



Monroe County School Boards Association

Position Paper: Zero-Emission Bus Transition

While MCSBA supports the goal of a sustainable future, the state’s mandate to have new school buses be zero-emission by 2027 is operationally and financially unfeasible.

MCSBA requests: Our membership urges legislators to pause the 2027 deadline and immediately complete a comprehensive feasibility study. We ask for a realistic rollout schedule and a new, dedicated funding stream to make this transition possible.

- **Conflict with State Law:** The mandate requires districts to make **substantial purchases** to fulfill their obligation, but state law requires districts to seek **taxpayer approval** for budgets, bus purchases, and capital projects.
- **A Financial & Logistical Challenge:** Electric buses cost **3 to 3.5 times more** than diesel buses. This cost, combined with the barrier of the tax cap and a lack of grid/facility capacity, is compounded by a **NYSERDA rule** that requires districts to buy a bus before they can get funding for the infrastructure to charge it.

ISSUES	CURRENT STATUS	SOLUTIONS
Taxpayer Approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● NYS public school districts are required to present their proposed budgets, propositions for bus purchases, and all capital projects to their local communities for approval. ● The Unanswered Question: Districts are left with no clear path forward when their taxpayers—who are also constrained by a tax cap—neglect to approve the massive spending required to comply with the Governor's mandate. 	<p>→ Conduct a Comprehensive Feasibility Study: Pause the 2027 deadline until a state-level study is completed on the full impact of this transition on local grids, infrastructure, and school budgets.</p> <p>→ Create a New, Dedicated Funding Stream: Districts cannot fund this mandate within the current tax cap. The state must create a new funding source to cover the 3-3.5x cost increase and assist districts reliant on private bus providers.</p> <p>→ Fix the NYSERDA Rule: Change the rule to allow districts to receive funding for infrastructure <i>before</i> being forced to purchase buses they have no way to charge.</p> <p>→ Explore All Alternatives: The state should investigate all viable zero-emission fuel sources, not just electricity, to provide districts with flexibility.</p>
Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The local electrical grid does not currently have the capacity to support charging an entire fleet of electric buses. ● Bus garages must be completely redesigned or rebuilt to safely park and charge electric buses. ● Our cold geographic region will place additional stress on battery capacity and range. 	
Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Electric buses are significantly heavier. Existing garage lifts cannot hold them, and data is needed to show the impact of this added weight on local roads and bridges. ● The state must provide safety guidance and training for handling spills, accidents, and the safe storage and disposal of high-capacity batteries. 	
Availability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● New York State will need an estimated 50,000 electric buses. Monroe County alone will need 2,000. Currently, there are only two electric bus manufacturers in New York. ● A new workforce of mechanics with unique training and certification is needed to maintain and repair these vehicles. 	
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Not only does the increased cost of bus purchases make purchases unattainable, districts that are reliant on transportation providers face steep cost increases. ● The impact of transportation aid increases has not been addressed. 	