School Board Delegation Template

Electric School Bus Benefits and the Need to Transition

Timeframe: usually given 4 or 5 minutes to speak

Personal Background

My name is [NAME] and I represent [a group of climate concerned parents / school kids here in the [AREA]. We are dedicated to fighting climate change for our future and our children's futures. Thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to speak to you tonight. I would like to take a few moments of your time to discuss electric school buses and how we might go about promoting and incorporating electric school buses into our fleet.

Route to Delegation

[e.g.] Recently, I had the pleasure of speaking with my trustee about electric school buses. They felt that the board would be very interested in hearing about this topic and suggested that a delegation would be a great place to start. They also outlined for me the rather complicated structure of the school bus system in Ontario and the many different players involved.

Electric School Bus Information

Ecology Ottawa, For Our Kids and others have done extensive research on the topic of electric school buses and are working hard to promote the transition here in Ontario. British Columbia, Quebec and Prince Edward Island have made great strides in electrifying their school bus fleet. We need to get started here! With every electric school bus we add to the fleet, we would be saving 17-23 tonnes of carbon emissions per year. Electric school buses are even made in Canada, by our neighbours in Quebec.

Diesel exhaust is actually classified as a level 1 carcinogen and according to Health Canada it can lead to increased risk of asthma, allergy symptoms, lung cancer, heart problems, and other impacts. There have been studies indicating that the concentration of diesel exhaust inside the bus is actually 4 times greater than outside. It has also been documented that children are more susceptible to the health impacts of air pollution because of their developing lungs and higher breathing rates. These are very concerning things for me to hear as a parent.

Onto the logistics and feasibility of this transition. Today's electric school bus can travel 250 km on a single charge. I know our current school buses each make 2 or 3 rounds per day and they can be charged in between rounds. Buses typically charge 8 hours overnight but 3-hour fast charging systems are also available. Cost wise, a typical diesel school bus has a price tag of $125,000, while electric school buses cost twice as much at $345,000 each. However, they are cheaper to maintain. An electric school bus only has 10% the amount of moving parts as a diesel bus. As a result they cost 80% less to run and 60% less to maintain which could lead to

a savings of $20 to 30,000/year per bus. Additional savings may even be possible by selling back excess power to the grid through vehicle to grid transfer systems. There is funding that bus operators can access through Infrastructure Canada's $2.75bn Zero-Emission Transit Fund to help facilitate the transition.

Call to Action

The case for electric school buses makes sense – at least I hope I have convinced you of that here tonight. I am hoping that the school board will write a letter to the provincial government, expressing the need to start the transition to electric school buses and calling on the Transportation Ministry to provide funding to support the purchase of electric school buses as diesel buses reach the end of their life.

I believe that if the provincial government hears from school boards across the province supporting the health, emissions and economic co-benefits of electric school buses, they will be encouraged to take advantage of the Federal funding for electric school buses and help this transition begin. I appreciate the chance to discuss this with you and would love to hear any suggestions!