

**ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)
2023 Clean School Bus (CSB) Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)
Project Narrative - EPA-OAR-OTAQ-23-06**

Cover Page:

Project Title	DeKalb County School District’s Clean School Bus Initiative			
Applicant Information	Applicant Name: DeKalb County School District Address: 1701 Mountain Industrial Blvd. Stone Mountain, GA 30083 UEI Number: WVNNLFF8YQN7 Office Phone and Fax: 678-875-0090/678-676-1546 Point of Contact and website: Bernardo Brown, Director of Student Transportation, bernardo_brown@dekalbschoolsga.org , https://www.dekalbschoolsga.org/operations/transportation/			
Entity Eligibility	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State or local governmental entity that provide bus service, including a public school district or charter school			
Budget Summary	EPA Funding Requested [A]	Applicant Costs [B]	External Leveraged Costs [C]	Total Project Cost [A+B+C=D]
	\$20,139,250.36	\$2,027,303.16	\$219,500.00	\$22,386,053.52
Project Location(s)	Buses will be deployed through DeKalb County, Georgia with service to the cities of Tucker (30084), Redan (30074), Decatur (30032, 30034, 30034), Lithonia (30038, 30058), and Stone Mountain (30083, 30087). Vehicles and chargers will be based at two bus depots located at 5855 Memorial Drive, Stone Mountain, GA 30083, and 3414 Memorial Drive, Decatur, GA 30032.			
Poor Air Quality	All electric buses will be deployed and operate in non-attainment areas 100% of the time as indicated in the Fleet Sheet and listed in the project locations.			
Project Period	Project Start Date: April 1, 2024		Project End Date: April 1, 2026	
Short Project Description	DeKalb County School District’s Clean School Bus Initiative will reduce emissions and improve air quality by replacing 50 class 7 diesel buses that are around 20 years old with 50 bi-directional capable clean and zero-emission electric school buses. The district will add 44 level 2 and 6 DCFC charging stations that will use managed charging.			

School District Name	NCES#	School Buses (#)	Fuel Type [ZE, CNG, Propane, Mix – define Fuel Type]	Charging Infrastructure [Y/N] and Type [EVSE Level 1, 2, 3, or Mix]
DeKalb County School District	1301740	50	ZE	Y – EVSE Mix (44 Level 2 and 6 Level 3)



Workplan:

Section 1- Project Summary

DeKalb County School District (DCSD) proposes to replace 50 of its oldest (20-year-old) Type C diesel buses with Type C electric zero emission school buses and is taking a holistic approach focused on operational success, efficiency, safety, and reliability. Studies have shown that older buses are significantly more polluting and this decision to transition to electric school buses (ESBs) stems from the district's commitment to reducing its carbon footprint and improving air quality to benefit the health and well-being of our students and the community at large. DCSD is in communication with and has the support of Georgia Power, our electric utility, to ensure this project will be successful.

DCSD is the third largest school system in the state of Georgia, serving over 100,000 students (about the seating capacity of the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum) across 138 schools and centers. This ESB deployment, if funded, would be the largest in the state and directly transport more than 6,700 students daily and serve a school district where 80% of schools receive Title I funding and 87% of students (79,921 students) attend those schools. These ESBs will provide a clean, tailpipe-emission-free transportation option for historically underserved students, increasing transportation equity and inclusion.

DCSD also provides K-12 public education to an exceptionally diverse population where parents and students speak 166+ languages and represent 155+ nations due to a large refugee population. Clarkston, Georgia, considered to be the most ethnically diverse square mile in America, is within DeKalb County. DCSD has comprehensive plans in place to engage all members of our community including Town Halls, demonstration events with the ESBs, and regular monthly educational campaigns. DCSD will create a webpage to provide project updates and include direct contact information, establishing an avenue for the public to ask questions and share concerns that DCSD will address. Being awarded 50 electric school buses in DeKalb would make an immediate, large-scale impact to improving the air quality and health outcomes for an incredibly diverse population of students, staff, and community members and establish one of the largest fleets of electric school buses at a school district in the Southeast. DCSD is committed to meaningfully engaging and soliciting feedback from our diverse community.

Importantly, DCSD is well positioned to successfully manage this award, having executed federal and state grants as detailed in Section 5, Past Performance. And by leveraging the strengths of local and national partners including Mothers and Others for Clean Air, Moms Clean Air Force, the Lakeside Bus Drivers Association, Sequoyah Middle PTSA, World Resources Institute's Electric School Bus Initiative, and Electrification Coalition, DCSD has the resources and support to effectively implement this project and create a collaborative ecosystem to share experiences and disseminate learnings. In this way, the project's success will expand beyond its immediate scope to serve as a blueprint for other districts across Georgia and the Southeast for successful large-scale implementation of electric school buses.

Section 2 - Environmental Results—Outputs, Outcomes, and Performance Measures

The project will be executed through a multifaceted approach, integrating various components to achieve maximum impact for outputs and outcomes:

- 1. Bus Replacement:** 50 diesel buses will be retired and replaced with electric school buses. DCSD's Clean School Bus Initiative's primary objective is to remove diesel exhaust emissions causing climate change and improve healthy air quality for students in the district and community. DCSD is in the fourth (highest) quartile of PM2.5 and in the 3rd quartile of ozone out of *all* school districts in the country based on WRI's analysis using EJScreen data. By replacing the diesel buses with electric, DCSD will transport 6,708 school children daily in a zero-tailpipe emissions environment where 100% of electric vehicle miles traveled are within non-attainment areas.



