(Madison, WI, February 15, 2011) – Every day tens of thousands of school children across Wisconsin ride on school buses that utilize diesel fuel, exposing them to hazardous pollutants and increasing their potential to suffer from adverse health effects. Leonardo Academy, through a grant provided by the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) National Clean Diesel Funding Assistance Program, is facilitating efforts to reduce emissions among several Wisconsin school bus fleets – particularly those operating within nonattainment or poorer air quality areas of the state.

Select school buses operated by the Oconto Falls School District, Oconomowoc Transport and Riteway Bus have been installed with technologies that reduce school bus idling and thus emissions to students in the idling zone. The direct fired heaters will also preheat school bus engines to eliminate cold starts, extend engine life, reduce fuel consumption and tailpipe emissions, and provide in-duty supplemental heat. Oconomowoc Transport and Riteway Bus operate largely in Waukesha and Milwaukee counties, both of which have been designated by the EPA to be in nonattainment for PM2.5 and 8-hour ozone. Leonardo Academy anticipates that the implementation of the proposed strategies will assist the counties in progressing towards the attainment standard.

“Part of Leonardo Academy’s goal in advocating the EPA’s National Clean Diesel Campaign is to improve air quality by reducing emissions from diesel-fueled school buses throughout Wisconsin, and in the process protect children from harmful exhaust fumes,” explained Michael Arny, President of Leonardo Academy. “We definitely believe that support to reducing vehicle idling and the implementation of clean diesel technologies is instrumental in curtailing the environmental triggers of child asthma as well as other respiratory problems in these areas”.

About Leonardo Academy

Leonardo Academy is a charitable 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing the understanding of energy and environmental issues and supporting continued environmental improvement. By utilizing an interdisciplinary approach to sustainability implementation, we strive to make sustainability practical for everyone. Leonardo Academy provides education, carries out analysis, and develops new approaches to the implementation of public policy that support environmental improvement, increased energy efficiency, and increased use of renewable energy.
We strive to develop integrative sustainability solutions designed to enhance the environmental stewardship, social responsibility and economic prosperity of organizations, corporations and individuals. We envision a world filled with sustainable opportunities that can transform the way we live today and ensure the prosperity and wellbeing of future generations.

Leonardo Academy is also a member of the Wisconsin Clean Diesel Coalition (WCDC). The WCDC is a collaborative of diesel fleets, engine manufacturers, government agencies, and other nonprofit and private stakeholders, that have joined efforts to voluntarily explore, develop and implement mobile diesel emission reduction strategies in Wisconsin. WCDC focuses on educational outreach and development of funding mechanisms to accelerate emission reductions from diesel fleets.

For more information about Leonardo Academy, visit our website at www.leonardoacademy.org.

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