

News Release

For immediate release

10-12-09

TO: local news and assignment editors



San Joaquin Valley
AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT

California Environmental Protection Agency

 **Air Resources Board**



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WHO: Mary Nichols, Chair, State Air Resources Board
Seyed Sadredin, Executive Director/APCO, Valley Air District
Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case, Valley Air District Governing Board Member
Orange Cove Mayor Victor Lopez
Juan Garza, Kings Canyon Unified School District
Superintendent
Ron Hudson, Kings Canyon USD Deputy Superintendent

WHAT: Unveiling new, cleaner school buses

WHEN: 11a.m., Thurs., Oct. 15

WHERE: Orange Cove High School, 1700 Anchor Ave., Orange Cove

Air grant retires polluting buses in rural school district

A state grant administered through the local air district is taking old, polluting school buses off the road in a rural Fresno County school district, and as a result, improving the lives of its children and community.

The four new buses, which replace buses manufactured before 1977, will reduce harmful air pollutants that affect human health in the Kings Canyon Unified School District. The buses were replaced through the Prop 1B Lower Emission School Bus Program. The state Air Resources Board allocated \$39 million in Prop 1B funds to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District.

"Replacing older, dirtier school buses with today's newer models provides cleaner air to students, communities and schoolyards," said ARB Chairman Mary D. Nichols. "Credit goes to the San Joaquin Valley Air District for moving expeditiously to parlay this voter-approved state funding into on-the-ground air quality improvements in a part of the state that really needs it."

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GRANT RETIRES POLLUTING BUSES

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“This project is an example of how the Air District targets the areas of greatest need in the Valley for critical funding,” said Seyed Sadredin, the Air District’s executive director and air pollution control officer.

With a population of 10,000 students in the Kings Canyon Unified School District and nearly 600 at Orange Cove High School, these newer buses will have an immediate benefit to the area, reducing exposure to harmful diesel particulate emissions and nitrogen oxides (NOx) by 85 percent each. These pollutants are serious health threats that can cause disease and exacerbate existing respiratory conditions such as asthma.

Buses manufactured before 1977 produced about seven tons of emissions over their lifetime, compared to lifetime emissions of one ton for buses manufactured today. Additionally, older buses are not subject to federal safety standards. All pre-1977 buses in the Valley will be replaced with Prop 1B funding. Remaining funds will be used for retrofits and additional replacements.

School districts must apply to the Air District for funding. For additional information, call 559-230-5800.

“With this important change, we can improve the lives of these students and their community significantly,” said Sadredin. “That, in a nutshell, is why we are here.”

For more information about the Valley Air District, call a regional office: in Fresno, 559-230-6000; in Bakersfield, 661-392-5500; and in Modesto, 209-557-6400.

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