Specifically, this upgrade to electric school buses means tailpipe emissions will be reduced by 100% across a series of pollutants. The expected annual baseline emissions reductions are 1.820 short tons of nitrogen oxides, 0.141 short tons of particulate matter (2.5), 0.244 short tons of hydrocarbons, 0.935 short tons of carbon monoxide, and 615 short tons of carbon dioxide. The model years of DCSD’s diesel buses (2003 and 2004) indicate that their engines are past their typical maximum life. DCSD used EPA’s Diesel Emissions Quantifier (DEQ) to calculate emissions reductions that would result from this project. For the purposes of emissions reductions estimates, the fleet of 50 diesel school buses set to be replaced were split into two groups based on engine model year – 46 of the 2003 model year and four of the 2004 model year. The same inputs were applied to each vehicle in a single group, with average values entered for usage fields. The model year of DCSD’s diesel buses indicates that their engines are past their typical maximum life. As a result, DEQ assigns a remaining life of one year, making annual and lifetime emission reductions the same.

2. **Charging Infrastructure:** Installing 50 EV charging stations, 44 L2 and 6 DCFC, that will support the electric buses' operations while minimizing the reliance on fossil fuels (76,322 gallons of diesel fuel displaced each year) and reducing greenhouse gas emissions associated with traditional fueling methods.
3. **Training Programs:** Comprehensive and ongoing training provided for drivers and technicians will ensure smooth adoption and operation of electric buses. Equipped with the necessary skills, the workforce will optimize the performance of the new fleet.
4. **Transportation Equity:** DCSD serves an incredibly large and diverse student body where 80% of the schools are Title I funded with 87% of the students attending a Title I funded school. All routes where the ESBs will be deployed operate in non-attainment areas. This project will eliminate 100% of tailpipe pollutants for historically undeserved students in low-income and non-white communities that are disproportionately impacted by diesel bus pollution.
5. **Community Engagement:** The project is committed to meaningful engagement with community members and diverse stakeholders to communicate project plans and elicit feedback. There will be an open line of communication between DCSD and the public to foster understanding and support for the project. The sense of ownership and enthusiasm this creates will strengthen the project's long-term sustainability.
6. **Knowledge Sharing:** Lessons learned throughout the project's implementation will be shared at conferences and with other school districts to support their fleet electrification efforts. This knowledge dissemination will facilitate replication, accelerating the adoption of electric buses across Georgia and throughout the Southeast, ultimately aligning with city, county, and state climate and resiliency plans.

By executing this holistic approach, DCSD’ Clean School Bus Initiative will realize its goals of cleaner air, reduced emissions, reduction in fossil fuel use, strengthening workforce development for electrification, and broad-scale adoption of electric school buses, thereby making a substantial contribution to both local and broader climate and resiliency plans.

The **Activities Table** below outlines in detail the anticipated outputs and outcomes described in the narrative.

Activities	Anticipated Outputs	Anticipated Outcomes
Replace 50 class 7 diesel school buses with class 7 zero-emission (ZE) buses	Removal of 46, 2003 diesel school buses, off the road Removal of 4, 2004 diesel school buses, off the road	Each zero-emission (ZE) bus will reduce tailpipe emissions and pollutants by 100%, preventing 1.82 short tons of NOx, .141 short tons of PM2.5, and 615 short tons of CO2 annually, improving air quality in the communities in which they operate
Deploy zero-emission buses on routes in communities through which buses drive every day	6,708 children are transported on ZE or clean buses rather than diesel buses daily Serve a school district where 87% of the district’s students (79,921 students) attend schools receiving Title I funding	Low income and environmental justice communities will benefit from improved air quality and a reduction in carbon emissions, which will lead to a healthier environment and improved public health outcomes



<p>Bring 50 zero-emission buses to the third largest and most diverse school system in Georgia</p>	<p>Be a leader in electric school buses at a large and extremely diverse district serving over 100,000 students with 111 Title I schools where parents and students speak 166+ languages and represent 155+ nations due to a large refugee population</p>	<p>Increase transportation equity by ensuring access to clean and healthy transportation options in non-white communities that are disproportionately impacted by diesel bus pollution</p>
<p>Install 44 Level 2 chargers and 6 DC chargers</p>	<p>Removing 76,322 gallons of diesel fuel from use each year will result in 1,708,086.36 pounds of CO2 and 4,579,320 of nitrogen oxides (NOx) reduced</p>	<p>Chargers for the buses use electricity instead of diesel and therefore reduce energy waste, reduce costs for fuel, and reduce dependence on fossil fuels contributing to a more sustainable energy system</p>
<p>Comprehensive training is provided to all staff who will be engaged with the zero emission school buses, including, but not limited to, bus drivers, technicians, and first responders</p>	<p>Training will be provided by vendors ahead of bus and charger delivery to key staff in the transportation department in a train-the-trainer model. Approximately, 75 bus drivers and 27 technicians will be trained during the process for the full 50 ESBs</p>	<p>Increase knowledge and skills needed to operate zero emission buses and their charging infrastructure effectively and safely. Training programs will focus on building confidence and competency in operating the zero emission buses, promoting safety, optimizing range through regenerative braking techniques and energy efficiency and reducing maintenance cost</p>
<p>Actively and regularly engage the school community on zero emission school buses</p> <p>Provide avenues for feedback from the community at large</p>	<p>During the Open House at the local school level information about the zero emission buses will be disseminated to parents</p> <p>A public Townhall meeting will be held at a minimum yearly to educate community members about zero emission buses, ask questions, and provide input</p> <p>Demonstration Events will occur at least twice a year where community members can see and experience the electric buses firsthand</p> <p>Through regular monthly Educational Campaigns, we will inform the community about the zero emission buses by sending out flyers, sharing videos, and providing updates through virtual platforms</p>	<p>Foster meaningful participation within the community and increase the public's awareness of zero emission buses and their infrastructure</p> <p>Provides multiple opportunities throughout the year for the community to engage with DCSD on their zero emission school buses and enables transparent communication between the community and DCSD to share information on the zero emission school buses and receive feedback</p>
<p>Share lessons learned and best practices</p>	<p>Create a page on a website with contact information to communicate project implementation info and receive feedback from the community</p> <p>Establish resources for other Districts considering school bus fleet electrification and be a leader in the space</p>	<p>Establishes an avenue for DCSD to share project status updates with the community, provide data, showcase emissions reductions and any cost savings, as well as a way for the community to communicate concerns to DCSD and for DCSD to respond to any issues</p>
<p>Partner with local community-based organizations to support outreach and engagement with the community around zero emission school buses</p>	<p>Partnership with the Moms Clean Air Force, Mothers and Others for Clean Air, Lakeside Bus Drivers, and the Sequoyah Middle School PTSA to disseminate information on ESBs to the community and solicit input</p>	<p>Ensure broad and meaningful engagement with community and local stakeholders and understanding of new technologies</p>



