

ComEd grant adds electric vehicle to driver's ed

\$50,000 addition makes Chevrolet Bolt latest member of DeKalb High School's garage



Photo provided by Lauren Huffman of ComEd An electric vehicle and two charging stations are now a part of DeKalb High School's driver's education program, made possible by a \$50,000 grant from ComEd. A new Chevrolet Bolt joined DeKalb High School's fleet earlier this year following the grant facilitated through the DeKalb Education Foundation, which was provided by ComEd through its EVs (electric vehicles) for Education program, according to a news release.

(Photo provided by Lauren Huffman of ComEd)

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“DeKalb High School students will now have a unique opportunity to drive an electric vehicle as they learn the rules of safety on the road,” DeKalb High School Principal Donna Larson said in the release.

DeKalb High School's driver's education program currently has 140 participants, according to the release. Students also have the opportunity to learn the ins and outs of driving and maintaining electric vehicles.

It's not the first grant ComEd has provided to the DeKalb area to expand area drivers' access to electric vehicles and charging stations.

Earlier this year, ComEd joined DeKalb city leaders for a ribbon cutting for a third public charging station located in the city's downtown district.

That project was supported by a Powering Safe Communities grant. And in 2021, the city installed its first two charging stations, again with ComEd's support.

DeKalb Mayor Cohen Barnes said the efforts align with the city's goal to enhance student access to technology.

"Thank you to ComEd and the DeKalb Education Foundation for giving our students firsthand experience with green technology as they learn the importance of environmental sustainability,"

Barnes said in the release.

A decal was created for the high school's electric car, made possible by DeKalb Sycamore Chevrolet Buick GMC; Scott Zeimet of State Farm Insurance; Banner Up Signs; the DeKalb County Sheriff's Office; the DeKalb Police Department; the DeKalb Police Benevolent and Protective Association Unit No. 71; the DeKalb Fire Department; the DeKalb Fire Fighters Local 1236 and Northern Illinois University Police Department.

Including DeKalb, 14 Illinois schools have participated in ComEd's electric vehicle education program. Illinois school communities with a drivers' education program interested in applying for the next round of grants for 2023 are invited to apply for a piece of the \$250,000 available funding through Dec. 31.

Philip Roy, ComEd director of external affairs, said use of electric vehicles can lower emissions and bring cleaner air to communities.

"We are proud to partner with DeKalb High School to integrate a new EV and charging station that will enhance the driver education experience and expose more Illinois students to the exciting vehicles that will soon dominate our roadways and that are key to a cleaner, healthier future," Roy said in the release.

ComEd's education program was created in 2019 through the Illinois Climate and Equitable Jobs Act, with a goal to add 1 million electric vehicles to the roadways by 2030.