and other congressional and local leaders at Jose Marti STEM Academy in Union City, N.J.

The award, which is made possible through President Biden’s Investing in America agenda, will help secure clean school buses for five school districts in New Jersey, including in Union City, Elizabeth, Newark, Bloomfield Township and Lakewood Township. The transportation company, Van-Con, Inc., will receive nearly \$19 million to purchase 42 clean school buses and 28 bus chargers.

“Today’s funding means cleaner air and less pollution...which equals healthier kids!” **said EPA Chief of Staff Olivia Glenn.** “Thanks to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, we’ll breathe easier in New Jersey having these quiet, tailpipe-less school buses carrying our kids to and from school and other activities. Making our neighborhoods cleaner and better places to live is how we advance environmental justice and is what investing in America is all about.”

“I want to thank President Biden, our congressional delegation, and the Environmental Protection Agency for their steadfast support of our efforts here at home to protect school children from harmful pollutants and give them the best chance to succeed,” **said Governor Phil Murphy.** “Together, we are building momentum in the transition to zero-emission vehicles that will help us deliver on our promise to mitigate the disproportionate health impacts of medium and heavy-duty vehicles, especially in New Jersey’s most overburdened communities.”

“There is nothing more important than the health and wellbeing of our children, most of whom are transported each day on school buses that produce harmful diesel emissions,” **said New Jersey Environmental Protection Commissioner Shawn M. LaTourette.** “The Murphy Administration is proud to have recently announced its groundbreaking [Electric School Bus Grant Program \(https://nj.gov/dep/newsrel/2024/24_0002.htm\)](https://nj.gov/dep/newsrel/2024/24_0002.htm) providing grants for clean electric school bus purchases and charging infrastructure. We are equally proud to join with the EPA and the Biden-Harris Administration in announcing this Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding for even more electric school bus purchases and infrastructure in New Jersey. With programs like these, we are embarking on an exciting and important journey that will better protect the health of our schoolchildren and communities, especially our overburdened communities.”

“I’m proud to work with the Biden Administration to deliver funding that will benefit five New Jersey school districts with clean school buses, a significant investment in protecting our children’s health and combating the climate crisis,” **said Senator Cory Booker.** “When we crafted the Inflation Reduction Act and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, these are among the groundbreaking investments into our communities that I envisioned. Electric school buses are a win-win for our children, bus drivers, and our communities—providing a cleaner, healthier environment and producing long-term savings. Today’s grant announcement is the product of a months-long process during which my office worked closely with the awardees, and I’m confident this is one of many more awards to come. My office is continuously engaged with districts throughout the state seeking to transition to an electric fleet.”

“I’m proud to have secured this funding for clean school buses through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. The School Bus program is a perfect example of how making necessary investments in building the clean energy



economy will also create a healthier environment for our children,” **said Senator Bob Menendez.** “These zero emission buses will help phase out older, dirtier diesel engines, reducing not only our greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change, but also other harmful air pollution that is linked to asthma and other health impacts. Students, staff, and residents of these five communities in New Jersey will benefit immensely from these new electric buses, and I look forward to continuing to work to bring even more funding for clean energy and transportation to communities across the state.”

“It is an honor to join Senator Booker and officials from the Environmental Protection Agency to highlight the \$19 million in federal funding that we have secured to ensure cleaner air in our Eighth District communities,” **said Congressman Rob Menendez (NJ-08).** “The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act continues to deliver for our residents with this funding that will allow our children to benefit from new state-of-the-art school buses while reducing pollutants in our cities and towns. Thank you to the Biden Administration, as well as Mayors Stack, Bollwage, and Baraka for their partnership on this critical environmental issue.”

“I am proud to hear that the Newark School District will receive six school buses as a part of an EPA Clean School Bus award to Van-Con Inc.” **said Rep. Donald M. Payne, Jr. (NJ-10).** “I helped to secure \$5 billion in funding for clean school buses in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to help protect the environment and make sure the next generation grows up in a cleaner environment. I hope we can expand this program and provide more clean buses to other communities in my district.”

“With this grant, New Jersey is one step closer to a greener future thanks to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. These school districts will now be able to purchase clean energy school buses and chargers—not only improving their transportation fleet but also protecting the health of our children. Securing federal grants like this is key to my fight to make New Jersey a better, safer, and more affordable place to live. I am thankful for the efforts of Senator Booker and the EPA in supporting that shared goal,” **said Rep. Mikie Sherrill (NJ-11).**

“The City of Elizabeth will be one five school districts receiving zero-emission vehicles, to not only empower education, but further our commitment to cleaner air for our community,” **said Mayor of Elizabeth Christian J. Bollwage.** “Together, we drive progress towards a healthier, greener, and brighter tomorrow.”