Contribute and collaborate with cities that fall within DeKalb County as well as the Atlanta Regional Commission on local AQ/regional mitigation plans.	Contribute to the broader county and regional emission mitigation plans including DeKalb County's resolution to transition to 100% clean energy by 2035	Participate and contribute to public policy development and implementation
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a. Performance Measures and Plan

- **Emissions reductions:** Track, measure, and report by updating EPA's fleet sheet for the 50 vehicles. Track and report charging events and estimate amount of fuel use displaced.
- **Impacted student populations:** Track and measure student ridership on the new electric buses. Track and measure student engagement with new technologies at demonstration and community engagement events.
- **Charging infrastructure:** Track number of charging stations and the charger downtime and any maintenance required.
- **Energy consumption:** DCSD will utilize charge energy management software to track energy consumption per charger per charging session for each vehicle, the vehicle miles per kWh of charge, and provide electricity pricing from utility bills to report on energy usage and associated costs.
- **Vehicle reliability and performance:** DCSD uses Samsara as the telematics software to monitor its fleet of 950 buses and 430 support vehicles. Samara displays and captures vital vehicle operation activities. Some activities include vehicle miles traveled per vehicle, number of routes per vehicle, average occupancy per route for each vehicle, and vehicle downtime will all be tracked.
- **Training programs:** Collect feedback via surveys from training attendees. Collect staff information to track who attended what training.
- **Community engagement and perception:** Collect feedback via surveys from event attendees and report general perception and any changes in perception during duration of the grant.
- **Educational knowledge sharing:** Track and measure number of DCSD's students, teachers and staff, and community members reached through partner events.
- **Broader county and regional partnerships:** Scheduled regular meetings with documented agendas and notes for reporting to EPA.

b. Timeline & Milestones

Milestone	Q3 23	Q4 23	Q1 24	Q2 24	Q3 24	Q4 24	Q1 25	Q2 25	Q3 25	Q4 25	Q1 26
EPA CSB application submitted											
EPA Pre-Award Notification											
EPA CSB Agreement executed											
Project Start Date - 4/1/2024											
Community engagement efforts											
Charger and Infrastructure planning/design begins											
Purchase Order for 50 Type C ZE school buses issued											
EPA Quarterly Status Report Submitted											
Infrastructure construction and buildout											
Employee ZESB Training											
50 Type C ZE school buses received (may be two batches)											
50 Type C diesel school buses scrapped											
Final EPA Project Report Submitted											

Quarters are based on calendar year (Jan-Mar=Q1, Apr-Jun=Q2, etc.)



Section 3- Environmental Justice and Disadvantaged Communities

a. Prioritization for Disadvantaged Communities

NCES ID	District Name	# of Buses Serving the District	Prioritization Status [Yes/No] on Prioritized District List
1301740	DeKalb County School District	1,113 total (50 under this proposal)	Yes

b. Community Engagement

DCSD is committed to creating an environment that encourages active engagement throughout the project and ensures concerns are heard and addressed. To do this, from the initial planning stages of this project, DCSD will conduct a stakeholder analysis and actively involve community members and stakeholders through a variety of activities including:

- Quarterly public meetings
- Local school informational sessions that include updates on the electric school buses
- Dissemination of literature through a dedicated clean school bus initiative page on DCSD’s website, newsletters, and calling post
- Creation of educational campaigns that include demonstration events, and
- Collaboration with local partners and community-based organizations including Mothers and Others for Clean Air, Lakeside Bus Drivers, Sequoyah Middle School PTSA, and Mom’s Clean Air Force, as well as support through national organizations, Electrification Coalition and WRI

DCSD will measure success in community engagement by the number of members and community-based organizations (CBOs) contacted, and the reach from the informational events that are hosted or attended. Questions and concerns brought up by stakeholders will be tracked so that they may be addressed.

Understanding the community’s needs is a critical step in helping create the best possible outcomes for the project. The project team will seek to ensure participation is meaningful by providing accessible information, addressing concerns, and incorporating community input into decision-making processes. The project is committed to transparency, inclusivity, and ongoing communication to foster trust, increase awareness, and promote collaboration.

