

## **Mid-Atlantic Electric School Bus Experience Project: School Transportation Providers, Request for Qualifications**

### Project Overview

The Mid-Atlantic Electric School Bus Experience Project (MEEP) will provide schools with an introduction to electric school bus technology. Available to select Districts in Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and the District of Columbia, the project is supported in large part by a grant from the U.S. Department of Energy. The project will provide a wide range of stakeholders with needed information about electric school buses, allow school districts to gain experience with electric school buses from multiple manufacturers for an extended time period (6 - 8 weeks), evaluate vehicle performance (including comparison to baseline conventional fuel buses), and provide findings that can be used by both participating school districts and others to make intelligent decisions about incorporating advanced fuel technologies into their fleets.

The main components of the Electric School Bus Experience are to:

- Support school districts to plan for and execute a 6-8 week demonstration deployment including identification of appropriate routes and charging strategies to temporarily support the vehicle;
- Engage stakeholders to build awareness of electric school buses and educate them about the partnerships and activities needed to support deployment;
- Train staff to operate the vehicle and collect data on vehicle performance, and;
- Collect and analyze data throughout the experience to evaluate each experience and the project overall, as well as generate information for future decisions.

MEEP Team Members include:

Virginia Clean Cities at James Madison University (lead), Greater Washington Region Clean Cities Coalition, Eastern Pennsylvania Alliance for Clean Transportation, Maryland Clean Cities, New Jersey Clean Cities Coalition, VEIC, National Association for Pupil Transportation, Al Pollard of the Energy Foundation, Generation 180, Bus Manufacturers (Thomas Built / Blue Bird/and potentially others), State Air Quality Agencies (VA DEQ / MDE / NJ DEP) and Regional Electric Utilities (Dominion Energy / BGE / PEPCO / PECO).

### School Participation

In this project, demonstration electric buses from major manufacturers will be deployed by selected school districts (School Partners) in their regular transportation service for a period of 6-8 weeks. School Partners may include school districts, schools, or supervisory unions. For school entities utilizing transportation contractors, the school entity may apply on behalf of the school bus contractor(s). The MEEP Team is interested in working with at least one school entity per state/region over the three-year term of the project, and may consider additional entities per state/region if future schedules allow.

### Consideration Priority

School Partners that can demonstrate the following will be given priority for participating in the project:

- Strong operational candidates for electric bus adoption and an expressed interest in permanently adding battery electric school buses into their fleets;
- Operating in the service areas of utilities cooperating in the project;
- Diversity of operating environments that can be supported by electric buses to test a range of conditions that may impact vehicle performance;
- Those who show increased schedule flexibility, such as those capable of operating buses in the summer and during school breaks to help with additional data collection and scheduling of deployments with electric school bus manufacturers.

The project team will also consider geographic diversity (urban, rural, suburban), environmental justice status, and air quality data to support selection of school districts and ensure a variety of communities that can benefit from electric school bus adoption are exposed to the technology.

### Request for Qualifications

Virginia Clean Cities at James Madison University, Greater Washington Region Clean Cities Coalition, Eastern Pennsylvania Alliance for Clean Transportation, Maryland Clean Cities, and New Jersey Clean Cities Coalition are each seeking qualifications from prospective School Partners within their respective states/regions.

This Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is intended to determine basic eligibility and level of commitment in order to select School Partners. Recognizing that this technology will be new to many potential applicants, Clean Cities coordinators from your state/region are available to support you through this process. **If you are interested but unsure of your eligibility, please reach out and we will be happy to help.**

### Submission Details

Interested candidates should respond to the following questions under the Request for Qualifications heading below.

Responses are being accepted on a rolling basis and must be submitted electronically to the Clean Cities Coordinator of your state/region (below). **Strong interest is expected and spots are limited so interested fleets should apply as soon as possible.**

Email subject line should read: MEEP\_RFQ\_School (or Contractor) Name

In you need assistance or have any questions, please contact your state/region's Clean Cities coordinator (contact info below):

