

September 17, 2019

MEMORANDUM

TO: School District Transportation Directors

FROM: James Boylan, Manager
Planning and Support Program
Georgia Environmental Protection Division

SUBJECT: 2019 DERA Funding Application for School Bus Early Replacement Projects

The Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) is pleased to announce available funding for 2019 early school bus replacement projects. Through the Diesel Emission Reduction Act (DERA) State Clean Diesel Grant, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has awarded approximately \$486,864 to EPD for the purpose of reducing diesel emissions.

EPD is issuing a Request for Applications (RFA) to school systems in Georgia for the purpose of reducing school bus diesel emissions. The emissions will be reduced by early replacement of older, high emitting school buses with newer model-year buses with lower emissions. School systems that choose to replace older school buses can dramatically reduce emissions and create a healthier environment for school children, bus drivers, mechanics, teachers, and communities where the buses operate.

School buses proposed for replacement must not have been previously scheduled for replacement within three (3) years of August 2019. Only school buses built between the model years of 1996-2009 are eligible to be replaced with the new clean diesel buses. Alternatively, school systems may replace buses built between 1996-2018 with new buses powered by zero emission technology (such as electric) or near zero NOx engine technology (such as propane). The new buses that are purchased must be model years 2016 or newer. Project applicants are required to match a minimum of 85.1% of the project cost.

The project application is enclosed. The application period will start September 17, 2019 and the deadline for submitting applications is 5:00 p.m. on October 15, 2019. The application includes instructions on how to submit your proposal.

If requests for funding exceed available funds, the following selection preferences will apply:

- First priority will be given to public school systems whose fleets are based in counties that have been designated as nonattainment for the 2015 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS). The counties included are Bartow, Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Fulton, Gwinnett, and Henry.
- Second priority will be given to public school systems whose fleets are based in counties that have been designated as maintenance for the 2008 Ozone NAAQS and attainment for the 2015 Ozone NAAQS. These counties are Cherokee, Coweta, Douglas, Fayette, Forsyth, Newton, Paulding, and Rockdale.
- Third priority will be given to public school systems whose fleets are based in counties that have not been designated as nonattainment or maintenance for the 2008 or 2015 Ozone NAAQS.
- Within each priority, applications will be ranked according to cost effectiveness of the project (cost per ton of emission reduced over the lifetime of the project).

Please note that school buses purchased for the early replacement of existing school buses must remain in the fleet for a minimum of four years.

For those school systems interested in applying for the DERA School Bus Early Replacement RFA, please complete the enclosed application and submit to Richard McDonald via e-mail, mail, or hand delivery.

Mailing and Street Address: Georgia Environmental Protection Division
Planning and Support Program
Attn: Richard McDonald
4244 International Parkway, Suite 120
Atlanta, GA 30354

E-Mail Address: Richard.mcdonald@dnr.ga.gov
Phone: 404-362-6594

The applications are due by 5:00 p.m. on October 15, 2019. If an application is submitted by e-mail, please contact Richard McDonald to confirm receipt of the application.

Once the RFA closes, EPD staff will review each application to ensure eligibility as stipulated in the grant criteria. Recommendations for issuing sub-grants will be made to the EPD Director based on the top-ranked projects and available funding.

If you have any questions related to the grant criteria, information contained in the cover letter or the application, please contact Richard McDonald. Note that Mr. McDonald will share the questions and answers with all of the eligible school systems, so that every potential applicant will have access to the same information. EPD staff will not be able to make comments or answer questions related to the potential scoring or viability of a project while the RFA is open.

This RFA does not commit the Georgia Environmental Protection Division to enter into an agreement, to any cost incurred in the preparation of the response to this request or in subsequent exclusive negotiations, to procure or to contract for the project. In addition, EPD reserves the right to award projects for less than the requested amount.

EPD thanks you for your time and consideration, and we look forward to receiving your application.

JB:rpm