“I want to thank Senator Booker and Governor Murphy for all their support in securing funding from the Clean School Bus program. Union City is honored to be one of only five school districts in New Jersey to be chosen to receive this money,” **said Mayor of Union City and State Senator Brian P. Stack.** “These new electric school busses will provide cleaner air through reduced greenhouse emissions, reduce health risks especially for children with respiratory problems, and save on maintenance and fuel costs.”

“The Union City School District is very pleased to have been awarded these funds from the EPA grant, which will enable us to provide enhanced transportation services for our students,” **said Union City Public Schools Superintendent Silvia Abbato.** “We are grateful to the EPA for recognizing the needs of urban districts like ours that continuously strive to furnish our students with all the tools to be successful.”

“This is a transformational opportunity for our community,” **said Charles A. Webster, director of Grants and Innovative Programming at Union City Public Schools.**

“CCMT is honored and privileged to be working with the USEPA and Van-Con, Inc. on this major deployment of zero emission electric school buses for some of New Jersey’s largest environmental justice communities. These buses are going eliminate toxic diesel air pollutants at the local level and CO2 emissions at the planetary level. The USEPA Clean School Bus grant will help these school districts with the high cost of student transportation. The USEPA grant will also have a broader economic benefit, creating jobs right here in New Jersey as well as in Georgia and Michigan” **said James Sherman, the project developer, manager, and CEO of Climate Change Mitigation Technologies LLC.**

About the Clean School Bus Program

EPA’s Clean School Bus Program was adopted under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, which provides an unprecedented \$5 billion of funding to transform the nation’s fleet of school buses. The Clean School Bus Program funds electric buses, producing zero tailpipe emissions, as well as propane and compressed natural gas (CNG) buses, resulting in lower tailpipe emissions compared to their older diesel predecessors.

The Clean School Bus Program will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, save money for school districts and produce cleaner air. Air pollution from older diesel engines is linked to asthma and other conditions that harm students' health and cause them to miss school, particularly in communities of color and Tribal communities. Efforts to minimize the effects of these older diesel engines will ensure cleaner air for students, bus drivers, and school staff working near the bus loading areas, and the communities through which the buses drive each day.

The reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from these bus replacements will also help to address the outsized role of the transportation sector in fueling the climate crisis. The Program will benefit school districts as they upgrade to cost-saving and fuel-efficient school bus fleets, by replacing existing buses with brand new zero-emission and clean school buses and freeing up needed resources for schools.

In April 2023, EPA [announced \(https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/biden-harris-administration-announces-400-million-grant-program-fund-clean-school\)](https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/biden-harris-administration-announces-400-million-grant-program-fund-clean-school) the availability of at least \$400 million for its 2023 Clean School Bus Grants through a Notice of Funding Opportunity. The grant application period closed in August 2023 with an outstanding response from applicants seeking to purchase electric and low-emission school buses. Given the overwhelming demand and high-scoring applications, including applicants in low-income communities, Tribal nations and territories, EPA has nearly doubled the amount of funding that will be awarded this round to approximately \$965 million. EPA anticipates making the award announced today once all legal and administrative requirements are satisfied.

These awards follow over \$875 million obligated to new buses from the Clean School Bus Program's 2022 Rebates, which funded the replacement of 2,366 buses at 372 school districts to further improve air quality in and around schools, to reduce greenhouse gas pollution fueling the climate crisis, and help accelerate America's leadership in developing the clean vehicles of the future.

Prioritized school districts in low-income, rural, and/or Tribal communities make up approximately 86% of the projects selected for funding. The program delivers on President Biden's [Justice40 Initiative \(https://www.whitehouse.gov/environmentaljustice/justice40/\)](https://www.whitehouse.gov/environmentaljustice/justice40/), which aims to deliver 40% of the overall benefits of certain federal investments to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized, underserved and overburdened by pollution.

For more information, please email [CleanSchoolBus@epa.gov \(mailto:CleanSchoolBus@epa.gov\)](mailto:CleanSchoolBus@epa.gov).

View the full list of Clean School Bus grantees [here \(https://www.epa.gov/cleanschoolbus/clean-school-bus-program-awards\)](https://www.epa.gov/cleanschoolbus/clean-school-bus-program-awards).

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