

Antonia Minion, Theo Waltuch, Maya Perakash

Electrifying School Buses in PA: The Bus Electric Energy Proposal (BEEP)



Who Are We?

Palo Alto Student Climate
Coalition Leaders

Gunn Social Justice
Pathway Students



The Need


- Nationwide, diesel-powered school buses produce more than 5 million tons of carbon dioxide emissions per year (Marpillero-Colomina)
- Only 1% of the United States' fleet of 500,000 school buses is electrified (Alejandro De La Garza).
- Diesel worsens existing health conditions such as asthma, allergies, and bronchitis, and EPA views diesel emissions as a severe health risk (“Sources of Greenhouse Gas Emissions”).



Our Plan



Collect global and local research



**Create a presentation/
proposal for the school board**



Gain support from school board members/ staff



Present at a school board meeting

shared our findings with
environmental activists to
ensure accuracy

presented to individual
district staff members to
gain feedback and further
insights

ran our presentation past
our SJP mentors to survey
for effectiveness

Prototyping

Obstacles

- District hesitance and delays
 - Persistence and connections
- Misinformation about costs of electrification
 - Research and advocacy surrounding cost and time
- Not approved for agendization
 - Public comments



Results

INCREASED ATTENTION

The harms of diesel buses are on the district radar.

Students from other schools demonstrated interest in the issue. We've connected with a PALY advocacy group who focuses on a petition to garner support.

RE-PRIORITIZATION

The school board president is working to prioritize sustainability, and working with the district staff to reorganize funding as needed.

The district has acknowledged the need for more electric buses and everyone involved has a common goal.

PROGRESS!

The first two electric buses have arrived, and the conversation around expanding the program has begun.

Electric school buses are:

1. cheaper
2. healthier
3. eco-friendlier

Civic engagement is effective and people listen, but change takes time!

The journey doesn't end here: we are speaking at another school board meeting this month!

Our Final Takeaways



Resources

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Thank You!



**Tarn Wilson
and Tara
Firenzi**

**Gunn Social
Justice
Pathway**

**Foothill
Symposium**