

# **Pittsburgh Healthy School Bus Retrofit Fund Description**

## **A rebate fund to support diesel particulate filter and closed crankcase ventilation system retrofit of school buses servicing the Pittsburgh Public Schools**

### **Summary**

School buses remain the safest method of transporting pupils to school, however, pre-2007 model buses can emit diesel pollution from the engine tailpipe and crankcase that exposes passengers and others to pollutants that impede respiratory systems, cause asthma attacks, and have been linked to a wide variety of other adverse health effects including heart attacks, strokes, cancer and premature death, including crib death in infants. The opportunity exists now to reduce diesel emissions from these buses by at least 85% by using the same emission control technology that is cleaning up new buses. Rather than waiting a long time for the buses to be replaced by cleaner 2007 or later models, reducing diesel emissions now from school buses will have health benefits for one of our most vulnerable populations, school children.

To promote this solution, the Clean Air Task Force in collaboration with the Allegheny County Partnership to Reduce Diesel Pollution and the Heinz Endowments, announce the establishment of the Pittsburgh Healthy School Bus Retrofit Fund. The goal of this rebate program is to promote a clean ride to school by providing funds to retrofit pre-2007 engine buses serving the Pittsburgh Public Schools with the most effective emission reduction technologies available, both a diesel particulate filter (DPF) for the tailpipe and a closed crankcase ventilation system for the engine. Currently the Pittsburgh Public Schools use approximately 350 full size diesel school buses (Types C, and D), contracted through twelve separate contractors to transport pupils. The Heinz Endowments has made this program possible by providing \$500,000 in initial funds. The expectation is that a combination of public and private grants will make substantial additional funding available.

The rebate program is a simple two-step process: (1) reservation and (2) payment. During the first-step, “reservation”, the bus owner is assigned a spot on a payment list, qualifying the owner/operator for a rebate as long as the technology is installed within 120 days. The second step, “payment” follows installation, and is provided as long as the installation and all other requirements are completed and documented, again within the specified time period. Reservations and payments will be secured on a first come, first served basis and are conditioned on the availability of funds. The rebate values are currently set at a fixed level of \$7,150 per bus including the DPF/CCV and associated components as well as installation and warranty. These rebate values are subject to change and are expected to decline over the life of the program as the technologies achieve greater economies of scale. The program will track the usage of the buses after the retrofit is complete to verify that the bus is still in service within the Pittsburgh Public Schools system and the DPF/CCV is still installed and functional.

## Eligibility

*Who:* Retrofit vendors as well as owners of diesel school buses serving the Pittsburgh Public Schools are eligible for this rebate program. For both entities, the reservation form requires the bus owner to pledge that the buses continue to remain in the Pittsburgh Public Schools system for four years after DPF/CCV installation. Note that because Pittsburgh Public Schools requires that buses transporting pupils cannot be over 12 years of age. Therefore, rebates are limited to buses with engines model year 2000 through 2006.

*What:* The rebate applies to the installation of both a DPF and CCV on the vehicle including any ancillary equipment required by the verification such as backpressure monitors.

*Types of Vehicles:* All diesel engine school buses used for pupil transport in the Pittsburgh Public Schools system, including Types C and D (i.e. full size buses).

*Technologies:* Only EPA or CARB verified DPFs are eligible for rebate payment. Both EPA and CARB publish a listing of verified technologies on their respective websites. The EPA list is here: <http://www.epa.gov/otaq/retrofit/verif-list.htm> and the CARB list is here: <http://www.arb.ca.gov/diesel/verdev/level3/level3.htm>. The Clean Air Task Force makes no representation or guarantee as to, and shall not be responsible for, the accuracy, completeness or pertinence of this information referenced above. Furthermore, the websites are not under the control of the Clean Air Task Force, and the Clean Air Task Force is not responsible for its content. This information referenced above is made available merely for the purpose of providing such information as is in the possession of the Clean Air Task Force, whether or not such information may be accurate, complete or pertinent, or of any value to interested parties.

A CCV that completely closes the crankcase from the atmosphere and routes the crankcase vapor to the inlet of the engine is also required for payment under this program coupled with the DPF installation. A CCV system must be supplied and installed with the DPF and warranted by the DPF vendor.

## Funding Levels / Availability

Funds will be provided in the rebate amount to defray the purchase and installation cost of installing a DPF and CCV on a school bus operated in the Pittsburgh Public Schools system. The rebate amount is currently set at a flat rate of \$7,150 per eligible bus. This rebate value is expected to decline over the life of the program as the technologies achieve greater economies of scale.

Funding is available immediately. Rebate funding will be “reserved” on a first come first served basis upon receipt of a fully executed reservation application form that meets all program requirements. Installation of both the DPF and CCV technology must be

complete within 120 days of the effective date on the reservation indicated on the accepted reservation form in order to receive the full rebate payment.

There is no maximum as to the number of buses that can be retrofit by any one owner or retrofit vendor, except as limited by the availability of funds. The initial amount in the fund is \$500,000 and the fund administrators hope to secure enough funding to retrofit all eligible school buses operating in the Pittsburgh Public Schools system.

