

Focus on: Electric School Bus Grants



Figure 1. Electric school bus at a charging station.

Why Electric School Buses Matter

Most school buses in Washington and nationwide have diesel engines, which pollute the outdoor air.

Better for children's health

Air pollution negatively affects everyone's health, and diesel emissions make up a substantial portion of outdoor air pollution. Diesel exhaust causes cancer¹, and in Washington, 66% of cancer risk from pollutants in the air comes from diesel exhaust. But some groups are especially sensitive, such as children. When old, diesel buses are replaced with electric buses, there are substantial health and climate benefits, including reducing deaths from vehicle emissions, according to recent research².

Better for the environment

Transportation is the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in Washington, contributing 40% of the annual total. Replacing old diesel school buses with electric models helps reduce air pollution as well as greenhouse gas emissions driving climate change. Together with other Washington climate policies, these grants will help Washington achieve the commitment to reduce overall greenhouse gas emissions by 95% by 2050.

Electric is Gathering Momentum

Right now, a growing fraction of school buses in Washington are electric. Every year, the number of electric school buses increases, with the goal of all school buses eventually being zero-emission models. In 2024, Ecology received more funding than ever to replace diesel school buses with electric buses. A large portion of that funding comes from the Climate Commitment Act.

¹<https://www.iarc.who.int/news-events/iarc-diesel-engine-exhaust-carcinogenic/>

² <https://www.pnas.org/doi/10.1073/pnas.2320338121>

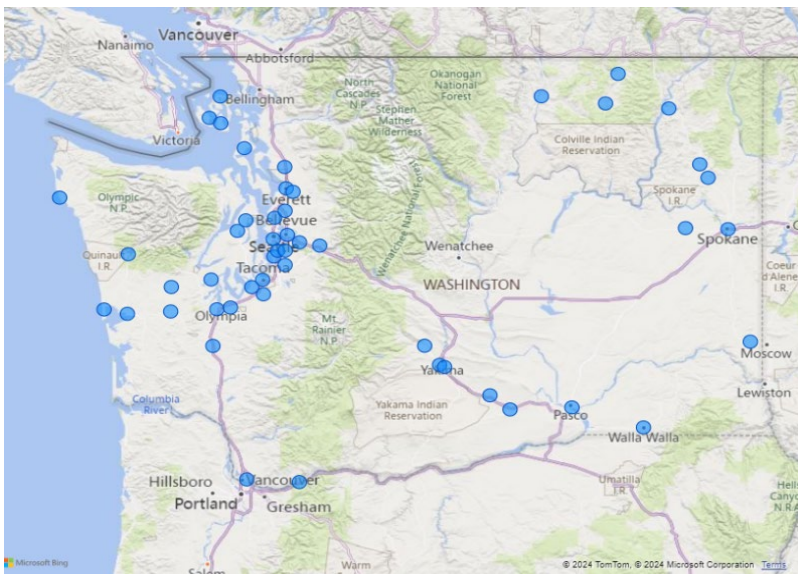
Electric School Bus Grant Program

From 2021 to 2025, Washington has invested \$78.3 million to replace approximately 220 fossil-fueled school buses with electric school buses and install associated charging infrastructure. The Legislature has also allocated funds in the 2025-2027 biennium for school bus electrification grants.

As the number of electric school buses continues to increase, so does the need for skilled technicians to maintain these buses. In addition to funding bus replacement projects and charging infrastructure, Ecology’s grant programs also fund workforce development, including early education. These projects have supported K-12 students, school bus mechanics, drivers and office staff to gain needed skills and education as the state transitions its diesel fleets to zero emission.

Distribution of Electric School Bus Funding

Map shows the distribution of electric school bus grants as of Dec. 2024.



Partners

We’ve developed a network of partners who can offer technical assistance, resources, and other support for school districts transitioning from diesel to electric buses. Visit the [electric school buses webpage](#) to learn more.

Related Information

- [Electric school buses](#)³
- [Clean diesel grants](#)⁴
- [Reducing diesel emissions](#)⁵



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³ <https://ecology.wa.gov/air-climate/air-quality/vehicle-emissions/electric-school-buses>

⁴ <https://ecology.wa.gov/about-us/payments-contracts-grants/grants-loans/find-a-grant-or-loan/clean-diesel-grants>

⁵ <https://ecology.wa.gov/air-climate/air-quality/vehicle-emissions/diesel-emissions>