Section 4- Project Location – Nonattainment or Maintenance Area(s)

School District NCES ID	School District Name	County	State	Cities	Zip codes	# of Buses	% of Time Vehicles Spend in Area	Non-Attainment/ Maintenance Area
1301740	DeKalb County School District	DeKalb	GA	Stone Mountain, Tucker, Redan, Lithonia, Decatur	30083, 30084, 30032, 30034, 30035, 30038, 30058, 30087, 30074	50	100%	Yes

Section 5- Programmatic Capability and Past Performance

a. Past Performance

Federally Funded Assistance Agreement 1

Federal Agency	Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families
Project Title	Not a Number: Building Human Trafficking Prevention Education Capacity in DeKalb County School District
Assistance Listing #	93.327
Assistance Agreement #	90TV0042-01-00
Brief Description	The Not a Number: Building Human Trafficking Prevention Education Capacity in DeKalb County School District grant project is designed to provide human trafficking prevention education to educators and equip them to identify and respond to students who are experiencing human



	trafficking or are at high risk and deliver human trafficking prevention education to students. The district was awarded \$600,000.
Discussion	DCSD is successfully managing the grant project which is currently being implemented. A project manager works collaboratively with the project investigator and community-based organizations to manage and implement the grant.

Federally Funded Assistance Agreement 2

Federal Agency	United States Department of Education
Project Title	Innovative Approaches to Literacy: STEM is LIT(eracies)
Assistance Listing #	84.215G
Assistance Agreement #	S215G18015
Brief Description	DCSD was awarded approximately \$750,000 during the 2018 –2022 grant period from the United States Department of Education’s Innovative Approaches to Literacy Grant Program. The purpose of the Stem is Literacies grant project was to provide high quality reading resources and books for middle school students and provide literacy training across various content areas for middle school teachers.
Discussion	The project team, which included university and district staff, a finance team member, community-based organizations, a project manager, and the grant’s director and coordinator, met monthly to ensure the grant project was implemented successfully and with fidelity.

Federally Funded Assistance Agreement 3

Federal Agency	U.S. Department of Education
Project Title	DeKalb County School District’s School Based Mental Health Program
Assistance Listing #	84.184H
Assistance Agreement #	S184H220135
Brief Description	The purpose of the \$677,673 grant is to increase mental health services and resources for PreK-12 grade students by increasing the number of school psychologists recruited, hired, and retained in the school district to support students’ mental health needs.
Discussion	DCSD’s lead psychologist works collaboratively with Georgia State University and the Human Resources department to successfully implement and manage the five-year (2023-2028) grant project.

Federally Funded Assistance Agreement 4

Federal Agency	U.S. Department of Education
Project Title	ESSER II-CRRSA Act - LEA
Assistance Agreement #	CFDA #84.425D
Brief Description	ESSER II-CRRSA Act – LEA funds were received to help mitigate challenges experienced during the pandemic. The district was awarded \$42,266,826.00 and utilized the funds to support student academic achievement, hiring and retention of staff, create new positions to support schools, staff professional development, supplies needed to disinfect the schools and keep the school clean, and other key areas to support.
Discussion	DCSD is successfully managing the grant funds which are monitored by the following: Chief Financial Officer and finance team, Federal Programs, Audits and Compliance, and senior DCSD leadership.

Federally Funded Assistance Agreement 5

Federal Agency	U.S. Department of Education
Project Title	IDEA ARP 611
Assistance Agreement #	CFDA #84.027X
Brief Description	IDEA ARP 611 funds were received to help mitigate challenges experienced during the pandemic. The district was awarded \$3,250,392.00.
Discussion	DCSD is successfully managing the grant funds which are monitored by the following: Chief Financial Officer and finance team, Federal Programs, Audits and Compliance, and senior DCSD leadership.



b. Reporting Requirements

Reporting Submission Quality	<p>1. The project manager for the human trafficking grant collects data and works collaboratively with the community-based organization to submit mid-year and final reports to the Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families grant’s program manager in a timely manner.</p> <p>2. Innovative Approaches to Literacy Grant: Final agreements and reports were submitted in September 2021 for the USDOE Innovative approaches to Literacy Stem is (LIT)eracies grant project. During the three-year (2018-2021) grant implementation period, mid-year and final reports were provided to the USDOE each year of the grant. All reporting requirements were completed, and the grant was successfully closed out according to the USDOE guidelines.</p> <p>3. The School Based Mental Health grant teams are working collaboratively with the community-based organization and the school district’s finance department to ensure that they are collecting data and spending funds to prepare for the first mid-year report, since this grant was awarded in January 2023.</p> <p>4 and 5. For the ESSER II-CRRSA Act – LEA funding and the IDEA American Rescue Plan grant, the Chief Financial Officer and the Executive Director of Federal Programs at DCSD ensure the funds are allocated and distributed according to the federal guidelines. Reports regarding expenditure are updated and checked for accuracy. The district has not encountered any challengers since the funds were received.</p>
Timely Reporting on Progress	DCSD adequately and timely reported on its progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes under each of the agreements. The DCSD team met with program managers of each awarded federally funded grant, submitted the reports on time, and ensured outcomes were met.
Reporting on Progress Barriers	There are no barriers to the progress of managing the funds for any of the five grant projects.

