

Governor's Task Force on Teen Driving

Education and Training Subcommittee Minutes

Monday, March 17, 2008

1:00 – 3:00

Multimedia Room

Department of Motor Vehicles

60 State Street

Wethersfield CT 06161

Attendees: Jim Macpherson Co-Chair
Gillian Mosier, Co-Chair
Susan Naide
Mario Damaito
Sherry Chapman

In discussion were the following recommendations that were reviewed by all in attendance. The final decisions were that we were going to rewrite recommendation # 5 and to add a 6th one related to police education. These would be sent to Bill Seymour by Tuesday morning for the meeting of the subcommittee chairs on Wednesday.

Recommendation 1: That the state develop a standardized, uniform curriculum for driver education establishing minimum content standards for classroom and behind-the-wheel training for 16 and 17 year-olds. The curriculum would apply to secondary and commercial schools and be offered at no charge for parents wishing to teach their teens at home. Such distribution could be accomplished through the Internet. The curriculum would be presented in order. Development through the DMV should be accomplished within a 12 month time frame. Further, any developed curriculum should be subject to public comment before adoption and reviewed annually to ensure that it remains up to date. Following each review, an opportunity for comment must be afforded to the public.

Rationale: Currently, the minimum standards constituting proper classroom and behind-the-wheel training are ill defined. Providing specific guidelines would aid both professional educators and parents and help ensure uniformity of training within the state.

Funding: Undetermined.

Recommendation 2: That the DMV evaluate the level of skill and knowledge of an applicant for a new license by demonstrating a more intense and highly skilled maneuvers for the behind the wheel driving test and increasing a higher number of written test questions with a higher percentage to successfully correct answers to obtain

the GDL.. This would support improved education and the acquisition of more driving knowledge and practice before a license is granted.

Rationale: Currently, many teens are fully aware of the nature of the test. Many applicants study and practice only to the extent that they feel is necessary to pass this test. Increasing the level of knowledge and skill needed to pass would ensure more skilled and knowledgeable drivers.

Funding: Additional time for behind-the-wheel testing should be covered by an appropriate adjustment in the testing fee.

Recommendation 3: Create a separate Operator Retraining Program for Junior Operators. This segregated program will be specific to the ages of 16 to the operators 18th birthday. This program can be managed by the same members that manage the ORP program. This curriculum will focus on the specific learning principles of the identified age group addressing attitudes and behaviors common to this age group. These Junior Operators who will be mandated to attend this program after only one violation. This program will be a standardized curriculum to be followed by all who provide the program with the same mandated inspections as other programs provided by other drivers educational programs.

Rationale: By segregating these license holders, specific programs can be developed for this single group. Enforcement and education would also be simplified when dealing with just teens. Standardizing the program will ensure consistency through out the State of Connecticut.

Funding: the attendee

Recommendation 4: Develop an orientation program that at least one parent or guardian of 16 and 17 year olds seeking a learner's permit would have to attend. Content should include the risks associated with teenage driving, the current laws governing graduated licensing, the potential state and civil penalties for failure to obey the laws and the consequences of traffic crashes. For home teaching/coaching opportunities, references to applicable standards and curricula should also be included. A detailed instructional log should be provided for the parents to use as a tool to be completed and returned to the DMV. A warning, noting the penalties for falsifying training records when submitting the form to DMV at the time of the driving test, be included on the tool.

Rationale: Parents are not fully aware of the varied restrictions and GDL program.

Funding: Should be covered by an appropriate adjustment in the application process of both the permit and license.

Recommendation 5: Incorporate into the schools Health Education Programs 10 hours yearly starting in the 7th grade education related to the behaviors and attitudes of teens and the operation of a vehicle.

Rationale: There is less than one hour throughout the Health Education Programs in high schools today as it relates to teen driving. This needs to be initiated early to be able to provide guidance for those who could potentially become those passengers so they are to know the laws as well as to provide accumulative instructional material and data to continually increase the knowledge base.

Funding: Provided by updated course material from the authors of the books provided by the Health Educational Programs presently in existence.