

School Bus Purchase Program FAQ

- 1. If a district is awarded \$90,000 for the purchase of two school buses, with \$45,000 designated for each school bus, can the district use the total allocation of \$90,000 to purchase one school bus?**

No, districts who wish to accept funding will need to indicate the award amount for the number of buses they want to replace. If a district only wants to purchase one bus, the school should indicate this on the acceptance form and the Department will reduce the allocation amount in CCIP to reflect an amount of \$45,000.

- 2. Can the awarded funds be used to purchase a used school bus?**

Yes. However, the used school bus cannot be older than a model year 2015.

- 3. If a district approved the purchase of a new bus during a board meeting in December 2021, can the district still use the funding from the School Bus Purchase program to pay for the bus?**

Yes. Districts may apply funding to a bus that was approved for purchase or ordered prior to February 1, 2022. However, *purchases made* prior to November 1, 2021 cannot be reimbursed to a district.

- 4. If a district is interested in purchasing additional buses, only if additional funds become available, should the district list the potential number of buses that will be purchased if more funds become available?**

No, districts should only list the buses that will be purchased with this award amount.

- 5. Can funding from the School Bus Purchase Program be combined with another grant funding source?**

Yes. The district will need to ensure that the other funding does not have a restriction on combining funding and can be used for the purposes of purchasing a school bus.

- 6. Can the funds be used to purchase a vehicle other than a school bus (i.e. van, SUV, etc.)?**

No, funding is restricted to yellow school bus purchase(s).

- 7. Where can a district find the amount of funding they were allocated in CCIP?**

Districts who were awarded funding from this grant can find their total allocation in FY22 under "School Bus Purchase Program."

- 8. The acceptance form states that districts need to list the bus taken out of regular route service. Does that mean a district will need to dispose of that bus or can a district make a regular service route bus a spare bus and dispose of another bus?**

No, districts may take one of the qualifying bus(es) 8 model years or older out of regular route service and the district can make that a "spare" bus and trade-in/dispose of a bus that was listed as a spare bus.

9. In CCIP, the status shows that the application is “Fiscal Representative Approved”. What needs to happen to move it forward?

The district superintendent will need to change the status of their application to “Authorized Representative Approved”. Once complete, program staff from the Department will review the district’s application to ensure all required items have been submitted and change the status of the application to “Reviewed”. Once an application is in “Reviewed” status, the district will be able to complete a Financial Expense Report (FER).

10. Is there an additional opportunity for funding in FY22? If a district did not receive funding because of data reporting, is the district able to revise age and milage information and become eligible for funding?

Funding for FY22 has been fully allocated. The Department relied on data reported from the T-1 Report for FY22 of assigned status buses in SFPS. Due to a change in the law that requires the Department to allocate school bus purchase funds based on both the age and milage of the school bus, the Department asked districts to update their vehicle inventory mileage and condition. The T-1 reporting is due each year by November 1. The Department anticipates awarding funds in FY23 and will consider prioritizing school districts that did not receive funding in FY22.

11. Can a district re-apply for funding in FY23?

There is no application process for this grant. If funding is available in FY23, there will be a second allocation of funds based on T-1 Report Data as of November 1, 2022.

12. If a district utilizes a contracted vendor to provide transportation to our eligible students, can the district still accept School Bus Purchase funding?

No, funding is only available to traditional public districts that own their bus fleet. If the district’s bus fleet is only partially contracted with a vendor, the funding can be applied to buses that the district owns.

13. Are community schools, joint vocational school districts, and education service centers eligible to receive school bus purchase funding?

No, Ohio law limits funding to city, local, and exempted village school districts for the purpose of replacing the oldest and highest mileage buses in the state assigned to routes.