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EPA Awards More Than \$1 Million to Clean Up School Buses in Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Texas

DALLAS - (April 24, 2020) In conjunction with the 50th anniversary of Earth Day, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) awarded \$11.5 million to replace 580 older diesel school buses. The funds are going to 157 school bus fleets in 43 states and Puerto Rico, each of which will receive rebates through EPA's Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) funding. Twelve school districts in Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Texas received \$1,095,000.

"As we continue to celebrate Earth Day's 50th anniversary, EPA continues to be committed to providing communities access to rebates to improve and replace aging school buses that will improve air quality across the country and provide children with a safe and healthy way to get to school," said **EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler**. "While many fleets are currently off the road as we all social distance during COVID-19, these local school districts will start up again, and EPA is proud to have helped equip them with cleaner running buses."

"The school day starts with kid's ride in the morning and extends to their trip home in the afternoon," said **Regional Administrator Ken McQueen**. "EPA's DERA program and bus rebates help make sure their transportation is part of a healthy school environment."

"I'm extremely thankful for the EPA's investment in Cordell, Oklahoma and the overall well-being of our communities," said **Rep. Frank Lucas (OK-03), House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology Committee Ranking Member**. "The grant provided by the EPA, through the Diesel Emissions Reduction Act, will not only help reduce pollutants in our community but it will also provide a safer and healthier way for our school children to get to school."

"On behalf of the National School Transportation Association (NSTA), and in recognition of the 50th Earth Day, we would like to express our continued gratitude and support to EPA for their stewardship of the DERA program," said **John Benish, NSTA president**. "As our partnership continues to grow, many school bus contractors around the country have been able to upgrade their fleets with newer, cleaner, and more efficient buses. The beneficiaries of this partnership are the school children we transport every day, as well as the communities where we operate. We look forward to advancing this cause even more in the future."

"Sometimes you don't miss something until it's not there, and many parents miss sending their kids to school on the convenient yellow school bus right now," said **Charlie Hood, Executive Director of the National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services (NASDPTS)**. "After we weather the coronavirus crisis, be assured that school buses will return, transporting students safely and economically. Especially with the budget challenges public schools will be facing for the foreseeable future, the EPA's School Bus Rebate program is a boon. It helps school districts and contractors replace their old school buses with new ones that are more cost-effective and meet stringent, modern standards for reduced emissions and clean air. This 50th Earth Day is a great time to mark how DERA has been a plus for both taxpayers and the environment."

Applicants replacing buses with engine model years 2006 and older will receive rebates between \$15,000 and \$20,000 per bus, depending on the size of the bus.

Districts in Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas receiving grants:

State	District	Grant Amount	Number of Buses
AR	Trumann School District	\$20,000	1
LA	Lincoln Parish School Board	\$100,000	5
OK	Cordell Public Schools	\$60,000	3
	Coalgate Public Schools	\$120,000	6
	Kingston Public Schools	\$20,000	1
TX	Floresville Indep. School District	\$140,000	7
	Rockwall Independent School District	\$135,000	7
	Groveton Independent School District	\$20,000	1
	Kress Independent School District	\$20,000	1
	Tidehaven Independent School District	\$60,000	4
	Aldine Independent School District	\$200,000	10
	Houston Independent School District	\$200,000	10

EPA has implemented standards to make newer diesel engines more than 90 percent cleaner, but many older diesel school buses are still operating. These older diesel engines emit large amounts of pollutants such as nitrogen oxides and particulate matter, which are linked to instances of aggravated asthma, lung damage and other serious health problems.

Since 2008, the DERA program has funded more than 1,000 clean diesel projects across the country, reducing emissions in more than 70,000 engines. A comprehensive list of the 2020 DERA school bus recipients can be found at www.epa.gov/dera/awarded-dera-rebates

For more information about the DERA program, visit www.epa.gov/cleandiesel

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