

Maryland Electric School Bus Grant Program: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

1. What is the Maryland Electric School Bus (ESB) Grant Program?

The Maryland Electric School Bus Grant Program provides financial assistance to help Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) and their transportation partners transition to electric school buses. This program supports the purchase of electric school buses, charging infrastructure, technical training, and other associated costs.

2. Can I combine this grant with other funding sources?

Yes, applicants can stack funding from the Maryland Electric School Bus Grant Program with other grants, such as the EPA's Clean School Bus Program. Stacking grants allows applicants to maximize resources and cover more costs. Here is a breakdown:

- **EPA Clean School Bus Grant Program:** Covers the cost of electric school buses and charging infrastructure.
- **MEA ESB Grant Program:** Covers up to **120%** of the incremental cost of the electric bus, a portion of charging infrastructure costs (up to **30% of total project funding request**), electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE)/facility planning (up to **\$200,000**), technical training (up to **\$7,200 for six technicians**), and lift-equipped accessibility (up to **\$20,000**).

If combined funding from MEA and other sources exceeds the total project costs, the excess funds received from the Electric School Bus Grant must be returned to MEA.

3. What types of vehicles are eligible?

Any publicly-funded school bus procured by an eligible entity for the routine transportation of students for school or school-related programming or activities is eligible for consideration. Vehicles must be purchased new (i.e. retrofits or repowered vehicles are NOT eligible). A vehicle that has been funded in whole or in part by another Maryland State grant may not be funded through this program.

4. Are there restrictions on using other Maryland state funding?

No, vehicles or infrastructure that have already received funding from another Maryland state

agency grant program can receive additional funding through this program with the stipulation that the applicant provides clear and concise documentation to show those other funding sources.

5. What associated costs are covered?

- **Charging Infrastructure:** Up to **30%** of the total project funding request.
- **Technical Training:** Up to **\$7,200** for training six technicians.
- **Lift-Equipped Buses:** Up to **\$20,000** to assist with additional costs for lifts.
- **Facility Planning:** Up to **\$200,000** for EVSE and facility start-up planning.

6. Can a vendor apply on behalf of an LEA?

Yes, fleets/school bus vendors may apply on behalf of an LEA as long as a contract/agreement is in place and can be provided upon submission of application.

7. Is there a minimum or maximum number of buses that can be requested?

There is no specific minimum or maximum number of buses. However, requesting funding for fewer buses per applicant can make the application more competitive, as it demonstrates leveraging other funding sources.

8. How are applications evaluated?

Priority is given to projects benefiting Title I schools and underserved communities. Competitive applications will include concept plans for fleet management and/or an estimated project cost (for vehicle, charging infrastructure, etc.), stakeholder and community engagement, and the overall quality of the submitted application.

9. What is the "Community Partner" requirement?

Applicants should demonstrate collaboration with community partners such as utilities, local organizations, or government agencies to strengthen their proposals.