As an incentive, a fleet owner who retrofits fifty (50) or more eligible buses under this program may be eligible to receive a free cleaning station approved by the Program Administrator.

## **Rebate Process**

**Step 1: Reservation** Bus owners or retrofit vendors must submit a complete reservation form to the program administrator (one for each bus). Note that the entire form must be complete, and signed by both the bus owner and the DPF vendor, and that all form signatures must be notarized. If the form is not complete and properly executed and notarized, the reservation will not be accepted. Upon acceptance of a reservation, the submitter (bus owner and/or retrofit vendor) will receive a copy of the executed reservation form acknowledging acceptance as well as an assigned file number for that bus and an effective date for the reservation. Per the terms of the agreement, this rebate must be the sole incentive or grant funding for the retrofit. Acceptance of a reservation is contingent on the availability of funds at the time of reservation.

**Step 2: Payment** Payment will occur only after successful installation and state safety inspection, if required, of the retrofit technologies including both the DPF and CCV and ancillary equipment. The bus owner or retrofit vendor must submit a complete payment request form within 120 days of the effective date for the reservation (one for each bus) in order to be eligible for a rebate. After the 120-day period the reservation expires. After 180 days from the effective date of the original reservation a supplemental application may be submitted for the same vehicle, however, the re-submitted application will only be eligible for the then current rebate (as of the new submission date) level less \$500. That re-submitted application is also placed at the end of the reservation line. Note that the payment form must be fully completed, including notarizing of signatures. If the form is not complete, the payment will not be processed or approved. By requesting and accepting rebate payment funds, the bus owner or retrofit vendor also agrees to certain program conditions included in the “fine print” on the back of the program forms for as long as the bus is in operation by the bus owner/operator but no less than a period of four years.

**Ongoing Documentation** The bus owner/operator must maintain and operate each bus included in the program and its associated emission control equipment for a minimum period of four years until such time as the bus is retired or leaves the Pittsburgh Public Schools system. The bus owner will notify the program of any failures associated with the emission control equipment that are not rectified by the DPF vendor. The bus

owner shall also notify the program if the bus ceases to be operated in the district or is retired.

In the event of any breach of the program terms, the bus owner and/or retrofit vendor may be precluded from further participation in the program and the program may initiate a process to recover a pro-rated basis percentage of rebate payment if it is determined that the DPF/CCV has been removed from the bus or the bus is no longer operating within the Pittsburgh Public Schools system for at least the four years required after installing the DPF/CCV.

## **Obligations**

The bus owner/operator and/or retrofit vendor will have certain obligations under the rebate program after installation as noted in the “fine print” on the reverse of each program form. These include the following:

- The DPF and CCV must remain on the bus for a minimum of four years
- The bus owner/operator must fuel the bus(es) with ultra-low sulfur diesel fuel, if required as a condition of the vendor’s verification, for proper operation of the DPF.
- The bus owner/operator must maintain the bus and DPF/CCV according to manufacturer recommendations. Failure to use and maintain the DPF/CCV properly, including failure to assert equipment warranty claims, may require that all or a portion of the rebate be returned to the Program Administrator.
- The retrofit vendor must honor all warranty provisions according to their verification.
- The bus owner/operator should promptly report any operational issues or concerns that may be attributable to the use of the DPF/CCV to the Program Administrator.

## **Payment of Rebate**

The Program Administrator will issue a rebate check normally within 30 days of submittal and acceptance of a complete and accurate payment form. The rebate payment will be issued to the entity identified on the payment form for each bus, which must match either the bus owner or vendor listed on the original application reservation form one (1). Bus owners and retrofit vendors are encouraged to group payment requests to streamline the payment process but are also advised that reservations are processed on a first come first served basis.

## **Annual Reporting**

Bus owner/operators may be requested (no more often than annually) to complete a survey form for buses that are retrofit with a DPF/CCV under this rebate program. The Program Administrator will provide a survey to be completed, including information such

as whether each vehicle is still owned and in service or sold or scrapped, and current odometer readings for buses still in service.

## **Changes to Program**

Current version rebate program forms will only be made available in PDF format via the World Wide Web at [www.dieselretrofitrebate.org](http://www.dieselretrofitrebate.org). These forms can then be printed or duplicated but must be double sided such that the associated program “fine print” is printed on the reverse side of both: (1) the reservation application form, and (2) the payment request form. Single sided forms without the “fine print” will not be accepted and no changes or amendments may be made to the “fine print” language or to the form itself.

The rebate amount of \$7,150 for the DPF/CCV per eligible bus will be evaluated by the program steering committee and is subject to change. Changes to the rebate price level will be posted on the program website prior to taking effect and do not affect rebates already processed before the change, provided installation is completed within 120 days.

## **Program Contact Information**

All program forms should be completed and submitted to the program technical administrator at the following address. Some type of delivery confirmation, certified receipt (i.e. USPS) or delivery tracking (e.g., FedEx, UPS) is recommended.

Attn: Pittsburgh Healthy School Bus Retrofit Fund  
M.J. Bradley & Associates, Inc.  
1000 Elm Street, Second Floor  
Manchester, NH 03101  
603.647.5746 x100

Please refer to the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) PDF document on the program website before contacting the program technical administrator with questions.