

State Superintendent's Advisory Council on Rural Schools, Libraries and Communities

January 2005

School Bus Fuel Conversion Assistance

A member of the Rural Advisory Council had asked if there were any federal funding to assist school districts to purchase buses using natural gas. There are two nationwide programs which help school districts retrofit and/or replace buses in order to improve air quality.

Clean School Bus USA Demonstration Grants

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is advocating that older school buses be replaced or retrofitted to provide cleaner operating buses. The 2004 Clean School Bus USA Demonstration Grants provided \$5 million to 20 school districts (none in Wisconsin) for school bus retrofit and replacement grants (buses could be replaced with buses that run on compressed natural gas among other technologies).

President Bush proposed an expansion of Clean School Bus USA in 2005 (\$65 million); however, Congress did not include any funding for the program in the 2005 EPA appropriations bill. Therefore, funding for this program will likely be discontinued.

For more information see:

<http://www.epa.gov/otaq/schoolbus/funding.htm>.

Clean Buses for Kids Program

There is another program which helps school districts retrofit school buses with emission control equipment is the Clean Buses for Kids Program. This program is funded by a settlement of an enforcement action against the Toyota Motor Corporation. Grants to be awarded would range from \$30,000 to \$750,000 per school district. However, the deadline for application for a grant has passed (November 12, 2004).

Furthermore, priority for these grants was given to applicants located in certain counties that are listed as non-attainment (areas not meeting EPA air standards). In Wisconsin, only counties bordering Lake Michigan are considered non-attainment and DPI staff indicate that it is unlikely that school districts outside these areas will receive a grant. It is unknown whether any district in Wisconsin has applied for this grant.

For more information see:

<http://www.cleanbusesforkids.com>