

NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Education

PROVINCE UNVEILS CANADA'S FIRST HYBRID SCHOOL BUS

KELOWNA – Canada's first environmentally friendly hybrid school bus is set to begin service in the Central Okanagan school district, Education Minister Shirley Bond announced today.

"B.C. is proud to become the first province in Canada to operate a hybrid school bus," said Bond. "The hybrid's ability to minimize its environmental impact not only improves air quality, but serves as an example that there are many different ways we can work to reduce our province's overall greenhouse gas emissions."

The new bus will begin transporting students immediately, covering a mixed urban-rural route within Kelowna city limits.

"This state-of-the-art hybrid bus will eliminate diesel particulate emissions by up to 90 per cent, protecting the health and safety of students while also benefiting the local community," said Kelowna-Lake Country MLA Al Horning.

"We know hybrid vehicles are more fuel-efficient, saving money for the school district and also helping to protect the environment for future generations," said Okanagan-Westside MLA Rick Thorpe

The hybrid-electric school bus, the first of its kind in Canada according to the manufacturer, combines a diesel engine with a battery-powered electric motor to run the vehicle. The batteries recharge when the brakes are applied.

"Hybrid vehicles produce fewer fumes while idling, and so that's good for students who may be boarding or departing the bus," said board of education chair Moyra Baxter. "We are excited to be the first school district in the country to operate with this new technology and wish to thank the Province for its contribution."

The Province is providing a total of \$180,000 towards the school district's purchase of the bus. The 72-passenger hybrid vehicle costs about \$240,000.

The hybrid school bus supports the Province's throne speech commitment to reduce B.C.'s greenhouse gas emissions by at least 33 per cent below current levels by 2020.

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Media Lara Perzoff
contact: Ministry of Education
 250 356-5963
 250 920-9040 (cell)

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