



Driver Education: “Meeting the Challenges of Today’s Novice Drivers”

63rd Conference on Exceptional Children

Reggie Flythe
Driver Education Consultant
NC Department of Public Instruction



Brief History



- Taught in NC schools since 1957
- Taught by certified teachers until 1992, part of the school day
- Currently about a 50/50 mix of LEA in house programs and contracted commercial driving schools, taught before or after school
- LEAs may charge up to \$55 to offset the cost of instruction (fees started in Fall 2011), DPI pays \$191.11 per 9th grade ADM

General Statute – 115C-215



Program should be offered to all physically and mentally qualified persons who:

1. Are at least 14 years, 6 months old
2. Are approved by the Principal
3. Are currently enrolled in school (public, private, charter, federal or home school)
4. Have not previously enrolled in the course

General Statute – 115C-216



- LEAs shall offer noncredit driver education courses in high schools
- LEAs shall include as an item of instructional service....the expense necessary to offer the driver education course

Driver Education Program



- Consists of 30 hours of classroom instruction and 6 hours of Behind-the-Wheel instruction
- Must be taught outside the school day, before/after school
- May be taught on weekends, school holidays and summer at anytime during the day, as approved by the LEA

Classroom Instruction



- 30 hours, with a teacher present
- Students/parents/EC teachers need to make driver education teacher aware of disabilities
- Collaboration among staff, student and parents make for best experience
- Driver Education teachers can modify classroom lessons based on student needs

Classroom instruction



- We attempt to teach all who come and differentiate instruction as needed
- Driver education teachers work with EC specialists as needed to provide support for students
- During the class, a DMV representative will assess vision and the physical condition of students and review their restricted instruction permits

Restricted instruction permit



- If student cannot see 20/40 or better, they will fail eye test and given a form to take to an optometrist
- If physical conditions are present, they will be noted by the DMV rep and if needed, students will be referred to the DMV Medical Review Board for further evaluation
- No behind the wheel (BTW) training will be done until vision is corrected to 20/40 or better and/or medical review is completed

Behind the Wheel



- 6 hours of instruction, 6 hours of observation
- Safety First! Thorough evaluation of student in low speed driving environment by driver education teacher
- Academic success/failure does not necessarily reflect the student's ability to drive
- Most LEAs have access to a vehicle with adaptive controls

Behind the Wheel



- If a student is hearing impaired or has a need to drive alone, arrangements can be made for interpreter, case manager or other support professional to ride along with the instructor
- For serious conditions that driver educators cannot handle, there are options available

Specialized Driver Training



- There are several companies that provide specialized training services
- LEAs are responsible for determining the process of providing services to students who need specialized training
- LEAs driver education and/or exceptional children budget is responsible for paying additional costs associated with training
- Students who are working with Vocational Rehabilitation may be eligible for funding for assessment and training

Process for obtaining licensure



- Driver Education Certificate issued to students who successfully complete 30 & 6
- Driver Eligibility Certificate – Student must be making adequate academic progress toward graduation, passing 70% of courses
- Take both to DMV, along with birth certificate, SS card and proof of residence

DMV Requirements



- Knowledge test
- Vision test
- Completed paperwork
- Level 1 learner's permit issued, must keep for one full year or longer, expires on 18th birthday

Driver Eligibility



- High school students must maintain adequate academic progress throughout HS
- Failure to pass 70% or courses will result in a suspension of permit or license
- Lose Control = Lose License



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GUIDANCE FOR INCLUDING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN SCHOOL-FUNDED DRIVER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

- If a student with a disability 14 years of age or older chooses to pursue driver education, the intent should be noted in *General Education Program Participation* section of the IEP
- If the student requires accommodations and modifications, including personal assistant, sign language interpreter, etc., these must be provided for classroom and/or behind-the-wheel instruction as needed
- Students who are at least 14.5 years of age, regardless of disability, should have the option to participate in 30 hours of school-sponsored driver education classroom instruction
- Students must possess a copy of birth certificate or passport to participate in driver education courses
- All students must pass the 30-hour class portion and a DMV-administered vision test to be considered for behind-the-wheel training
- If there are medical, developmental, or cognitive concerns regarding the student's ability to safely participate in behind-the-wheel training, the parent(s) and the student should be notified
 - If the parent(s) and student with medical, developmental, or cognitive issues wish to proceed with behind-the-wheel training, the DMV examiner who conducts the school-based vision screening should be notified
 - The DMV vision examiner will initiate a referral to the North Carolina Driver Medical Review Board if further evaluation of the student's ability to participate in behind-the-wheel training is warranted
 - A DMV medical examiner, in collaboration with the student's physician, will make a determination regarding the student's ability to participate in behind-the-wheel training
- If the DMV has identified *no* medical, developmental, or cognitive concerns about the student's ability to safely participate in behind-the-wheel training, and the student has passed the in-class portion of the driver education course, behind-the-wheel training should be offered
- Students must pass 6 hours of behind-the-wheel training to be eligible for a Driver Education Certificate

Believing In Achieving



Web Resources:

North Carolina Department of Public Instruction Driver Education Homepage

<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/safehealthyschools/driver-ed/>

North Carolina Department of Public Instruction Driver Education Curriculum Guide:

<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/safehealthyschools/driver-ed/driver-ed-program.pdf>

North Carolina Division of Motor Vehicles Driver Education Class Description

http://www.ncdot.gov/download/dmv/license_drivereducation.pdf

North Carolina Division of Motor Vehicles Driver's Handbook

http://www.ncdot.gov/download/dmv/handbooks_NCDL_English.pdf

North Carolina Driver Medical Evaluation Program

<http://www.ncdot.gov/download/dmv/MedicalSummary.pdf>