

131st MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2023

Legislative Document	No. 730
S.P. 288	In Senate, February 16, 2023

An Act to Provide Traffic Safety Education in Schools

Reference to the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs suggested and ordered printed.

h GT

DAREK M. GRANT Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator DAUGHTRY of Cumberland. Cosponsored by Representative ANKELES of Brunswick and Senator: CARNEY of Cumberland, Representatives: ARFORD of Brunswick, BELL of Yarmouth.

S.P. 288

1	Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:
2	Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA c. 224 is enacted to read:
3	CHAPTER 224
4	TRAFFIC SAFETY EDUCATION
5	<u>§6701. Definitions</u>
6 7	As used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the following meanings.
8 9 10 11 12 13	1. Micromobility device. "Micromobility device" means any small, low-speed, human-powered or electric-powered transportation device, including a bicycle, scooter, skateboard, electric-assisted bicycle, electric scooter or e-scooter, electric skateboard and other small, lightweight, wheeled device that has a top speed of 28 miles per hour or less. "Micromobility device" does not include any transportation device powered by an internal combustion engine.
14 15 16 17 18	2. Traffic safety education. "Traffic safety education" means education designed to provide instruction regarding traffic safety laws and rules, including best practices for users of public and private ways, including motor vehicle operators, pedestrians, bicyclists, micromobility device operators and other vulnerable users, as that term is defined in Title 29-A, section 101, subsection 91-A.
19	<u>§6702. Traffic safety education required</u>
20 21 22	A school administrative unit shall provide at least one hour of age-appropriate traffic safety education annually to students in grades 2 to 12. The traffic safety education must meet the minimum requirements specified in section 6703.
23	<u>§6703. Traffic safety education program minimum requirements</u>
24 25 26	A traffic safety education program, referred to in this chapter as "the program," offered by a school administrative unit must meet, at a minimum, the following requirements adjusted as appropriate for each grade to which the traffic safety education is provided.
27 28 29	1. Pedestrian instruction. The program must provide instruction on traffic laws and rules applicable to pedestrians and safe pedestrian use of public and private ways, including:
30	A. Use of sidewalks and crosswalks;
31	B. Travel on the shoulders of public ways, including direction of travel;
32	C. Entering, exiting and crossing public and private ways; and
33	D. Conspicuity.
34 35 36	2. Bicyclist instruction. The program must provide instruction on traffic laws and rules applicable to bicyclists and safe bicycle operation on public and private ways, including:
37	A. Helmet requirements and use;

1	B. Conspicuity, lighting and reflector use;
2	C. Hand signals and use;
3 4	D. The meaning of and the proper response to traffic control devices as defined in Title 29-A, section 101, subsection 84;
5	E. Travel on public ways, including direction of travel; and
6	F. Entering, exiting and crossing public and private ways.
7 8 9 10	3. Micromobility device instruction. The program must provide instruction on best practices and any laws applicable to micromobility device operators on public and private ways, including instruction that micromobility device operators should operate as bicyclists when on public ways as described in Title 29-A, chapters 19 and 20.
11 12	<u>4.</u> Motorist instruction. The program must provide instruction on traffic laws and rules applicable to motor vehicle operators and passengers in motor vehicles, including:
13 14	A. Awareness of, operating around and safely passing pedestrians, bicyclists and other vulnerable users of public and private ways;
15	B. Prohibitions against distracted driving;
16 17	C. Prohibitions against operating under the influence of intoxicating liquor and drugs; and
18	D. Speed limits.
19	§6704. Limits on instruction
20 21 22 23	The program is not intended to supplant a driver education course offered pursuant to chapter 316 and may not include any practical instruction in the operation of a motor vehicle. The program may include so-called "in the field" sessions on foot or while riding bicycles.
24	§6705. Contract with 3rd party
25 26	A school administrative unit may contract with a 3rd party to provide traffic safety education.
27	SUMMARY
28 29 30 31	The purpose of this bill is to provide students in Maine with traffic safety education from an early age with the goal of teaching students safe practices and respect for all users of the road in order to reduce the number of pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities and make Maine's roadways safer and more enjoyable for all users.
32 33 34 35 36 37 38	This bill requires all school administrative units to provide age-appropriate traffic safety education annually to students in grades 2 to 12. The traffic safety education program must provide, at a minimum, instruction on the laws and rules regarding the use of public and private ways by motor vehicle operators, passengers in motor vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists, micromobility device operators and other vulnerable users. A school administrative unit may contract with a 3rd party to provide the traffic safety education.