



BLUE BIRD®

March 15, 2024

To: New Mexico Environment Department (NMED)
1190 St. Francis Drive, Suite N4050
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505

From: Blue Bird Body Company

Re: Letter of Support for the New Mexico's Efficient and Clean Operations for Schools
Funding Opportunity Number: EPA-R-OAR-CPRGI-23-07

Greetings New Mexico Environment Department (NMED),

Blue Bird Body Company stands in support of the Efficient and Clean Operations for Schools because the measure will create access to funding opportunities for school districts to convert their diesel school bus fleets into zero-emission school buses which not only benefits the students but the entire community in which they operate.

Blue Bird is recognized as a technology leader and innovator of school buses since its founding in 1927 and is the only U.S.-owned and operated school bus manufacturer in the U.S. Blue Bird is the leader in low- and zero-emission school buses with more than 20,000 propane and electric powered buses in operation today.

Today, nearly 500,000 school buses carry millions of children to and from school every single day. More than 90% of them are diesel-powered...which means they generate harmful greenhouse gases and other pollutants that can negatively impact student and community health. Students from low-income areas are disproportionately impacted by diesel pollution from school buses, since the majority of them ride the bus to school. Electric school buses do not produce any emissions. Zero-emission school buses mean cleaner air to breathe and healthier students. Replacing diesel fuel school buses with all-electric buses would eliminate an estimated 5 million tons of carbon emissions in the U.S. each year.

School districts could save big in the long run by going electric. Electric school buses carry batteries, not diesel engines. That's why school districts don't have to worry about the cost of fuel or engine maintenance over the 10 to 15 years a diesel bus is in operation. The savings add up. Customers reported fuel costs of up to 79 cents per mile for their diesel buses, compared to an average 19 cents per mile in energy costs for electric buses.

Blue Bird has over 1,500 electric school bus on the road today. Replacing 1,500 diesel-powered and polluting school buses with an equal number of zero-emission vehicles has reduced harmful carbon emissions by an estimated 16,000 metric tons annually. In addition, more than 110,000 students a day are no longer exposed to diesel tailpipe emissions linked to serious health issues such as asthma or heart disease.

In conclusion, Blue Bird Body Company urges NMED to apply for the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant opportunity to support this measure and requests the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to award the funds to support it.

Sincerely,

Albert Burleigh, Vice-President, Alternative Power