

E-Bikes at School: Safety, Education, and Policy Update

Overview

Downey Unified School District presented an update on student e-bike safety, legal classifications, and proposed policy changes designed to promote safe transportation practices. The presentation reviewed the benefits of e-bikes, safety considerations, applicable laws, community concerns, and the District's efforts to educate students and families regarding safe and responsible use.

Understanding E-Bikes

An e-bike is a bicycle equipped with an electric motor that assists pedaling. Depending on the classification, e-bikes may travel between 20 and 28 miles per hour and are subject to specific state regulations regarding operation, equipment, and rider requirements.

Benefits of E-Bikes

The presentation highlighted several potential benefits of e-bikes for students, including:

- Increased transportation access for students traveling longer distances to school
- Reduced physical strain when carrying backpacks or equipment
- Support for physical activity through pedal-assist operation
- Increased independence and responsibility for student riders
- Reduced vehicle traffic and environmental impact around school campuses

Safety Considerations

The District reviewed growing concerns regarding e-bike safety, including increased public attention on accidents, injuries, and legal responsibilities associated with e-bike use. The presentation included examples of media coverage and community discussions highlighting the importance of rider education, supervision, and compliance with applicable laws.

Community Partnerships and Education

Downey Unified has collaborated with community partners, local businesses, and the Downey Police Department to support public awareness efforts regarding safe e-bike operation. The presentation referenced educational outreach efforts, community messaging, and

informational campaigns designed to help families understand legal requirements and safety expectations.

Legal Classifications and Requirements

The presentation reviewed California e-bike classifications and the distinctions between Class 1, Class 2, and Class 3 e-bikes. Information was provided regarding rider age requirements, helmet requirements, speed limitations, and differences between e-bikes and electric motorcycles. The District emphasized the importance of complying with state laws and operating only legally classified e-bikes.

District Guidelines and Proposed Policy Updates

The District reviewed current regulations and proposed updates to Board Policy regarding bicycles and e-bikes on school campuses.

Key components include:

- Restrictions related to e-bike and e-moto use on school property
- Expectations for student safety and responsible operation
- Helmet and legal compliance requirements
- Procedures related to campus access and bicycle parking areas
- Ongoing review of policies as transportation trends evolve

Family and Student Education

The District developed informational materials to support student and family awareness, including:

- Parent-student guides
- E-bike safety one-page resources
- Website-based parent resources
- Parent education meetings
- School and community communication campaigns

These resources focus on safe riding practices, applicable laws, campus expectations, and responsible use of personal transportation devices.

Collaboration with Public Safety Partners

The District continues to work closely with the Downey Police Department, including School Resource Officers, motor officers, and Safe Schools meetings, to support student education and community awareness efforts. Partnerships with community organizations and parent groups will help strengthen ongoing safety messaging and outreach.

Next Steps

The District's ongoing efforts include:

- Updating Board policy
- Expanding parent and student education resources
- Continuing public awareness campaigns
- Providing safety guidance through school and community channels
- Monitoring implementation and evaluating future needs related to student transportation safety

Conclusion

Downey Unified remains committed to promoting safe transportation practices while supporting students and families in understanding e-bike laws, safety requirements, and responsible operation. Through education, community partnerships, and policy development, the District seeks to improve awareness and help ensure student safety both on and off campus.