

**NEWS RELEASE***For Immediate Release***October 24, 2023**

*The Environment Department's mission is to protect and restore the environment and to foster a healthy and prosperous New Mexico for present and future generations.*

**Contact:** Jorge Estrada, Public Relations Coordinator  
New Mexico Environment Department  
505.690.5326 | [george.estrada@env.nm.gov](mailto:george.estrada@env.nm.gov)

## **New Mexico Environment Department provides financing to Rehoboth Christian School to complete transition fleet from diesel to propane**

*DERA funding helps schools, organizations reduce emissions*

**REHOBOTH** — The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) awarded Rehoboth Christian School \$45,023 in grant funding to purchase a 2024 Blue Bird Vision propane-fueled activity school bus. The funding partially reimburses the replacement of an Engine Model Year (EMY) 2007 Bluebird All American Class 8 diesel-fueled activity school bus.

This award follows \$1,513,789 in Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) funding for five other recent projects throughout New Mexico, including [\\$464,996 to Goodwill Industries of New Mexico](#) to partially reimburse the cost of two zero emission electric semi-trucks in April 2023.

“The Environment Department is serious about providing support to those public and private entities transitioning their diesel buses, trucks and engines to cleaner options,” said **Environmental Protection Division Director Michelle Miano**. “DERA funding provides those organizations in New Mexico with an affordable way to reduce their carbon footprint.”

Rehoboth Christian School will reduce their diesel usage by 3,322 gallons over the life of the new propane-fueled activity bus, preventing the release of 37.4 tons of carbon dioxide emissions in alignment with Gov. Lujan Grisham’s climate change policy.

The new bus will be used for transportation of students for school related extracurricular activities, including athletic events throughout the school year, class trips, fine arts competitions around the state, and student organization activities. The bus will also be ready to serve as a backup as needed if route buses are unavailable due to repairs or service.



Rehoboth Christian School propane-powered school buses (*Credit: RCS*)

Rehoboth Christian School serves 478 students from PreK-12th grade, providing transportation to a large portion of the K-12 students on six different routes. Currently, their fleet has eight buses including six propane-fueled route buses, one diesel-fueled activity bus, and one propane-fueled bus that serves as a spare route and alternate activity bus. In 2020, NMED provided Rehoboth Christian School with \$143,918 in financial assistance through the Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Trust to replace six diesel-fueled school buses with six propane-fueled school buses.

“Creation stewardship is a key aspect of our faith. The opportunity to convert our fleet from older diesel buses to low emission propane-fueled buses allows us to better care for creation while also providing reliable and safe transportation for our students,” said **Bob Ippel, Executive Director of Rehoboth Christian School**. “We also appreciate the lower cost per mile of operating our buses in both fuel and maintenance. The VW Diesel Emissions Environmental Mitigation Trust was the catalyst for making the purchase of the first six buses affordable. Now we are thankful for this grant opportunity to finish the conversion so that all our buses will now be propane-fueled.”

Grant funding is awarded from the NMED through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) Diesel Emissions Reduction Act. NMED is currently accepting applications for approximately \$473,222 in additional DERA funding on a rolling, first come, first served basis. Application information, application forms, and access to a pre-recorded webinar on the submission process is available at <https://www.env.nm.gov/air-quality/diesel> or by calling 505-476-4300. NMED will be applying for additional DERA funding later this year to support additional projects reducing harmful diesel emissions in New Mexico.

###

NMED does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, age or sex in the administration of its programs or activities, as required by applicable laws and regulations. NMED is responsible for coordination of compliance efforts and receipt of inquiries concerning non-discrimination requirements implemented by 40 C.F.R. Parts 5 and 7, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and Section 13 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972. If you have any questions about this notice or any of NMED’s non-discrimination programs, policies or procedures, you may contact: Kate Cardenas, Non-Discrimination Coordinator | NMED | 1190 St. Francis Dr., Suite N4050 | P.O. Box 5469 | Santa Fe, NM 87502 or (505) 827-2855 or [nd.coordinator@env.nm.gov](mailto:nd.coordinator@env.nm.gov). If you believe that you have been discriminated against with respect to a NMED program or activity, you may contact the Non-Discrimination Coordinator.

###