c. Staff Expertise

Position Title	% FTE	Resume	Summary of knowledge, expertise, or qualifications to achieve project goals
Project Manager – Fleet Electrification	100%	N	A dedicated full-time ESB Project Manager will be hired to oversee the implementation of the 50 electric school buses and EVSE installation.
Project Staff – Fleet Electrification	100%	N	A dedicated part-time ESB Project Staff member will be hired to support the Project Manager – Fleet Electrification.
Director Student Transportation/ Bernando Brown	25%	Y	Possess extensive expertise in logistics, fleet management, and transportation systems. Has over 18 years of experience and has a comprehensive understanding of regulatory compliance and optimizing operations.
Director Fleet Services/ Cedric Burse	25%	Y	The Director of Fleet Services possesses vast knowledge in managing and optimizing large-scale vehicle fleets. Holds a strong background in maintenance and cost-efficiency strategies, while overseeing operations, implementing maintenance protocols, and ensuring the seamless functioning of diverse transportation assets.
Senior Project Manager/ Lemuel Hawkins	10%	Y	The Senior Project Manager handles the development and ongoing efforts for completion of Capital Improvement projects throughout a specified region within the DeKalb County School District. Also, manage and assist with nonplus related Special Projects requested by schools within a specified region of the DeKalb County School District.
Director of Finance/ Daniel Denton	10%	Y	Oversee the drawdown of budget expenditures and ensure adherence to federal district and federal financial policies and procedures. Ensures contract compliance of all grant documents with Federal and State law as well as internal policies.
Chief Operating Officer/ Eric Hofstetter	5%	Y	Directs and reviews the administration of financial activities pertaining to the budget development and administration, including maintenance of financial and position records and controls and functional supervision over financial management of all schools.



Partnerships Manager/ Michael Harris	5%	Y	Successfully led major federal, state, and local grant projects for over 20 years; served as the project manager of the projects.
Family -Community Empowerment Manager/ Marcia Coward	5%	Y	Leads the district's family engagement efforts to ensure parents have a voice and are informed on how to help their students and families be successful; Marcia Coward will support the community engagement activities and public awareness campaigns.
Grants and Partnerships Director/ Marcia Oglesby	5%	Y	Leads the district's grant development projects; will ensure the grant is being implemented according to the established goals and timeline; previous experience with leading federal grant projects and providing grants technical assistance to staff.
Grants and Partnerships Coordinator/ Libritta Anderson-Griffin	5%	Y	Provides support to the Grants and Partnerships Director and identifies and secures funding opportunities through grants and strategic collaborations. Supports with grant implementation, application processes, and budget management.
Communications Director/ Portia Kirkland	5%	Y	Ensure the public is aware of the campaigns and information is posted on the district's website, provide photos and news articles from open house and other public awareness events.

Project Partners

WRI	WRI is a non-profit research organization with an Electric School Bus Initiative working closely with school districts, advocacy organizations, electric utilities, manufacturers, financing entities and policymakers across the U.S to equitably electrify the U.S. school bus fleet. WRI has developed approximately 200 free, publicly available guides, planning documents, tools, and resources to help districts in their electrification journey while supporting individual school districts across the country with technical assistance — with a focus on low-income communities, communities of color, Tribal/Indigenous communities and those disproportionately impacted by diesel exhaust pollution.
Mothers and Others for Clean Air - GA	Mothers and Others for Clean Air (M&O) is working to reduce the impacts of air pollution and climate change throughout the Southeast. M&O works with caretakers, health professionals, scientists, and teachers to protect children's health by improving air quality. The team is getting busy this summer while school is out of session, meeting with local school systems to discuss EPA grant funding opportunities for electric buses.
Moms Clean Air Force - GA	Moms Clean Air Force is a nonprofit, grassroots environmental advocacy group with the mission is to protect children from air pollution and climate change, and envision a safe, stable, and equitable future where all children breathe clean air. Moms Clean Air Force is a community of over 1.5 million moms and dads united against air pollution including the urgent crisis of our changing climate to protect our children's health. They fight for Justice in Every Breath, recognizing the importance of equitable solutions in addressing air pollution and climate change. It is politically neutral or, in its own words, "mom-partisan."
Electrification Coalition	The Electrification Coalition is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that develops and implements a broad set of strategies to facilitate the widespread adoption of electric vehicles to overcome the economic, public health, and national security challenges that stem from America's dependence on oil. Our strategies include policy development, advocacy campaigns, consumer education, fleet electrification, cultivation of bipartisan support, support for charging infrastructure planning, EV supply chain development, and coalition building.
Lakeside Bus Drivers	Lakeside Bus Drivers has expertise in certifying bus drivers and experience working in Georgia/DeKalb/Atlanta community. The mission is to protect children from air pollution and emissions control.
Sequoyah Middle School PTSA	PTSA's mission is to make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children.



Section 6- Project Sustainability

DCSD understands that robust coordination with our electric utility, Georgia Power, will be critical to the sustainability of the results and benefits of this project, including future expansion of our electric fleet. As a result, we have already begun discussions with Georgia Power regarding this project. As demonstrated in the attached and signed Utility Partnership forms, these discussions have included consultation on 1) charging needs; 2) upgrades needed; 3) costs; 4) rates for future service; and 5) the timeframe for necessary upgrades for both depot locations (5855 Memorial Drive and 3413 Memorial Drive) with 25 electric school buses planned for each site.

For charging stations, DCSD has engaged Georgia Power to provide guidance and solutions for electrifying our bus fleet. Georgia Power has identified a variety of potential charging station and procurement solutions for DCSD, including pricing options.

For infrastructure, DCSD and Georgia Power have discussed plans to install charging stations to power the electric school buses. Georgia Power has indicated a scope that includes an electrical design for the installation of a 500kVa pad mount transformer to support the chargers (22 19.2 kW L2 chargers and 3 60 kW DCFC at each site), upgrades to the terminator pole, service lateral/conductor, installation of metering equipment, and primary line extensions for both sites.

