PROPANE SCHOOL BUSES
Benefits and Opportunities for States
Roy W. Willis, President & CEO, Propane Education & Research Council
National Overview

• Leading national alternative fuel for school transportation.

• Scalable, affordable infrastructure for on-site refueling.

• Buses from all major O.E.Ms.
National Overview

• Nearly 11,000 propane autogas school buses operating in the U.S.
• 436% increase in the amount of Type C propane school buses since 2012
• Texas, California and Oregon lead the nation in number of propane school buses on the road.

Number of propane school buses per state.

- Texas: 2,600
- California: 1,176
- Oregon: 672
Why School Districts Choose Propane

• Financial
  • Many districts are facing budget challenges.

• Environmental
  • States and municipalities are seeking ways to reduce emissions. Diesel-powered fleets are a prime target for replacement with alternative fuels.

• Health & Safety
  • Technologies that improves the health and safety of passengers.
- Bus Cost
- Infrastructure Cost
- Maintenance
  - Fluid
  - Out of service cost
  - Parts
- Garage Facilities
The WHO and EPA have identified diesel engine exhaust as a carcinogen, which can cause short- and long-term health effects.

Harmful particulate matter found in diesel exhaust is also known to escalate breathing-related issues and aggravate asthma.
Health & Safety

• Compared with diesel buses, propane autogas buses are **noticeably quieter** when operating.

• Crash tested for impact in the side and rear areas, meeting rigorous U.S. and Canadian FMVSS and motor vehicle safety standards.

• Visit BetterOurBuses.com
Resources

• Training via the National Alternative Fuels Training Consortium (NAFTC)
  • Service technicians and mechanics

• Engine Research

• Case studies and results
  • Available at BetterOurBuses.com
2016 School Bus Campaign

- Partnering with Adopt a Classroom.
  - $30,000 in total donations to schools.
  - Help teachers purchase schools suppliers for their classrooms.

- Spokesperson Jena Bush Hager.
  - Visit a school that has adopted propane school buses.
  - Give magazine and TV interviews about the technology.

- Events - Last week of September
  - Five events at five districts that have adopted propane buses.
Get More Information

Case Studies & Resources
BetterOurBuses.com

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Indiana Propane School
Bus (PSB) Grant

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This is the first time the Office of Energy Development (OED) has offered grants specifically for propane school buses.

The funds come from SEP funds.

OED seeks to increase IN school’s access to affordable and reliable energy.

- Propane tends to be cheaper than diesel or gasoline.
- Fuel diversification protects schools long-term from fuel price shocks.
- Propane burns more cleanly than diesel, which lowers maintenance costs and reduces children’s exposure to harmful emissions.
49 School Buses in 7 School Districts

$275,430 in grants
  $5,621 per bus

595,363 miles per year

96,488 gallons of fuel offset

4.5 million digital impressions from media outlets
  State and National Coverage, including the Associated Press and Washington Times
$300,000 available for the PSB program

Max amount per school: $50,000

Will fund the *incremental* cost between buying a new propane bus instead of buying a new diesel or gasoline bus
- Max amount per bus is $10,000
- If your incremental is $9k, OED will fund up to $9k
- If your incremental is $11k, OED will fund $10k

Minimum of two buses being purchased is needed to submit application
Scoring Criteria

- Vehicle miles driven annually per bus
- Diesel gallons or gasoline gallons displaced annually
- Level of cost-share (match) provided by the grantee. OED will fund between 50% and 100% of the incremental costs
- Demonstrated need for this project and how this project will impact the applicant’s school corporation
- Applicant’s plan to educate its community and peers on its experience with the propane buses
- Quality and clarity of application
Applicants are eligible for 100% of the incremental costs, but match is encouraged. Extra points are given to grants that provide some level of match.

(Cake is also encouraged, but not required)
Benefits to School

- Clean Cities Coalitions were available to help schools plan infrastructure and fleet planning questions.

- Schools repeatedly showed interest in reducing fuel cost; longer bus life, cleaner emissions.

- Propane buses heat up much more quickly in the winter than traditional busses.
School corporations were asked how they would promote the project to its community and other school corporations.

Examples included:

- Community
  - Website page highlighting bus project
  - Local new media outreach
- Other school corporations
  - Regional transportation summit on propane
  - Work with Clean Cities and OED to do a case study
  - Motorweek segments
Proof that the applicant will have access to propane fueling infrastructure
- letter from propane dealer providing infrastructure, or
- letter from school stating they own propane infrastructure,
- or copy of a bid for purchase or lease of infrastructure, with a date indicating installation date

Important to have schools establish a line of communication with local propane dealers early in the process