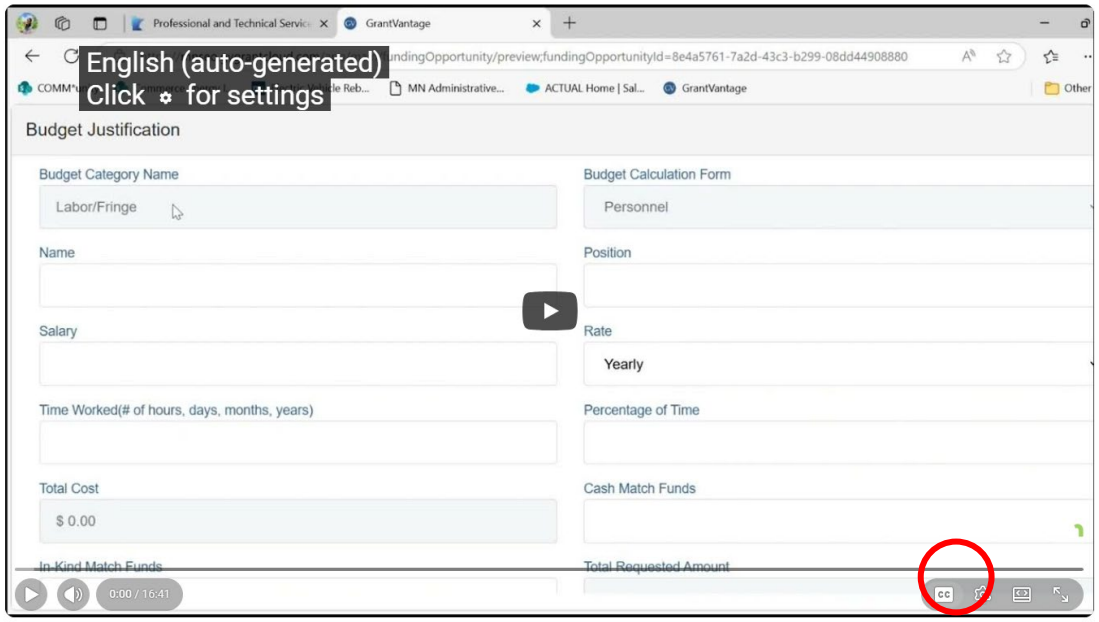
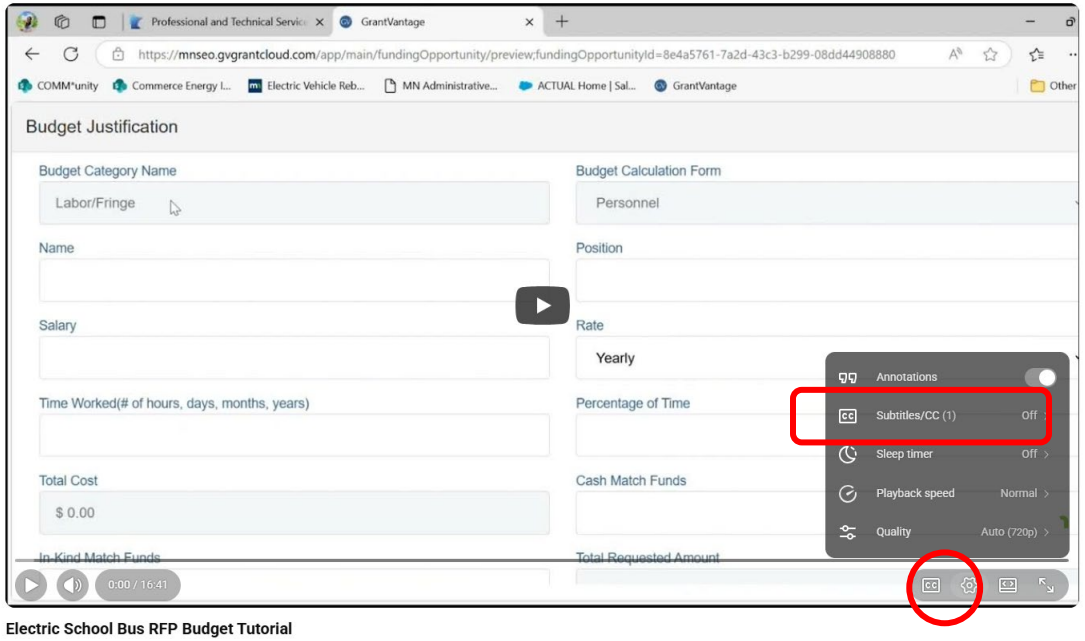
How to Turn On Closed Captions

