

Request for Information about OEM Job Quality and Workforce Development Practices

I. Overview:

EPA is requesting information from original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) manufacturing electric buses for the Clean School Bus (CSB) Program about their job quality and workforce development practices. This data will be public and used to populate a new webpage that will make information available to partners and stakeholders of the CSB program about how these federal investments are contributing to the creation of high-quality jobs. Having a robust manufacturing workforce built on strong workforce development and job quality practices is essential to the success of the CSB program.

While this information request is voluntary at this point, EPA encourages OEMs to participate and share examples of programs and practices that are creating good jobs in the growing electric school bus market. **Responses using the attached template are requested by May 31 and will be published on EPA's website in early June. Please send responses to cleanschoolbus@epa.gov.** Responses submitted after May 31 will be added to the website on a rolling basis.

II. Background:

EPA is committed to investing Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding in a manner that produces high-quality jobs in the United States. This is consistent with President Biden's vision set forth in Executive Order 14025, *Worker Organizing and Empowerment* (86 FR 22829), and Executive Order 14052, *Implementation of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act* (86 FR 64335), that federal investments should incorporate strong labor standards and create good jobs with the free and fair choice to join a union.

These federal investments are a tool for expanding economic opportunity for all workers in the United States. OEMs are strongly encouraged to create opportunities for individuals to enter high-quality career pathways with a particular emphasis on underserved communities and groups underrepresented in the manufacturing sector. This includes taking proactive steps to encourage broader participation among women, people of color, veterans, people with disabilities, opportunity youth, and other underrepresented groups¹ in the employment and economic opportunities created by the CSB Program.

Prioritizing job quality and workforce development will support the success of the CSB program by ensuring that a strong, well-qualified workforce can deliver timely manufacturing and deployment of buses, in addition to supporting school districts in adopting their new buses and infrastructure.

III. Request for Information:

EPA will be adding a new page to the Clean School Bus website with responses to the following questions provided by electric bus OEMs. **Please follow the instructions in the attached "CSB OEM Workforce Template" to respond to questions.** EPA will publish on the website that all OEMs are asked to provide this information. Responses to this request will provide transparency to school districts

¹ The U.S. Department of Labor's Good Jobs Initiative identifies the following communities as underserved: Black, Indigenous, people of color; LGBTQ+ individuals; women; immigrants; veterans; individuals with disabilities; individuals in rural communities; individuals without a college degree; individuals with or recovering from substance use disorder; justice-involved individuals; and opportunity youth. <https://www.dol.gov/general/good-jobs/principles>

and stakeholders of the Clean School Bus program about how these investments are contributing to the creation of high-quality jobs across the country.

Responses can discuss existing practices or new commitments the company is making. When developing job quality and workforce development goals, EPA encourages OEMs to review the [Good Jobs Principles](#) created by the U.S. Department of Labor and U.S. Department of Commerce that describe what constitutes a high-quality job. Experts at the Department of Labor are available to provide technical assistance to OEMs that need support answering these questions and/or would like to discuss opportunities to strengthen their current workforce practices.

All hiring efforts and initiatives are subject to equal protection and nondiscrimination laws.

Instructions: The questions in **bold** must be answered as a Yes or No. The text in *italics* provide additional context and illustrative examples for how you may consider providing further detail for your Yes/No response to a question. Written responses should be no longer than 150 words. The examples provided in the instructions intend to be illustrative and are not exhaustive.

Worker Voice

- 1. Does your company have employees that are covered by a collective bargaining agreement?**
- 2. Has your company committed to remain neutral in any organizing campaign and/or to voluntarily recognize a union based on a show of majority support?**

Describe your company's approach to respecting workers' free and fair choice to join a union and engage in collective bargaining. Describe any collective bargaining agreements and describe the scope of activities they cover. Please describe whether you have any policies that support negotiating in good-faith and signing a first contract in a timely manner. State whether your company has committed to voluntarily recognize a union based on a showing of majority support. State whether your company has committed to remain neutral in any organizing campaign.