If awarded, DCSD has a strong relationship and an assigned accounts manager at Georgia Power. DCSD will continue to consult with them on a regular basis throughout the project to ensure proper planning, including futureproofing for upcoming needs based on our fleet electrification plans.

DCSD also has a close partnership with our Blue Bird bus dealer, Yancey Bus, as outlined in the attached partnership letter. Headquartered in Georgia, Blue Bird is well positioned to support DCSD. Yancey Bus staff have been on-site to meet with our engineers and Georgia Power, and they are committed to ensuring the Blue Bird ESBs procured are fully operational including confirming charger interoperability and that the infrastructure system is built out and functioning as it should. They will also assist with the required scrapping of the older diesel school buses within EPA guidelines.

Furthermore, DCSD will ensure the results and benefits of this project are sustainable by proactively promoting our experience with the DCSD community and seeking their input. We will document and share our experience as outlined in Section 3.b (Community Engagement) to make sure all stakeholders and key decisionmakers are involved and have a sense of ownership and enthusiasm that will strengthen the project's long-term sustainability.

Section 7 – Workforce Development

DCSD will collaborate with vendors to train drivers, technicians, and support staff in operating, training, and repairing EV buses and associated equipment. The district will establish training programs and opportunities for drivers and technicians in their transition to electric buses. The training for drivers will consist of both classroom and hands-on training sessions conducted by expert trainers. The sessions will cover a wide range of topics, including electric bus operations, safety protocols, battery management, and route optimization, and are scheduled during non-operational hours. Simultaneously, training for technicians will encompass in-depth workshops that focus on the details of EV buses, maintenance, and repair, battery systems, charging infrastructure, diagnostics, and software management. This will be enhanced through online training programs in [Blue Bird Academy](#) offered by the selected manufacturer, Blue Bird, that includes technician training with six courses and over 30 topics. In-person hands-on vehicle training will be provided by the local dealer, Yancey Bus, at delivery of the electric models to ensure existing drivers can safely operate the ESBs.

DCSD has determined that 30 drivers and 13 of technicians will receive initial training on the electric vehicles and using a train-the-trainer model, training will be scaled to an additional 45 drivers (for a total 75) and 14 technicians



(for a total of 27) to be fully trained within 6 months of receiving the vehicles funded by this grant. It will be a mix of online computer-based instruction, classroom lectures, and hands-on practical training. Topics covered will include high voltage safety, pre- and post-trip inspections, vehicle operations and practice of bus controls, regenerative braking, bus preventative maintenance, charger operations and troubleshooting, best practices for electric vehicles, and roadside emergency protocols. Separate training for first responders will also be conducted.

DCSD recognizes the importance of continuing training to ensure that all current and future staff can participate in a successful transition to clean buses. As such, DCSD will incorporate electric vehicle and electric charger training in our on-going workforce training programs. Furthermore, these training programs on electric buses will be incorporated into the regular driver and technician responsibilities meaning no personnel will be displaced due to electric school bus implementation.

Section 8- Project Resilience to Climate Impacts

DCSD recognizes that Climate Change will increase the risk of extreme weather events like flooding and extreme heat in DeKalb County that can disrupt and damage transportation infrastructure.

To protect the fleet and equipment from flooding and heavy rains, DCSD is carefully evaluating infrastructure siting. Both locations have been reviewed relative to the 2020 FEMA Flood Maps and neither location is impacted by flood hazards. Additionally, neither location has trees or vegetation capable of inflicting damage to equipment or the ESBs.

DCSD also recognizes that higher temperatures from climate change will increase the need for an emergency response to extreme heat events and is actively planning for it. DeKalb is expanding its emergency heat plan to address the escalating challenges posed by rising temperatures due to climate change. This comprehensive plan will encompass several key elements to ensure the safety and well-being of students, staff, and the community during extreme heat events, as well as consider the vehicles and charging stations. Currently, the plan consists of a multi-tiered approach, involving coordination between school administration, transportation teams, and support staff.

The plan begins with advanced monitoring of weather forecasts to identify potential heatwave situations. In the event of forecasted extreme heat, the plan initiates a series of actions, including (1) an Early Communication and Alert System that allows for timely communication with schools, staff, and parents so they are aware of extreme heat events and any adjustments to transportation schedules, (2) Flexible Scheduling and Activities to minimize exposure of students, staff, and equipment to high temperatures, (3) Cooling Stations and Resources where DCSD identifies and designates specific areas within schools as cooling stations equipped with air conditioning and hydration resources to provide relief for students and staff during peak heat periods, (4) Transportation Safety Measures plan that includes directives for the transportation department to ensure the safety and comfort of students during bus rides, including implementing air conditioning on buses, adjusting routes to minimize time spent outdoors, and maintaining open lines of communication between drivers, school officials, and parents, (5) Staff Training and Preparedness that consists of training sessions to all staff to familiarize them with emergency heat plan protocols and how to coordinate responses effectively, and (6) Collaboration with Local Authorities and management agencies, public health departments, and community organizations to ensure a unified response to extreme heat events and access to additional resources.

Plans are subject to regular review and refinement based on experiences learned from past events, emerging climate trends, and technological advancements. This iterative approach ensures that DCSD remains agile in addressing evolving challenges posed by climate-induced extreme heat.