1. Click on the “**CC**” box in the lower right corner of the video

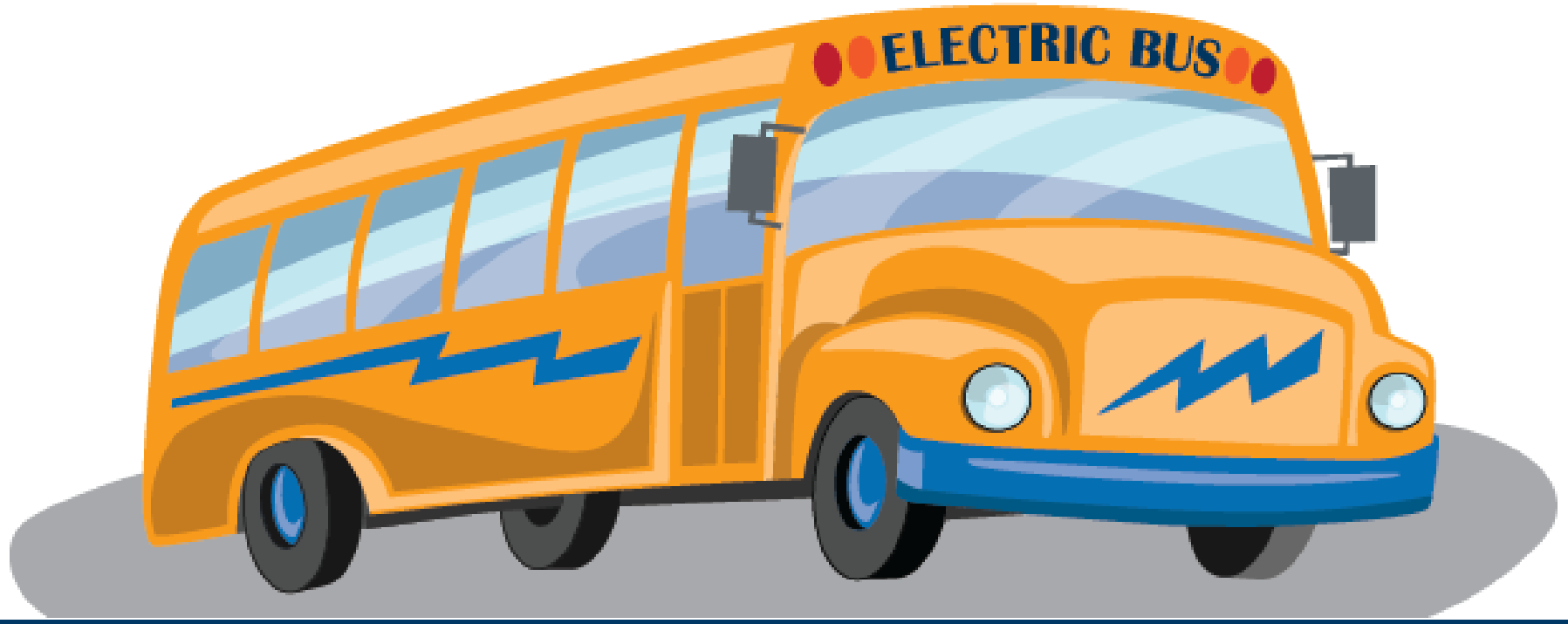


Electric School Bus RFP Budget Tutorial

2. Click on the gear icon in the lower right corner and choose subtitle options



Electric School Bus RFP Budget Tutorial



Electric School Bus Grants Informational Webinar
Equipment and Planning & Technical Assistance

Anna Crouch| Buildings and Transportation Energy Programs Administrator
Lex Brand| Emerging Fuels Specialist

COMMERCE DEPARTMENT

mn.gov/ElectricSchoolBus

Agenda

Electric School Bus (ESB) Grants	• Timeline • Who Can Apply • Which Application Is Right For You
ESB Grants: **Equipment**	• Eligible & Ineligible Expenses • Bus Requirements • Grant Caps And Financial Need • Priority Service Areas
ESB Grants: **Planning & Technical Assistance (P&TA)**	• Eligible & Ineligible Expenses • Grant Caps • How It Differs • Scoring And Evaluation
Preparing To Apply	• What To Do, When • Application Submission Documents
Questions & Answers	

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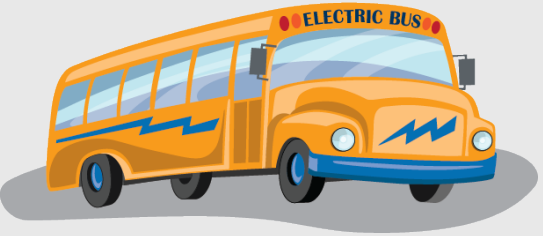


Electric School Bus Grants

Overview of Both Grants

ESB Grants: Timeline and Available Funds

- **Both RFPs** were issued on October 19, 2026
- Q & A Period ends on December 16, 2026
- Last Q & A will be posted on December 23, 2026
- **Both applications due on December 31, 2026 at 5pm CT**