<u>State/Region</u>	<u>Clean Cities Coalition</u>	<u>Coordinator</u>	<u>Contact Info</u>
Virginia	Virginia Clean Cities	Alleyn Harned	<a href="mailto:aharned@vacleancities.org">aharned@vacleancities.org</a> ; (804) 539-9425
District of Columbia and its Maryland and VA suburbs	Greater Washington Region Clean Cities Coalition	Ira Dorfman	<a href="mailto:iradorfman@gwrccc.org">iradorfman@gwrccc.org</a> ; 202-255-6050
Pennsylvania	Eastern Pennsylvania Alliance for Clean	Tony Bandiero	<a href="mailto:tbandiero@ep-act.org">tbandiero@ep-act.org</a> ; 215-990-8200
Maryland	Maryland Clean Cities	Mike Jones	<a href="mailto:michael.jones1@maryland.gov">michael.jones1@maryland.gov</a> ; 410-537-4071
New Jersey	New Jersey Clean Cities Coalition	Chuck Feinberg	<a href="mailto:cfeinberg@gbdtoday.com">cfeinberg@gbdtoday.com</a> ; 973-886-1655

**Request for Qualifications****School District**

School District:	
School Bus Contractor name (if applicable):	
Contact person, position, contact information:	
Street address:	
City / Town:	
Number of students transported by current school bus fleet:	

**Existing Bus Service**

What is the maximum number of school buses in service each day (school district operated and/or contracted)?	
How many bus routes do you operate/contract daily?	
What is the distance (miles) of your average route?	
What is the distance (miles) of the shortest daily bus route in your network?	
What is the distance (miles) of the longest daily bus route in your network?	
How long are your buses typically parked between morning and afternoon shifts?	
Do any of your routes include highway travel?	

Are your buses used for any purpose other than student transportation to and from school? If yes, please describe.	
Who operates your buses?	
Who owns and maintains your buses?	
Where are buses typically parked overnight? Are they in a covered facility?	
Are buses stored close to electric power access?	
Does the school district have any existing Level 2 electric vehicle chargers on site that could be used to charge buses? If yes, how many?	
Are there public or private Level 2 electric vehicle chargers nearby that could be used to charge buses? If yes, how many? Location?	
What types of buses do you currently operate? Provide numbers of Type A, Type C, Type D.	
What vehicle manufacturers are included in your fleet? Do you have a preferred manufacturer and local dealer?	
Is your current school bus insurance policy able to cover the short-term use of a demo bus? Please explain.	

### Additional Questions

Are you available to receive and deploy a demonstration electric school bus for an approximately 6- to 8-week period at any point during the 2020-2021, 2021-2022, or 2022-2023 academic years? Do you have specific schedule limitations or preferences?

How do you anticipate incorporating a demonstration electric bus into those operations, given COVID-19 pandemic disruptions to school transportation operations?

Has your school district been selected for other electric school bus pilot projects and/or has it received funding for electric school bus purchases? If yes, please explain.

What utility provides electrical service where the demonstration bus would be charged? Is this utility aware of your interest in participating in this demonstration project?

### Ability to Support Demonstration

For the electric bus demo program to be successful, it will be critical that School Partners have adequate fleet / transportation staff for bus operation and maintenance to support the short-term deployment of a new technology, incorporate the necessary protocols, and support data collection through the demo period. **The MEEP Team will support School Partners before, during and after the demo period, helping to facilitate the process and providing technical assistance, including staff training to support operations and data collection.**

The MEEP Team will work with School Partners to ensure they will be able to meet the following project requirements:

- Help facilitate the installation of any necessary charging infrastructure (as needed)
- Collect electric billing and usage information to monitor energy costs
- Provide existing fleet data to the MEEP team to establish a baseline for existing conventionally fueled vehicles
- Complete data submission reports (templates to be provided) to the MEEP Team on all agreed-upon data collection and ensure daily drivers' logs are maintained
- Participate in public events to help build awareness about electric school buses among community and regional stakeholders

Commitment and Support

Letters of support from your school district leadership are strongly encouraged to ensure there is buy-in from key stakeholders to participate in the demonstration. Other letters of support that demonstrate depth of community support are also welcome.

Please include a Letter of Commitment, signed by your Superintendent or the Chair of the School Board, or other relevant authority, confirming your commitment to:

- Engage relevant staff;
- Drive the demo bus daily to support school transportation operations;
- Use the demo bus(es) only on routes mutually agreed upon by the MEEP Team and your staff
- Support data collection throughout the demonstration period, including completing and submitting the driver’s log;
- Share information about your experience with others in the state and region;
- Explain your level of interest in potentially adding electric school buses to your fleet permanently

Additional Information

Please share any other information or materials that you would like us to consider as we evaluate your interest in the electric school bus experience project (below or attached). As noted above, **the MEEP Team is available to support you through this proposal process. Please reach out with any questions or to request support.**