DCSD will also utilize managed charging, benefiting both the district and the overall grid. Managed charging avoids times of peak energy demand when costs are high, and energy may be pulled from peaker plants emitting twice as much CO₂ and 20 times as much NO₂ as typical gas plants. DCSD will take all measures to reduce emissions that contribute to climate change. DCSD is applying for the maximum 50 electric buses to replace our oldest and most



polluting diesel buses. This action will immediately and significantly reduce GHG emissions and other polluting vehicle emissions in our community, protecting community health and improving community resiliency to climate change.

Section 9- Leveraging of Additional External Funds

DCSD is eager to implement this project and has sought out leveraged additional external funds, detailed below, to maximize the impact and reach of potential federal funds. The total value of these funds is \$219,500.

World Resources Institute's (WRI's) Electric School Bus Initiative will commit to providing 200 hours of staff time for free technical assistance and advisory services as an in-kind contribution to DCSD if awarded this grant, valued at \$19,500 over the proposed project period. As described in the attached Leveraged Resources Commitment Letter, these leveraged resources are intended to support the following activities:

- Coordinating with the various stakeholders who will need to be involved in the project, including the electric utility;
- Planning for vehicle procurement and deployment;
- Informing decisions regarding charging infrastructure;
- Evaluating proposals from potential vendors;
- Supporting community engagement activities; and
- Sharing lessons learned from this project with the community and general public.

Georgia Power has partnered with DCSD on fleet electrification as described in the completed Utility Partnership Template letter that is included in this application. DCSD intends to access \$200,000 of funding through Georgia Power's Make Ready program for costs associated with the infrastructure (engineering and construction) upgrades that will be required for the project including the electrical designs for the project, the transformer, terminator pole, service lateral/conductor, metering, primary line extension and additional equipment, as well as the installation for this infrastructure.

Section 10- Budget

a. Budget Detail

DCSD's budget management will be led by the Project Manager for Fleet Electrification with oversight provided by the Director of Grants and Partnerships and support from the Grants and Partnerships Coordinator.

Personnel

Our budget includes personnel funding for two years for two key staff, a full-time Project Manager and a part-time Project Staff, who will be dedicated to project activities in this proposal to ensure project success. While several other critical staff including the Dir of Student Transportation and Dir of Fleet Services within the Transportation Department will have significant time allocated to the project (25% each), these staff salaries are fully covered by DCSD, and EPA funds are not requested. The project will also have staff time from the departments of Finance, Grants and Partnerships, Communications, and Family and Community Empowerment, but staff costs associated with the project will be borne by DCSD and fall under their normal work responsibilities.

Travel and Supplies

No travel expenses are anticipated during the life of the project. Travel costs which may materialize during the project life for key staff to attend community events, speaking roles at conferences, or other activities will be borne by DCSD. Supplies needed for community engagement and events associated with the project will also be borne by DCSD.

Equipment and Construction

Vehicles: DCSD plans to procure 50 Blue Bird electric school buses at \$385,000 each (quote from dealer). DCSD is requesting EPA funding for \$345,000 per bus and will pursue the federal tax credits to support the remaining \$40,000 per bus to fund the vehicles in this project. Under the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), the Tax Credit for Qualified



Commercial Clean Vehicles (section 45W) provides a credit per electric school bus (weighing more than 14,000 lbs.) of the lesser of the total incremental cost increase or 30% of the cost basis, up to \$40,000. Under either calculation, our procurement would result in \$40,000 per bus, totaling \$2,000,000 [50 x \$40,000].

EVSE including installation: DCSD has been provided quotes from Georgia Power for turnkey charging solutions including installation for 44 L2 19.2 kW chargers and 6 L3 60 kW DCFC chargers. DCSD will continue to seek additional pricing options but has indicated these values in the budget. The L2 chargers with installation have been quoted \$19,200 per charging station, and the DCFC with installation have been quoted at \$70,200. The turnkey charging solution includes consultation, design, procurement, installation, and five years of networking capabilities and five years of warranty coverage.

Construction: DCSD through consultation with Georgia Power has estimated the total engineering and construction cost for utility owned infrastructure (in front of the meter) for the project based on 50 electric school buses, 44 19.2 kW L2 chargers, six 60 kW L3 DCFC for both depot locations to be \$150,000 (\$75,000 for each site). Additional fleet side of the meter construction costs will be needed for both sites to install the charging stations, particularly at the 3414 Memorial Drive site that is currently an empty lot. DCSD is in the beginning stages of planning for this depot construction and the total costs will exceed the amount that has been requested to EPA. DCSD is committed to building out this site for the electric school buses and will cover all additional costs to complete the project.

Other:

EVSE Software and Data Connection: DCSD plans to utilize managed charging for all chargers. The software for each charger, based on estimates, is \$158 annually per charger for the software and \$562 annually per charger for the data connection. These are critical elements to project success as they will allow DCSD to use real-time information to monitor and track the chargers and ensure charging of buses is optimized.

WRI Technical Assistance: World Resources Institute (WRI) will provide 200 hours of in-kind staff time for free technical assistance to support DCSD in their electric school bus adoption, valued at \$19,500. This will maximize the impact and reach of the EPA federal funds.

Indirect Charges

The Federal Negotiated indirect cost rate for DCSD is 3.14% and the non-restrictive cost rate is 15%. The indirect cost is calculated at the indirect rate x the total personnel costs.