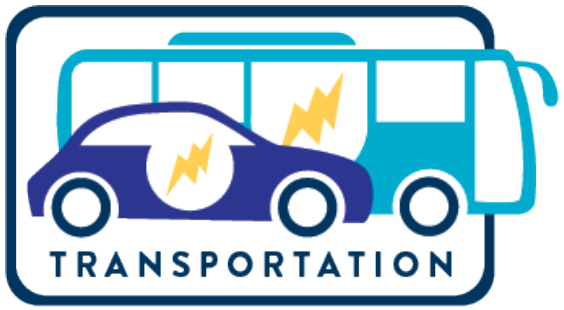


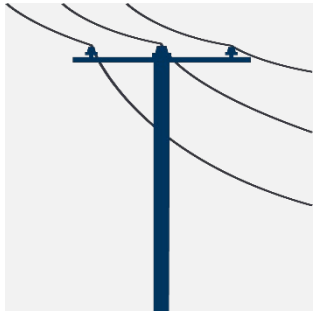
Up to
$1.7 million available
for both applications

Who Can Apply

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS







- ✓ **Independent School District**
- ✓ **Special School District**
- ✓ **Tribal Contract School**
- ✓ Transportation Service Provider
- ✓ Electric Utility
- ✓ Electric Vehicle Service Provider

INELIGIBLE APPLICANTS



- × Charter Schools
- × Private Schools
- × Universities And Colleges
- × Educational Co-ops

Prioritized School Districts

A school district is **prioritized** if it meets at least one of these criteria:

- Is listed as having 7.5 percent or more students living in poverty by the census
- Is identified with locale codes "43-Rural: Remote" and "42-Rural: Distant"
- Is funded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Receives basic support payments for children who reside on Indian land

Commerce is working to award at least 40% of total grants to prioritized school districts

Which Application Is Right for You

Choose Equipment

- You know you want buses
- You have talked to your utility
- You can cover the remaining cost
- You are ready to buy

Choose Planning & Technical Assistance

- You don't know where to start
- Your routes or yard are untested
- You need help with your utility
- You want federal grant help

Choose Both

- You want buses **and** a plan

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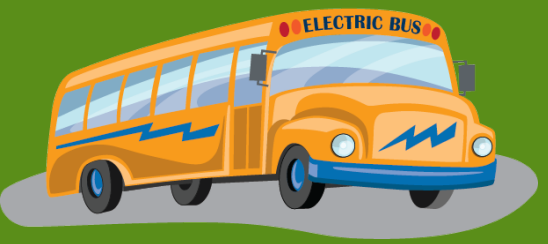


ESB Grants: **Equipment**

Information about the Application for Equipment (ESB06-10192026)

Equipment: Eligible Expenses



Up To 3 Buses

- Purchase: New electric school buses, types A-D
- Convert: Cost of parts and labor
- Applicable taxes, fees, and delivery costs



One Lvl. 2 Charger Per Bus
OR
One DC Fast Charger Per App

- Installation costs:
  - Trenching, wiring, labor, and permitting



Staff Project Work

Staff time costs for:

- Working and administering bids
- Coordinating to bring the school buses online

For the applicant only

Equipment: Ineligible Expenses

Examples of Ineligible Expenses

- × Diesel heaters on the bus(es)
- × Cameras and other safety equipment installed separately onto the buses
- × Utility infrastructure upgrade costs and any other funding for “Front-of-the-Meter” upgrades.
- × Any costs incurred prior to the full execution of grant awards.

