



Central Coast
**Community
Energy**

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CLEAN ENERGY. LOCAL CONTROL.

Central Coast Community Energy Awards Funding for Nine Electric School Buses

Innovative Subscription Model Helps Drive Low-Income Communities Toward Cleaner Future

Monterey, CA – May 12, 2022 – [Central Coast Community Energy \(CCCE\)](#) today announced it has signed a letter of intent (LOI) with five local school districts to help fund the purchase of nine new electric school buses, including five buses for the Salinas City Elementary School District. [CCCE's Electric School Bus Program](#) will contribute up to \$200,000 per bus to support each school district's drive toward a cleaner future by replacing diesel, a known carcinogen, with clean-running electric power.

For the first time, CCCE has extended its school bus incentive program to cover leased vehicles. This change in policy made the adoption of EV technology accessible to the Salinas City Elementary School District, which plans to lease its buses from Highland Electric Fleets, an electric school bus equipment services provider focused on making the adoption of clean buses affordable for schools. Electric school buses typically cost three times that of a traditional diesel model. Through leasing, the Salinas City Elementary School District will pay less on an annual basis than its current budget for owning and maintaining its existing buses.

In addition to providing funding support for the buses, CCCE is offering, via its Electric Vehicle (EV) Readiness Initiative, post-purchase rebates up to \$3,000 toward the purchase of a Level 2 EV charger and up to \$5,000 for the installation of an EV charging station. A-Z Bus Sales is expected to deliver the electric school buses.

"Salinas City Elementary School District is committed to reducing our carbon footprint," said Transportation Supervisor Rick Enriquez at Salinas Elementary School District. "The health and safety of our students is a priority for us. With the assistance and collaboration of outside agencies such as Central Coast Community Energy, our district is well on its way. Central Coast Community Energy has been an excellent source and provider as we move forward toward our goal of providing a cost-effective School Bus Replacement Program that includes an electrification infrastructure. This will greatly benefit our students and community."

Transportation contributes to 60% of local Central Coast greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Heavy-duty vehicles, like school buses, are the largest contributor of nitrogen oxides (NOx)—air pollution that is known to cause asthma, heart and lung disease, and other serious respiratory issues. According to the

[Bureau of Transportation Statistics](#), students from low-income communities are particularly impacted by diesel pollution from school buses. Sixty percent of students from low-income families ride the bus to school, compared to 45 percent of students from families with higher incomes. Electric school buses have no tailpipe exhaust, thereby eliminating air pollution that is demonstrated to be harmful to children's health.

“Central Coast Community Energy prioritized directing aid for zero-emission, electric powered school buses to school districts located in low-income communities,” shared CCCE CEO, Tom Habashi. *“Using the subscription model is an innovative approach to put more electric school buses on the road and is in alignment with our transportation electrification efforts to improve air quality locally.”*

Central Coast Community Energy also executed letters of intent with four other local school districts for the purchase of zero-emission electric school buses:

- Carpinteria Unified School District
- Los Olivos School District
- Pajaro Valley Unified School District
- San Benito High School District

“Central Coast Community Energy is excited to fund electric school buses throughout the Central Coast and help reduce overhead costs that can be returned to the classroom.” shares CCCE Energy Programs Director, Jon Griesser. *“Our goal is to reduce emissions and assist CCCE customers with the transition from fossil fuel power to clean, renewable energy through financial resources and education.”*

Since beginning its electric school bus incentive program in 2019, CCCE helped fund 12 electric school buses. Today's announcement will bring that total to 21 buses. The total amount granted by CCCE this year is \$1 million, which pays each district up to 50% of the cost to purchase a bus. Qualifying school districts must be CCCE customers and located within the agency's service area, spanning from Santa Cruz County to Santa Barbara County. Title 1 schools are given priority.

Applicants in the San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara counties may benefit from additional funding from the San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara Air Pollution Control Districts. Applicants in the Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz counties may benefit from additional funding from Monterey Bay Air Resources District (MBARD) incentives. These incentives combined with CCCE funding, may cover close to 100% of a school's electric school bus purchase in those counties.

Electrify Your Ride Program

To help further reduce transportation GHG emissions, CCCE also provides rebates to residential, commercial/agricultural, and public agency customers following the purchase or lease of eligible new, used or leased electric vehicles. [The Electrify Your Ride Program](#) has a \$2.85 million incentive budget and offers rebates to customers for electric vehicles, EV chargers, EV readiness (to cover time and material electrical costs associated with installation), and E-bikes. This program offers additional incentives for low-income customers on CARE (California Alternate Rates for Energy) or FERA (Family Electric Rate Assistance) programs, as well as an enhanced incentive for e-bikes purchased from local bike shops.

Over the past three years, Electrify Your Ride has helped put more than 300 new and pre-owned electric vehicles on Central Coast roads and the accompanying Charge Your Ride program helped establish nearly 100 charging stations in the region. CCCE's FY 21/22 Electrify Your Ride program launched in November 2021 and has received over 1,000 applications and distributed over \$1 million in rebates to date.

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About Central Coast Community Energy

Central Coast Community Energy is a public agency that sources competitively priced electricity from clean and renewable energy resources. CCCE is locally controlled and governed by board members who represent each community served by the agency. Revenue generated by CCCE stays local and helps keep electricity rates affordable for customers, while also funding innovative energy programs designed to lower greenhouse gas emissions and stimulate economic development. CCCE serves 436,000 customers throughout the Central Coast, including residential, commercial, and agricultural customers in communities located within Monterey, San Benito, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Santa Cruz counties. Learn more at [3CEnergy.org](https://www.3CEnergy.org) and on social media, including Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter @3CEnergy.

For more information:

Central Coast Community Energy

Lena Wallace

Communications Specialist

831-641-7206

lwallace@3ce.org