Budget Table

Line Item	Qty	Cost [per unit]	EPA Funding	Applicant Cost	Leveraged Costs	Total Project Cost
Project Manager (\$70/hr, 40 hrs/wk, 102 weeks)	1	\$285,600	\$285,600	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 285,600
Project Staff (\$30/hr, 30 hrs/wk, 102 weeks)	1	\$ 91,800	\$ 91,800	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 91,800
TOTAL PERSONNEL			\$ 377,400	\$0	\$0	\$377,400
Class 7 zero-emission/electric school bus	50	\$385,000	\$17,250,000	\$2,000,000	\$0	\$19,250,000
AC Level 2 charger (19.2 kW) (240 V) including 5yr networking capabilities and turnkey EVSE installation through Georgia Power	44	\$19,200	\$844,800	\$0	\$0	\$844,800
DC fast charger (DCFC, 60 kW) (480 V) including 5yr networking capabilities and turnkey EVSE installation through Georgia Power	6	\$70,200	\$421,200	\$0	\$0	\$421,200



<i>Vehicles and Infrastructure</i>			\$18,516,000	\$2,000,000	\$0	\$20,516,000
Electrical service equipment upgrades for two sites (distribution lines, transformers, etc.)	1	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$200,000	\$200,000
Additional EVSE installation for new depot (trenching, re-paving, conduit, etc., engineering review and drawings, permitting)	1	\$1,198,000	\$1,198,000	\$0	\$0	\$1,198,000
<i>Construction Work and Equipment Upgrades</i>			\$1,198,000	\$	\$200,000	\$1,398,000
TOTAL EQUIPMENT AND CONSTRUCTION			\$19,714,000	\$2,000,000	\$200,000	\$21,914,000
OTHER						
Fleet management software - RTA	1	\$0	\$0	\$10,953.16	\$0	\$10,953.16
GPS/Telematics - Samsara	50	\$0	\$0	\$16,350	\$0	\$16,350
EVSE Software (annual subscription)	50	\$158	\$7,900	\$0	\$0	\$7,900
EVSE Data Connection (annual subscription)	50	\$562	\$28,100	\$0	\$0	\$28,100
WRI Technical Assistance	1	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$19,500	\$19,500
TOTAL OTHER			\$36,000	\$27,303.16	\$19,500	\$82,803.16
INDIRECT COSTS						
Federal Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate = 3.14% (Indirect Rate x Personnel = Indirect Costs)	1	\$0	\$11,850.36	\$0	\$0	\$11,850.36
TOTAL INDIRECT			\$11,850.36	\$0	\$0	\$11,850.36
TOTAL FUNDING			\$20,139,250.36	\$2,027,303.16	\$219,500	\$22,386,053.52

b. Expenditure of Awarded Funds

DCSD's finance department has the responsibility to ensure timely recording, and accurate tracking of all contracts, grants and donations received by the district. This includes implementing the budget, receiving and approving disbursement requests timely and in accordance with applicable rules and regulations; tracking revenues and expenditures and performing monthly reconciliations of all accounts. The district maintains pooled cash and investments accounts and seeks to obtain market rates of return on its investments consistent with all policies. The district maintains, at a minimum, fund balances in the general fund at fiscal year-end between 5% and 7% of budgeted expenditures. Amounts that can be spent only for specific purposes are restricted in the fund balance. The general fund disburses cash payments until reimbursement is received from external grantor agencies.

DCSD utilizes an automated accounting system. Accounting controls and maintenance of the system are the responsibility of the Information Technology Division. The accounting system permits the classification of funds and all necessary classifications including revenues, expenditures. The system allows for expenses in specific categories as determined by state and federal regulations and utilizes terminology and classifications in accordance with the funds maintained and Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and reporting on all levels including subsidiary accounts. Budgetary controls are established at the cost center, function, object, fund, program levels. The system includes general accounting, accounts payable, payroll, HR and fin and finance. Accounting records are saved, and a disaster recovery solution is in place.



c. Reasonableness of Costs

The proposed expenses for the project have been carefully considered, demonstrating prudence and ensuring no undue excess. The selected equipment and services are based on estimates provided by vendors and Georgia Power and align with the project’s scope. During the interim period from application submission to potential award, DCSD will continue exploring optimal pricing for all equipment and software. The table below details how every cost requested for funding relates to the project narrative and specific emission reduction activities.

Item	Cost	Narrative and Emission Reduction Activity
Personnel Salary	\$377,400	DCSD recognizes that a project of this scale necessitates dedicated staff to oversee and manage for its success.
50 Class 7 Electric School Buses (Type C)	\$17,250,000	Zero tailpipe emissions ESBs eliminate NOx, PM2.5, CO, HC, and CO2, immediately improving local air quality and reducing noise pollution.
44 L2 (19.2 kW), 6 DC Fast Chargers (60 kW)	\$1,266,000	Reduces GHG emissions and dependence on fossil fuels by eliminating 76,000+ gallons of diesel fuel every year.
EVSE Installation and construction	\$1,198,000	Supports the infrastructure buildout of two bus depots to be equipped for the operation of ESBs that will reduce GHG emissions, air pollutants, and noise pollution.
EVSE Software and Data Connection	\$36,000	Charge management software will allow ESB charging to take place outside of peak demand periods, which often results in lower rates and reducing strain on the grid. Managed charging can be done remotely or at planned intervals so staff can monitor charging off-site. Furthermore, automated load management, a function of charge management, is particularly useful allowing the system to strategically share charging capacity across multiple charging ports at the same site, helping safely connect multiple charging ports whose total nameplate load would otherwise exceed the rated capacity of the customer connection. By using ALM, combined with optimization around vehicle duty cycles, customers can avoid or defer the need to upgrade certain distribution system infrastructure to accommodate the new EV charging load while still respecting their fleet operations.
Indirect Cost Rate	\$11,850.36	The federal negotiated indirect cost rate for DCSD is 3.14%. This value is the Indirect Rate x Personnel costs.