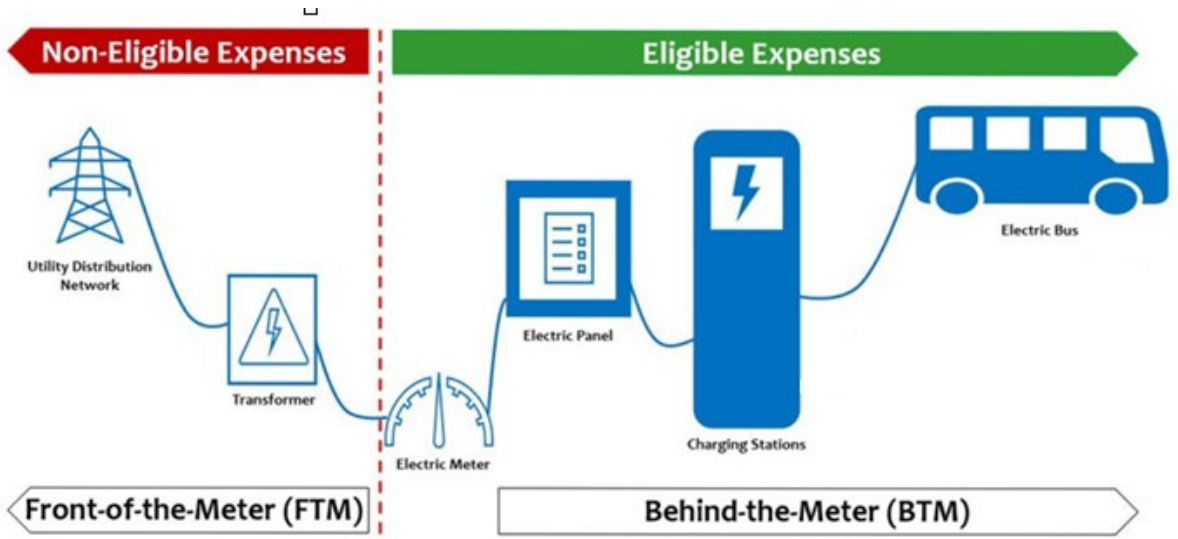


Image adapted from EPA’s Clean School Bus Program

× See a full list of ineligible expenses on page 6 of the RFP

Equipment: Bus Requirements

No Scrappage Requirement

- You do not have to scrap, sell, or donate an old fossil-fuel bus to receive a new electric school bus



Bus Operation Requirements

- At least 3 days per week on average during the school year, for 5 years
- Equipment operational and serving students within 18 months of award and signed contract

Model Year Requirements

- New buses must be model year 2025 or newer
- Repowered buses must be model year 2019 or newer

Equipment: Grant Caps and Financial Need

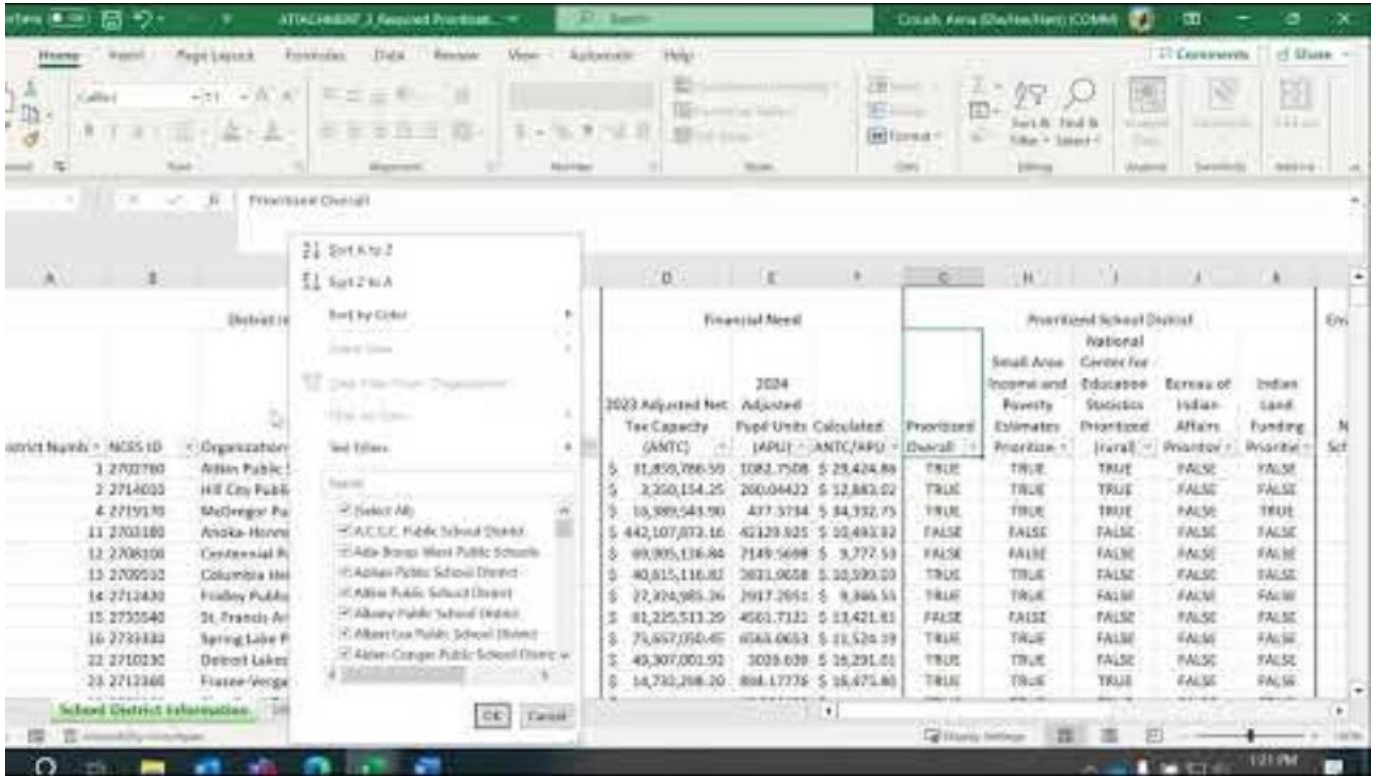
ANTC/APU	Prioritized Grant Cap	Prioritized Grant Cap	Prioritized Grant Cap	Grant Cap	Grant Cap	Grant Cap
	Cost of Bus(es)	Cost of Charger(s)	Administration Cost*	Cost of Bus(es)	Cost of Charger(s)	Administration Cost*
ANTC/APU ≤ $11,700 and Tribal Contract Schools	90%	95%	95%	90%	75%	75%
ANTC/APU >$11,700 and ≤$18,600	85%	90%	90%	85%	70%	70%
ANTC/APU >$18,600	80%	85%	85%	80%	65%	65%

Based on a district's prioritization status and financial need. Calculated as Adjusted Net Tax Capacity (ANTC) over Adjusted Pupil Unit (APU)

***Administration expenses covered by this grant must be 10% or less of the total requested funding**

Equipment: Using Attachment 3

This video focuses on the Equipment application, but the Planning & Technical Assistance grant also uses Attachment 3.



