



Okanagan schools shifting gears to electric buses

Vernon, Central Okanagan, Rocky Mountain and Okanagan-Skaha on board

JENNIFER SMITH / May. 7, 2021 2:00 p.m. / LOCAL NEWS / NEWS

The fleet of the future is coming to a school near you.

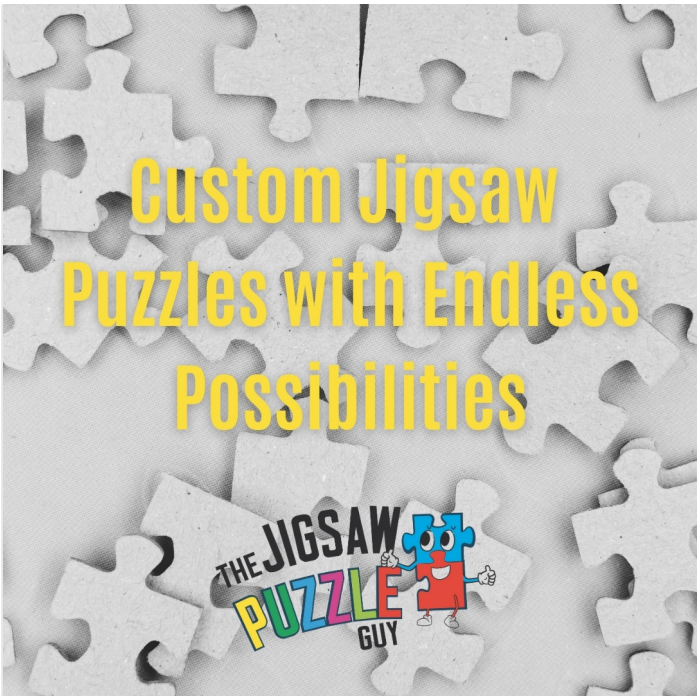
Thirteen school districts have purchased a total of 18 electric school buses that will begin operating in B.C. communities by the end of this school year.

Vernon is on board with two buses, Central Okanagan has three and there's one each at Okanagan-Skaha and Rocky Mountain school districts.

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“By shifting gears from diesel to electric school buses, these K-12 students are benefiting from our government’s work to create healthier and more sustainable learning environments across B.C.,” Premier John Horgan said. “Electric school buses produce zero emissions and also

support CleanBC's target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 40 per cent by the year 2030, helping build a cleaner, healthier future for all of us."

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Travel on electric school buses is smoother, quieter and healthier than traditional diesel buses. Overall, electric school buses are highly efficient, produce zero carbon dioxide emissions and are much more cost-effective to operate over time. A zero-emission electric school bus saves about 17 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions annually compared to a diesel school bus.

"I am constantly inspired by youth who push us to think about our environmental impact and their future," said Jennifer Whiteside, Minister of Education. "By making green investments in transportation and facilities, B.C. school districts can ensure students live, play and learn in cleaner communities that reflect our shared commitments."

Electric school buses have many advantages compared to diesel school buses, including the cost of electricity compared to fuel and fewer moving mechanical parts, which means they require fewer repairs and less maintenance.

“Our kids deserve a clean, healthy future, and that’s why we’re investing in zero-emission school buses in communities across B.C.,” said George Heyman, Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy. “By acting now to address climate change, we’re demonstrating leadership for young people by reducing pollution, improving air quality and building a more secure future for our kids and grandkids.”

The Ministry of Education’s Bus Acquisition program provided \$13 million for 31 school districts to buy a total of 101 new buses, including 18 electric buses. The purchase price for each electric school bus is about \$350,000, compared to the \$150,000 average cost for an equivalent diesel school bus.

School districts that buy electric buses also have access to provincial funding for charging station infrastructure.

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