

Illinois EPA Announces \$27 Million Notice Of Funding Opportunity For Electric School Buses

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SPRINGFIELD —Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (Illinois EPA) Director John J. Kim today announced a \$27,023,485 Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) to fund the replacement of existing diesel school buses with new all-electric school buses located and operated in any of the three priority areas outlined in the Beneficiary Mitigation Plan (BMP). Illinois EPA will also fund a portion of new electric charging

equipment if charging infrastructure is needed. This opportunity continues the Pritzker Administration's commitment to focus Illinois' remaining Volkswagen (VW) Settlement funding on electric transportation and infrastructure.

"Here in Illinois, we are leading the clean energy revolution—and this latest \$27 million in funding for electric school buses will help us achieve our goal of 100% clean energy by 2050," said Governor JB Pritzker. "This isn't just a win for our environment—it's a win for our state's children who deserve a healthy environment from the moment they step onto a school bus. I strongly urge all eligible school districts to apply for this funding as we create a cleaner Illinois, together."

"Illinois has committed a significant portion of the VW Settlement funding to electric school buses because they provide a healthier environment for Illinois students," said Director Kim. "Through the VW Settlement funding, Illinois has prioritized electric transportation and infrastructure to bring cleaner air to Illinois."

Through this funding opportunity, Illinois EPA intends to fund projects in the three priority areas outlined in the VW BMP and specified in the NOFO:

- **Priority Area 1:** Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, and Will counties, Oswego Township in Kendall County, and Aux Sable and Goose Lake townships in Grundy County.
- **Priority Area 2:** Madison, Monroe, and St. Clair counties.
- **Priority Area 3:** Champaign, DeKalb, LaSalle, McLean, Peoria, Sangamon, and Winnebago counties.

Eligible applicants include school districts that own their buses or commercial school bus providers. Purchased buses must serve a school district within one of the three priority areas. Existing diesel buses must be engine Model Year 2009 and older diesel-powered Class 4 – 8 school buses and must be scrapped within 90 days of the new bus being placed into service.

In April of 2022, Illinois EPA submitted a revised BMP to the VW Settlement Trustee, focusing Illinois' remaining \$84.3 million on electric transportation and infrastructure. The goals of the revised plan include reducing nitrogen oxide emissions in areas where the affected VW vehicles were registered. The revised BMP takes into consideration areas that do not meet federal air quality standards for ozone and bear a disproportionate share of the air pollution burden, including environmental justice areas.

All required forms and information can be found on the Driving A Cleaner Illinois webpage: <https://epa.illinois.gov/topics/air-quality/driving-a-cleaner-illinois.html>. Applications for the Driving a Cleaner Illinois – Volkswagen All-Electric School Buses NOFO will be accepted through 5:00 PM (CST) on September 5, 2023.

All applicants must pre-qualify through the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act [Grantee Portal](#).