Finding your district's grant cap for the Electric School Bus Equipment Grant

Equipment: Priority Service Areas

Any area in the school district that meets **one or more** of these criteria can be considered a Priority Service Area:

- **Environmental justice areas**, as defined by Minn. Stat. 216B.1691, sub 1(e) and mapped in Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's Environmental Justice Areas Map, that are within the School District's boundaries.
- **Areas of poor air quality**, as defined by Minn. Stat. 216C.374, sub 1 (k). This includes areas where childhood asthma rates are higher than the statewide average according to the Minnesota Department of Health.
- Schools within the School District that serve significant numbers of students eligible for **free and reduced-price school meals at a federal level**, according to the Minnesota Department of Education's 2024-2025 enrollment information.

Priority Service Areas: Any area of a school district that would particularly benefit from the deployment of electric school buses

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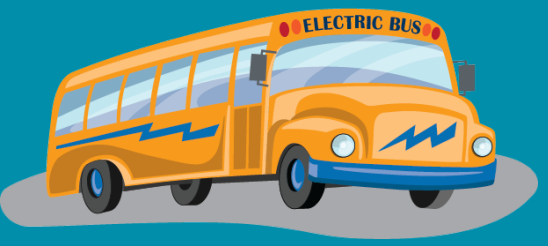

ESB Grants:
Planning & Technical Assistance

Information about the Application for Planning & Technical Assistance (ESB07-10192026)

Planning & Technical Assistance: What It Funds

What It Funds
Planning Activities: electrification readiness plan, infrastructure and capital planning, needs assessment, scoping, stakeholder engagement, market research
Federal Application Assistance Activities: preparing federal grant applications, hiring consultants
Both activities together

Not eligible: buses, charging infrastructure, non-federal grant applications, any work before the contract is executed

Planning & Technical Assistance: Grant Caps

ANTC/APU	Planning Activities Grant Cap	Federal Application Assistance Grant Cap	Maximum Amount
ANTC/APU ≤ $11,700 and Tribal Contract Schools	$20,000	$7,000	$27,000
ANTC/APU > $11,700 and ≤ $18,600	$18,000	$6,300	$24,300
ANTC/APU > $18,600	$16,000	$5,600	$21,600

Planning & Technical Assistance: Scoring and Evaluation

Criteria	Points
Prioritized school district	20
Electric school buses already awarded or operating	16
Presence of environmental justice areas in the district	16
Presence of poor air quality areas in the district	16
Students eligible for federal free and reduced-price lunch	16
Commitment to route buses through these areas	16
Total	**100**

Planning & Technical Assistance: How It Differs

Compare	Equipment	Planning & Technical Assistance
How funding works	A percentage of your costs	A flat dollar cap
Matching funds	You cover the remaining share	None needed
What it buys	Buses and charging equipment	Planning help and grant writing
Prioritized School District Impact	Score additional points AND determine grant cap	Score additional points

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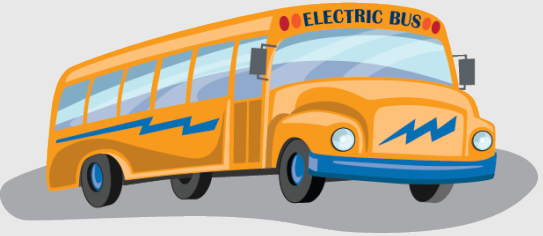

Preparing to Apply

What to Do, When

	What to Do
Right Now	• Review the RFP and required documentation on the Commerce RFP page • Determine your **Prioritization** and Grant Cap
When You've Decided to Apply	• Take a look at some of our technical assistance resources • Prepare your answers • Start collecting required documents
A Week Before Submitting	• Read the Step-By-Step applicant guide for the submission portal • Register (or log-in) to the submission portal
When You're Ready to Submit	**Give yourself at least 3 hours before the application closes!** • Ensure all questions are answered • Ensure all required documents are attached

Application Submission Documents

Document	Equipment	Planning & TA
Letter Of Authority To Apply	Required	Required
Budget and narrative in GrantVantage	Required	Required
Exhibit B: Exceptions Form	Required	Required
Exhibit C: Conflict of Interest	Required	Required
Scope of work and timeline (Attachment 4)	Required	Not required
Attachment 5: Proposed Contract Roles Worksheet	Required	Not required
Existing bus contracts or service agreements	Required	Not required

For Equipment, the letter of authority must be signed by the district superintendent.

