



SOUTH COAST AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

# PRESS RELEASE

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## \$30 Million Now Available for Zero-Emission School Buses and Charging Infrastructure

*Funding will Support Communities Most Impacted by Air Pollution*

**DIAMOND BAR** – On February 6, the South Coast Air Quality Management District (South Coast AQMD) Governing Board approved \$30 million to help communities disproportionately impacted by air pollution replace older school buses with new, zero-emission models and install supporting charging infrastructure.

South Coast AQMD's [Assembly Bill \(AB\) 617 Clean Community School Initiative](#) is an incentive program supporting school-related projects in overburdened communities identified through the [AB 617](#) Program. Applicants must be the operators of privately-owned school buses contracted with and servicing public school districts within the identified communities.

The initiative is expected to significantly reduce air pollution, including smog-forming nitrogen oxides (NOx) and particulate matter (PM10)—tiny particles that can penetrate deep into the lungs. Reducing exposure to these pollutants is especially critical for children, whose lungs are still developing and who are more vulnerable to respiratory illnesses such as asthma. Zero-emission school buses help create cleaner air around schools and along bus routes, supporting healthier learning environments and improving long-term health outcomes for students and surrounding communities.

Eligible existing school buses must be diesel-, compressed natural gas-, or propane-fueled; have a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) greater than 8,501 pounds; be currently registered with the California Department of Motor Vehicles; and comply with the California Air Resources Board's (CARB) Truck and Bus Regulation. Buses must also have a valid California Highway Patrol (CHP) certificate at the time of application, with continuous CHP safety certificates for at least the past two years. Existing buses must be crushed or dismantled upon replacement.

Replacement buses must be CARB-certified, zero-emission vehicles with a GVWR greater than 8,501 pounds and in the same weight class as the existing school bus, unless otherwise approved by South Coast AQMD. Replacement buses are required to maintain valid CHP certificates for the duration of the contract.

**Application Deadline:** Tuesday, April 7, 2026 at 11:59 p.m. PST.

To apply, visit South Coast AQMD's AB 617 Community Action Plan Incentives page at: [www.aqmd.gov/cleancommunityschools](http://www.aqmd.gov/cleancommunityschools).

South Coast AQMD is the regulatory agency responsible for improving air quality for large areas of Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino counties, including the Coachella Valley. For news, air quality alerts, event updates and more, please visit us at [www.aqmd.gov](http://www.aqmd.gov), download our award-winning app, or follow us on [Facebook](#), [X](#) (formerly known as Twitter) and [Instagram](#).

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