Employee Benefits

- 1. Are all permanent workers offered health insurance?**
- 2. Are all permanent workers offered paid leave?**
- 3. Are all permanent workers offered a retirement plan?**
- 4. What percentage of your manufacturing employees are hired on a temporary or contract basis?**
- 5. Are all temporary workers offered health insurance?**
- 6. Are all temporary workers offered paid leave?**
- 7. Are all temporary workers offered a retirement plan?**
- 8. Does your company offer other benefits or supportive services that you'd like to mention? Examples include vision, dental, mental health care, childcare, education benefits, transportation, or other similar benefits.**

Describe the employer-sponsored benefits provided to your employees, including the employer contribution. What are the eligibility criteria for employees to receive these benefits? (e.g., minimum hours, temporary versus permanent status, etc.)

Setting Goals and Tracking Inclusive Employment Practices

- 1. Does your company have measurable goals and initiatives to expand opportunity for communities traditionally underrepresented in the manufacturing workforce?**
- 2. Second-chance hiring is the practice of hiring individuals with a criminal record. Does your company utilize second-chance hiring practices to expand opportunity for individuals with a past conviction?²**

Describe any efforts to set benchmarks or goals to track progress toward improving Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) at your company. Examples may include collecting and reviewing demographically disaggregated data on a regular basis to identify patterns of who is getting recruited, hired, retained, or promoted at the company and how they are compensated, offering accommodations for employees, offering training on anti-harassment and other strategies to prevent and address harassment based on race, gender, ethnicity, or other factors protected under law, conducting a workplace climate survey to identify potential concerns, or a DEIA strategic plan with actionable, measurable goals. For information about the goals of second-chance hiring and existing federal efforts, please see this [White House Fact Sheet](#).

Training and Advancement

- 1. Do you provide all employees with the appropriate occupational safety and health training about hazards in their workplace?**
- 2. Do you offer a Registered Apprenticeship Program?**
- 3. Outside of Registered Apprenticeship Programs, do you offer paid training opportunities to help individuals start a career in manufacturing?**
- 4. Do you provide training programs for current employees to empower them to pursue promotion and advancement opportunities?**

Describe the health and safety training you provide for your employees (e.g. OSHA 10 and OSHA 30). Describe what high-quality training opportunities your company provides, or supports through third-party partners, to bring new individuals (especially those traditionally underrepresented in manufacturing) into manufacturing careers. Examples may include paid on-the-job training programs, pre-apprenticeship programs, Registered Apprenticeships, and partnerships with local training providers and/or community colleges. Describe what careers you prepare students for and roughly how many students you train through these programs in one year. Describe the training programs and promotion pathways you offer for existing workers seeking advancement opportunities.

School District Training and Support

- 1. Does your company provide services to train school districts on how to operate and maintain their new buses?**

Describe the support your company provides to help school districts meet the workforce training needs of their staff when adopting this bus technology. This may include training and resources for bus drivers, maintenance staff, and other essential personnel for operating and maintaining the buses.

² The U.S. Department of Labor defines the term "justice-involved" as an adult or juvenile who is or has been subject to any stage of the criminal or juvenile justice process and who requires assistance in overcoming artificial barriers to employment resulting from a record of arrest or conviction.

Community Partnerships

- 1. Does your company partner with outside organizations in the workforce development ecosystem, such as the local American Jobs Center or workforce development board, training providers, community colleges, or community-based organizations?**

Describe how your company engages with community partners to achieve the goals of recruiting and supporting a diverse, well-trained workforce. Examples may include working with partners to proactively recruit workers underrepresented in manufacturing and/or working with community-based partners to provide supportive services to employees that face barriers to employment. Partners could include the local American Jobs Centers, state and local workforce development boards, or other public workforce providers, labor organizations, community-based nonprofits, local educational institutions, health and mental healthcare providers, and others.