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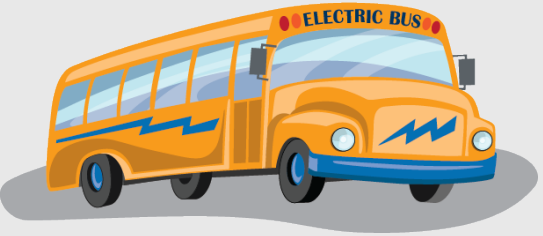
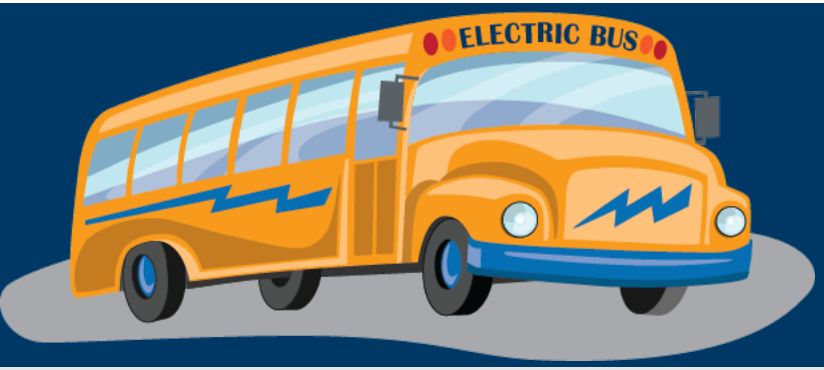


Questions and Answers

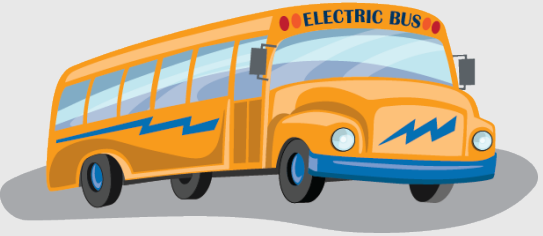
Please raise your hand or add your questions to the chat.



Thank You!

Questions? energy.contracts@state.mn.us

Applications due Thursday, December 31, 2026 at 5pm CT



Additional Useful Information

Slides that may not be used during the main presentation of the webinar, but might be useful in answering questions

Technical Assistance Resources

Useful Websites

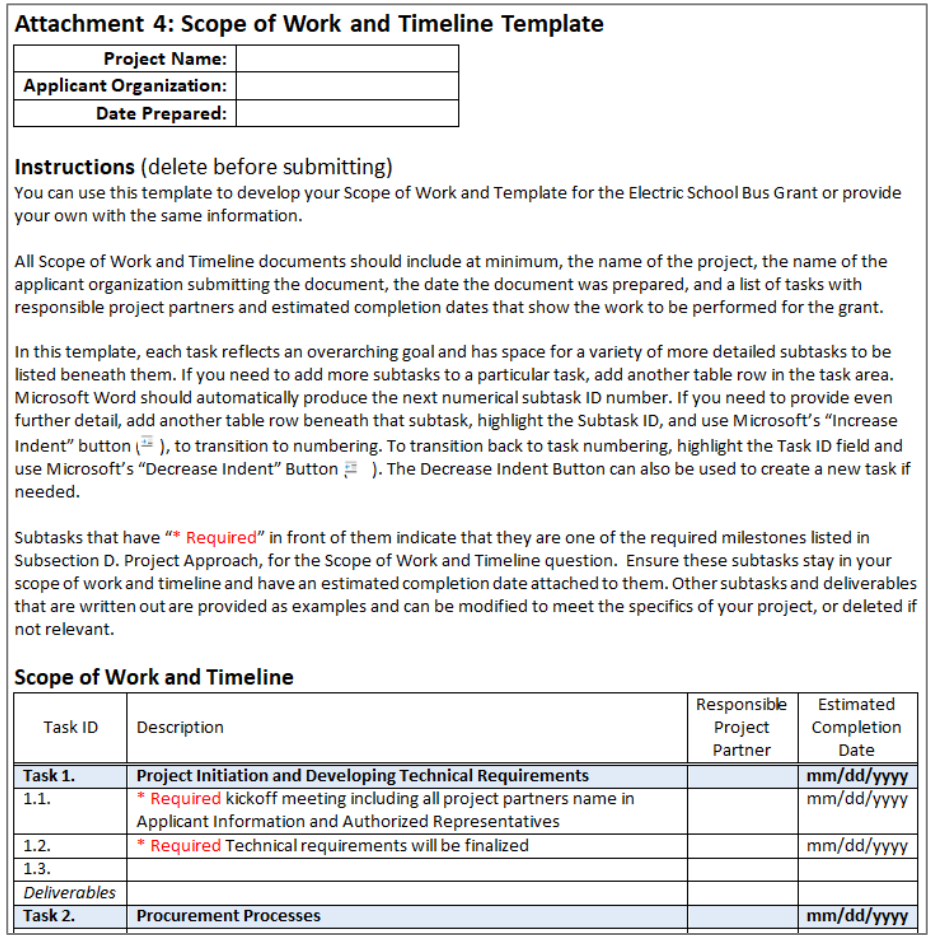
- Commerce Electric School Bus Website:
  - Technical Assistance and Other Resources / Minnesota Department of Commerce – Energy
- EPA Clean School Bus Technical Assistance:
  - Clean School Bus Technical Assistance | US EPA
- World Resources Institute Electric School Bus Tools:
  - Tools | Electric School Bus Initiative

