

Illinois EPA's Driving a Cleaner Illinois Program Awards Grant to Triad CUSB No. 2 for All-Electric School Bus Project

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SPRINGFIELD - Gov. J.B. Pritzker and Illinois EPA Director John J. Kim announced that the agency has issued a \$650,000 grant award to Triad Community Unit School District No. 2 in Troy for an all-electric school bus project.

The pilot project funding will go toward the purchase of three all-electric school buses and the necessary charging infrastructure.

“We are pleased this funding will be used to incorporate zero-emission transportation for the Triad Community Unit School District, improving air quality for the District’s students and surrounding community,” said Director Kim. “This award furthers our goal of utilizing the Volkswagen funds to generate environmental and public health benefits for the areas of Illinois most affected by mobile source emissions.”

Leigh Lewis, Triad Superintendent of Schools stated “This is great news to start our school year! It is inspiring to think that in the future Triad students will be able to share that they were the first to ride an all-electric bus to school. These funds will definitely allow our district to move progressively forward in providing more environmentally-friendly student transportation to and from our schools. We are equally excited about the potential impact this can have toward student learning and the broader community benefits that will be created as a result of this project.”

The grant award is funded by Volkswagen Settlement dollars provided through the Driving a Cleaner Illinois Program. Illinois EPA announced the second opportunity for Volkswagen funding in April 2019, which was designed to replace existing diesel school buses with new all-electric school buses in Priority Area 2, which includes Madison and St. Clair Counties. The Notice of Funding Opportunity was provided through the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act webpage.

“For many school districts, the cost of upgrading their transportation fleet is out of reach due to financial limitations,” said Richard J. Mark, chairman and president of Ameren Illinois. “The funds from the Illinois EPA will serve as a catalyst that will enable Triad to provide a cleaner, healthier transportation option for its students, and a new way to educate the entire community about the benefits of electrification. We’re pleased to assist the District in bringing this opportunity to the region.”

“The Environmental Law & Policy Center (ELPC) is pleased that Triad school district will be receiving 3 electric school buses, serving Metro East area students with quiet zero emission buses that will replace dirty diesel school buses,” said Susan Mudd, Senior Policy Advocate at ELPC. “Utilizing Illinois Volkswagen settlement funds on this transformative technology is a smart move, allowing Metro East residents to experience the future of cleaner transportation. Ameren Illinois support for the school’s purchase and setup of these buses demonstrates a commitment to protecting children’s health and making good use of batteries for the electric power grid.”

The Driving a Cleaner Illinois Program was designed to improve air quality in the state primarily by removing old diesel engines from service. Illinois EPA announced the first round of Volkswagen Settlement funding in December 2018, which included an all-electric school bus pilot project in Cook County. The funding is part of the State’s allocation of \$108 million received from the multi-billion-dollar Volkswagen Settlement

after it was discovered Volkswagen installed emissions cheating software in certain diesel vehicles. The Illinois EPA's Driving a Cleaner Illinois webpage contains additional information on the Volkswagen Settlement and the Driving a Cleaner Illinois Program: <https://www2.illinois.gov/epa/topics/air-quality/driving-a-cleaner-illinois/Pages/default.aspx> .