

THE PROBLEM

School buses are the largest form of public transportation in the country as they help transport more than 25 million children (half of all U.S. school children) to and from school every single day. School buses travel four billion miles per year. But 95% of school buses run on diesel, a polluting fuel that has been linked to various heart and lung illnesses, including asthma.

Most of the school buses driving today are older than the latest diesel emission standards from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. According to the EPA, “older, more polluting school buses can lead to significant health risks for students who typically ride these buses for one-half to two hours a day.”

Children are already more vulnerable to the effects of dirty air. By waiting for and riding in diesel school buses, children are constantly exposed to dangerous toxins that harm their developing lungs and worsen respiratory illnesses like asthma.

Asthma is the leading cause of school absences among children, and disproportionately affects communities of color, who are more likely to live in areas with dirty air and are more likely to ride school buses than their white peers.

School buses also travel thousands of miles through neighborhoods each year, exposing all communities to tailpipe emissions and pollution. Transitioning from diesel to electric school buses would make a huge difference in the futures of our children and our communities.

FAST FACTS

- Electric school buses last just as long as diesel school buses, 12 to 15 years.
- Electric school buses can travel up to 120 miles on a single charge.
- Electric school buses have been tested in many types of weather and terrain, from snowy days in Illinois to hilly parts of Massachusetts to hot climates in California.
- Electric school buses must pass EPA and the California Air Resources Board safety tests.



A COMPREHENSIVE SOLUTION

Connecticut is known as a nationwide leader in the fight against climate change, however, our state has not done enough to address environmental injustices linked to our high polluting transportation sector. Low-income communities, as well as Black and Latino communities in Hartford, Waterbury, New Haven, and Bridgeport are disproportionately impacted by climate change, pollution, and other environmental threats.

There are more than 480,000 school buses in service nationwide, 95% running on dirty diesel. But that's quickly changing. New efficient and affordable electric models are being released every year, helping schools from California to Minnesota to New York transition to clean, zero-emission school buses.

School districts running pilot projects are reporting “positive experiences with daily operation, charging, fuel savings, and community feedback.” Best of all, electric school buses don't emit dangerous diesel toxins -- they have ZERO tailpipe emissions. This means improved air quality, better health for children and our communities, and fewer emissions harming our environment and worsening climate change.

CONTACT

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BENEFITS OF ELECTRIC SCHOOL BUSES

LOWER MAINTENANCE COSTS

- No oil changes
- No air filter changes
- No smog checks
- No engine fluids or assembly
- No plug or coil replacements
- No transmission!
- Fewer moving parts
- Longer-lasting brakes

SIGNIFICANT FUEL SAVINGS

- No gas needed
- Better fuel-efficiency (17 equivalent mpg versus diesel's 6 mpg)

SAFER AND MORE COMFORTABLE

- Available with A/C and heating
- Available with seat belts
- Quieter -- there's no engine running!

CLEANER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

- ZERO tailpipe emissions
- Not contributing to climate change

PROTECTS OUR CHILDRENS HEALTH

- No exposure to dangerous toxins
- Fewer school absences due to asthma and respiratory illnesses caused by diesel emissions
- Improved health and academic outcomes

TO IMPLEMENT A SUCCESSFUL ELECTRIC SCHOOL BUS PROGRAM IN CONNECTICUT, WE NEED YOUR HELP!

1. Educate yourself about the benefits of Electric Buses and the Volkswagen Mitigation Plan;
2. Collect petitions from your family, friends, and members of the community to raise support;
3. Build relationships with your PTA, school board officials, and state lawmakers;
4. Hold educational forums at local schools;
5. Connect with the Connecticut EV Coalition on drafting a pilot program;
6. Connect with school bus companies and transportation union workers (Ex. Dattco Inc., First Student);
7. Hold a meeting with the school bus companies, union workers, and school boards on implementing pilot program;
8. Either the school board or the bus company should submit an RFP for funding: Volkswagen Mitigation (VW) Funds or Federal Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) funds to offset purchasing and maintenance costs.