- See more technical assistance and instructional videos from the Department of Commerce, including:
  - How to identify your grant cap
  - How to fill out the budget template

Let us know if you are interested in any more webinars/videos!

Attachment 4: Scope of Work and Timeline Template

Required to submit a scope of work and timeline, but don't have to use this template.



Attachment 4: Scope of Work and Timeline Template

Project Name:	
Applicant Organization:	
Date Prepared:	

Instructions (delete before submitting)

You can use this template to develop your Scope of Work and Template for the Electric School Bus Grant or provide your own with the same information.

All Scope of Work and Timeline documents should include at minimum, the name of the project, the name of the applicant organization submitting the document, the date the document was prepared, and a list of tasks with responsible project partners and estimated completion dates that show the work to be performed for the grant.

In this template, each task reflects an overarching goal and has space for a variety of more detailed subtasks to be listed beneath them. If you need to add more subtasks to a particular task, add another table row in the task area. Microsoft Word should automatically produce the next numerical subtask ID number. If you need to provide even further detail, add another table row beneath that subtask, highlight the Subtask ID, and use Microsoft's "Increase Indent" button ( ), to transition to numbering. To transition back to task numbering, highlight the Task ID field and use Microsoft's "Decrease Indent" Button). The Decrease Indent Button can also be used to create a new task if needed.

Subtasks that have "* Required" in front of them indicate that they are one of the required milestones listed in Subsection D. Project Approach, for the Scope of Work and Timeline question. Ensure these subtasks stay in your scope of work and timeline and have an estimated completion date attached to them. Other subtasks and deliverables that are written out are provided as examples and can be modified to meet the specifics of your project, or deleted if not relevant.

