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How to Write a **Success** **Story**



EPA CLEAN SCHOOL BUS PROGRAM

How to Write a Success Story

Congratulations on receiving funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Clean School Bus (CSB) Program! This guide will help you write a success story to share with your community so they can learn more about your transition to clean school buses.

Why Gather and Share Success Stories?

Sharing success stories is a great way to educate your community on the benefits of transitioning to clean school buses! It is also a great way to connect with others who have worked through similar challenges and can serve as a guide to other school districts just starting their Clean School Bus journey.

Building Your Success Story

The first step in developing a success story is to create an outline. Below are some basic elements you can use with italicized examples about an electric school bus project.

Title

Write a short, attention-grabbing title that describes the scope of the project. Be sure to include your organization's logo somewhere in the success story.

**YOUR LOGO
HERE**

Charge! Our District Is Leading the Way with Electric and Propane School Buses

Background

Describe in 200 words or less why your school district decided to transition to clean school buses.

In our search to find a way to transition our school bus fleet to cleaner technologies, we found the EPA Clean School Bus Program to be a great fit. This \$5 billion dollar rebate and grant program will fund the replacement of existing school buses with zero-emission and clean school buses. Our school district is proud to have received funding for ten electric and five propane school buses that replaced fifteen diesel buses from our current fleet.

What was your school using before? Why is it important to invest in clean transportation?

For the past 25 years, our school district has been using old diesel buses to transport students to and from school. The exhaust from the older buses is unhealthy for our students and employees, as well as the environment and the communities they drive through. Our transition to electric and propane buses will result in better air quality not only inside the buses but throughout our entire community. Electric buses also need less maintenance than diesel buses, can travel 100 miles or more when fully charged, and don't require expensive fuel. These features will result in a reduction in fuel costs for our school district.

Active Voice

Use active voice to get your point across effectively. Instead of "Our new buses are funded by EPA," write "EPA funded our new buses."

Program Description

Share details about the EPA CSB Program and what the process of applying for and receiving funding looked like for your school district.

What steps did you have to take? Did you run into unexpected challenges?

In December 2023, our school district received funding to purchase ten electric and five propane school buses. These zero-emission and clean school buses will result in cleaner and healthier air for all of us. And because our school is in a rural area, we were considered prioritized and received higher levels of funding. We also used EPA Clean School Bus Program funding to install the infrastructure required to charge the electric buses and have experienced a smooth transition so far. EPA provided us with valuable resources for this transition, including help preparing for our meeting with the electric utility to discuss infrastructure needs, information on additional funding opportunities, and guidance on estimating costs for the electric buses and charging infrastructure.



Example caption: Kids from a local school boarding our district's new electric school buses!

Applying for EPA funding was very straightforward! All of the webinars and resource documents from EPA made the application process easy to navigate. And we were able to communicate directly with EPA Clean School Bus Program staff whenever we had questions. Without this funding, we would not have been able to make this investment in our community. Thank you, EPA!

How to Include Photos

Include photos of your new buses in action! Ensure your photos are taken with a quality camera and are high resolution (at least 1920 x 1080 x 300 dpi is recommended). If there are any people shown in your photos, secure proper permissions before sharing, especially if using photos of children. If you're using a photo you did not take yourself, you may need to ask the photographer for permission and include a photo credit.

Outcomes

Describe the outcomes of your participation in the EPA CSB Program. Share tips on how to make the process smoother and things you would have done differently. Articulate the benefits and drawbacks of participating in the EPA CSB Program.

If you have numbers that quantify the benefits of clean or electric school bus operation such as cost savings or air emission reductions, use them!

Our participation in the EPA Clean School Bus Program has paid dividends—it has resulted in major cost savings, benefitted public health, and decreased greenhouse gas emissions in our community. Additionally, our bus drivers experienced an easy transition to electric and propane buses and have had no issues with completing bus routes. Our electric bus drivers have also noted the decrease in noise, the absence of diesel smell, and better acceleration.

[example continues on next page]

The district anticipates major cost savings in terms of both fuel and maintenance. Figure 1 shows the projected cost savings our school district will experience from acquiring electric and propane buses. We expect that adding ten electric and five propane buses in 2024 will decrease our bus-related maintenance costs. These savings will allow us to allocate money to other areas that will improve our district's schools.

We took the time to speak with Tina, a teacher and mother living in our community. Tina's son Max has severe asthma, which flares up when he rides to school on an old diesel bus. This put a lot of emotional and physical stress on Max and created challenges for him at school. Tina and her family are so relieved by the transition to electric buses: "Max's ride to school changed significantly once the district switched to electric buses. He can finally breathe easier on his ride to school!" Our school district is proud to be changing lives with this new technology!

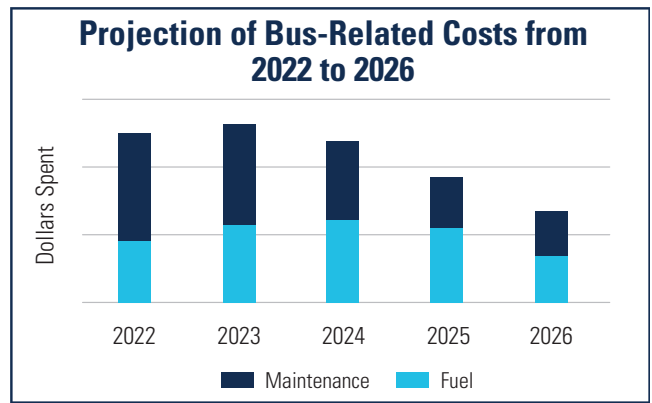


Figure 1: Graph showing the projection of dollars spent over five years on bus-related costs.*

* Your school is likely to experience cost savings, but this graph is just an example; it doesn't predict cost savings for your school district.

Collecting Testimonials

Reach out to someone for whom your transition to clean school buses had a positive impact, or someone who played a key role in the transition. Ask them about their experience, including both the benefits and challenges. Personalize the testimonial by adding a photo and/or quote. When adding a quote, secure proper permissions from the interviewee and confirm the language before publishing. Ask the interviewee if they want to only use their first name or an alias to protect their privacy. This is especially important to ask parents/guardians when interviewing children.

Data Visualization

Sometimes it is best to use a graphic to present your data. A chart or graph can help your audience digest data and easily spot trends. It can also help break up the text.

What's Next

Share information on future projects, performance monitoring results, next steps, and resources. Please also link to the EPA CSB Program website.

We will continue to assess the cost, efficiency, and health benefits of our electric and propane buses and publish the results. Our school district is planning to purchase two new electric buses in the next three years with the money we saved by participating in the EPA Clean School Bus Program. We also plan to apply for additional funding offered by EPA and other state and local funding programs to further transition our fleet. We are excited to see the long-term benefits of our new buses and share updates with the community!

To learn more about the EPA Clean School Bus Program, please visit: epa.gov/cleanschoolbus.

Now that you've completed your success story, share it with your community! EPA also wants to share your success story on epa.gov/cleanschoolbus and in other materials! Please send your complete success story and high-resolution photos to cleanschoolbus@epa.gov with the subject CSB Success Story. An EPA staff member will respond to your email with the required consent forms for you to complete and return to EPA. Thank you in advance for your participation!

