



Statement of David R. Celebrezze, Director of Air and Land Special Projects  
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The wheels on the school bus go round and round. Now, they will go round and round without belching out black smoke. These buses are running a lot cleaner thanks to Northwest Local Schools' leadership. Thousands of children and parents rely on school buses to transport students to and from school. These vehicles are the safest mode of transportation, and now, at Northwest, they are the cleanest.

For too long in our communities we have relied on dirty diesel engines to transport our children to school, move goods throughout the country, pick up our trash and help us get to work on time.

The diesel engines that do not have emission control devices are out of touch, out of date, and out of time. Diesel pollutants are hazardous to human health. The United States EPA has identified diesel exhaust as a probable carcinogen. In fact, there are over 40 known toxins such as formaldehyde and benzene that come out of a diesel tailpipe. To compound this health hazard, diesel exhaust also includes particulate matter—particles so small that they can penetrate the lung and pass into the bloodstream. Schoolchildren are especially vulnerable to this exposure because the ones that take the bus sit on the bus, an average of over an hour a day. To compound matters, children breathe 50% more air per pound of body weight than adults.

According to government researchers, diesel emissions:

- Trigger asthma attacks and cause lung damage, heart disease, cancer, and early death.
- Cause acid rain, ozone smog, haze, and global climate change.
- Drive up costs for business from lost work days caused by air pollution-related illness and by forcing counties in non-attainment areas—such as Stark County—to offset increases in emissions.

However, it is not all doom and gloom today. The good news is that solutions to diesel pollution exist. In fact, we are here today to celebrate the installation of pollution controls on these buses. Northwest Local Schools received a grant from the Ohio EPA for the installation of diesel particulate filters (or DPFs) on six school buses and six closed crankcase ventilation systems. These modern pollution controls are most cost effective and in terms of reducing emissions, they can reduce it by as much as 90%.

We are proud to be here today in celebration of these installations and are happy that Northwest Local Schools are part of our Stark County Diesel School Bus Clean Up Working Group. This group of school districts aims to reduce pollution from school buses through grant applications and no-idle policies. We are funded by the Stark Community Foundation and the Herbert W. Hoover Foundation.

But we need to take diesel clean up a step further. The state can do its part by requiring all public works projects sized \$2 million and larger to reduce their emissions by at least 20% now and 85% in 2013. Construction equipment makes up 21% of all diesel particle pollution in the state and public dollars should not go to pollute. This “green contract” language will help Ohio meet air quality standards while creating jobs.

Cleaning up diesel emissions from construction and school buses means easier breathing, less asthma attacks, and fewer trips to the emergency room. It means creating a healthy environment, community, and economy. Congratulations, again, to Northwest Local Schools.