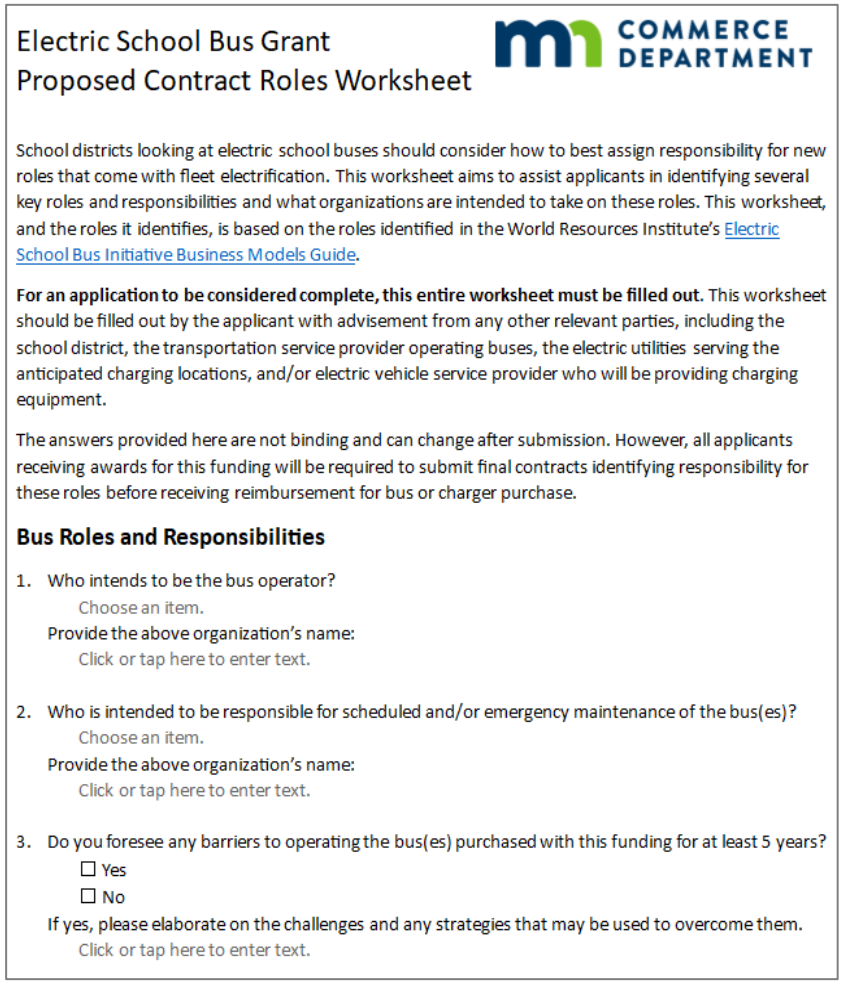
Scope of Work and Timeline

Task ID	Description	Responsible Project Partner	Estimated Completion Date
Task 1.	**Project Initiation and Developing Technical Requirements**		**mm/dd/yyyy**
1.1.	* Required kickoff meeting including all project partners name in Applicant Information and Authorized Representatives		mm/dd/yyyy
1.2.	* Required Technical requirements will be finalized		mm/dd/yyyy
1.3.			
Deliverables			
Task 2.	**Procurement Processes**		**mm/dd/yyyy**

- Find this document on the RFP page and in GrantVantage
- Word Doc has instructions listed first, and then the template you can use
- Organized by major tasks, subtasks, and deliverables
  - Subtasks that are required by the application question are marked with red "*Required" text, but can be edited as needed
- All tasks, subtasks and deliverables also have a space to identify project partners and estimated timeline for completion

Attachment 5: Proposed Contract Roles Worksheet

Equipment applicants are required to submit this worksheet.



Electric School Bus Grant
Proposed Contract Roles Worksheet

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School districts looking at electric school buses should consider how to best assign responsibility for new roles that come with fleet electrification. This worksheet aims to assist applicants in identifying several key roles and responsibilities and what organizations are intended to take on these roles. This worksheet, and the roles it identifies, is based on the roles identified in the World Resources Institute's Electric School Bus Initiative Business Models Guide.

For an application to be considered complete, this entire worksheet must be filled out. This worksheet should be filled out by the applicant with advisement from any other relevant parties, including the school district, the transportation service provider operating buses, the electric utilities serving the anticipated charging locations, and/or electric vehicle service provider who will be providing charging equipment.

The answers provided here are not binding and can change after submission. However, all applicants receiving awards for this funding will be required to submit final contracts identifying responsibility for these roles before receiving reimbursement for bus or charger purchase.

Bus Roles and Responsibilities

1. Who intends to be the bus operator?
   Choose an item.
   Provide the above organization's name:
   Click or tap here to enter text.

2. Who is intended to be responsible for scheduled and/or emergency maintenance of the bus(es)?
   Choose an item.
   Provide the above organization's name:
   Click or tap here to enter text.

3. Do you foresee any barriers to operating the bus(es) purchased with this funding for at least 5 years?
   ☐ Yes
   ☐ No
   If yes, please elaborate on the challenges and any strategies that may be used to overcome them.
   Click or tap here to enter text.

- Find this document on the RFP page and in GrantVantage
- Make sure to answer Bus Role and Responsibilities AND Charger Role and Responsibilities questions
- When you see a question that says "Choose an item." in gray text, there will be a drop-down list option. You must choose one of those options.
- When you see "Click or tap here to enter text." in gray text, you can type in any answer you choose
- Boxes by "Yes" or "No" options can be clicked on to mark them. Please only choose one answer per question

Scoring Criteria: Equipment

Scoring Criteria: Equipment	Points
Criteria 1: Minimum Qualifications	**Pass/Fail**
Meets all Minimum Qualifications	pass/fail
Criteria 2: Organization Background and Readiness	**25**
Demonstrates prior work or experience with school bus electrification	5
Demonstrates proposal's place in future fleet electrification plans	5
Identifies already existing financial, technical, and social support	15
Criteria 3: Additional Priorities	**20**
Is a Prioritized School District	10
Plans to serve Priority Service Areas	5
Integrating Bus into curriculum	5
Criteria 4: Project Approach	**40**
Scope of Work includes necessary elements	10
Timeline identifies major milestones with reasonable time estimates	10
Shows plan(s) of adequate ESB route	5
Shows plan(s) to operate buses for 5 years	5
Includes adequate considerations for maintenance for bus	5
Includes adequate considerations for maintenance for charger	5
Criteria 5: Budget	**15**
Budget is complete and reasonable	10
Budget shows that applicant has additional sources of funding that reduce amount of funding needed from Commerce	5

Scoring Criteria: Planning & Technical Assistance

Criteria	Highest score	Middle score	Lowest score	Points
Prioritized school district	Meets the definition	Not applicable	Does not meet the definition	20
Electric school buses already awarded or operating	None	1 to 2 buses	3 or more buses	16
Environmental justice areas in the district	60% or more of students	1% to 59% of students	No students	16
Poor air quality in the district	County asthma rate 20% above the state rate	Not applicable	County rate not 20% above	16
Students eligible for free and reduced-price lunch	50% or more	25% or more	Less than 25%	16
Commitment to route buses through these areas	Commits	Not applicable	Does not commit	16