

## North Carolina Driver Education Advisory Committee Meeting

Minutes – Tuesday, November 19, 2013

Members present were Connie Sessoms, Roxane Bernard, Bob Lisson, Chris Oliver, Chuck Lehning, Phil McGirt, Debra Horton, Tina Poltrock, Ed Johnson, Derek Graham, Arthur Goodwin, Joe Shrader, Allie Pezza and Mark Smith.

The meeting was called to order by Reggie Flythe, Driver Education Consultant, at 11:00 am. Minutes of the last meeting were adopted as amended, motion by Joe Shrader, second by Chuck Lehning. Motion to approve passed unanimously.

Members briefly introduced themselves giving their name and current responsibilities. Connie Sessoms, Jr., who was approved by the State Board of Education as the Chairperson of the Committee at their November meeting, was officially introduced to the committee as Chair. Connie took the Chair seat and began with a few opening comments. Connie thanked the SBE for giving him this opportunity to “do a work of great importance”. He asked for the support of the committee and pledged to do his best to provide positive leadership to the committee.

Chair Sessoms asked for nominations for a vice-chair as stipulated in SBE policy. After several minutes, no names were recommended and Mr. Flythe was asked to check with committee members not present to see if they were interested in filling that role.

Mr. Flythe gave a Driver Education Consultant report. He reported that 97 of 115 LEAs had responded to the 2012-13 Driver Education Survey and it contained several points of information that can be used to see what is going on within driver education at the local level. He also provided a handout of 2013-14 fees charged by LEA, so the committee could review. He reported that 19 LEAs have decided to charge a fee of \$55, 1 - \$50, 25 - \$45, 11 - \$40, 2 - \$38, 1 - \$35, 8 - \$25, 3- \$20 and 45 LEAs charge no fee.

Mr. Flythe yielded the floor to Alexis Schauss, DPI Director of School Business to report on Senate Bill 339 (Session Law 2011-334) which requires the State Board of Education to adopt a salary range for the delivery of driver education courses by public school employees. The salary range shall be based on the driver education instructor’s qualifications, certifications and licensure specific to driver education.

Mrs. Schauss provided information on driver education salaries currently being paid with LEAs providing “in-house” instructors and compared them with salaries paid by commercial schools. She provided the number of NC licensed teachers who are currently paid on the teacher salary schedule and the number of teachers who are DMV certified. She recommended that the DEAC establish a subcommittee to review the salary ranges and the DEAC vote on a recommendation to be presented at the January SBE meeting.

Chair Sessoms asked for interested committee members to serve on a salary subcommittee. Dr. Tina Poltrock, Chuck Lehning, Phil McGirt and Roxane Bernard agreed to serve on the committee. Due to the

time constraint, Chair Sessoms asked Mr. Flythe to set up a “go to meeting” for early December, so the committee could work on this issue and give time for the full committee to obtain a report of the subcommittee recommendation and then provide a vote via e-mail.

Mr. Flythe continued his report with an update of the Program Evaluation Division review of driver education. He reported that Mr. Larry Yates, Program Evaluation Principal Evaluator and he had visited Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools and Cumberland County Schools as part of the evaluation process. He mentioned that a minimum of three additional visits would take place in the coming weeks.

Mr. Flythe gave a brief report on the collaboration with DMV Driver Services and the progress of providing the DMV licensing knowledge test in driver education classrooms. He acknowledged that if it could be worked out, it would provide a win/win situation for both driver education and DMV.

Mr. Flythe mentioned that approval had been given for him to pursue grant funding with Governor’s Highway Safety for a state assessment for driver education. Currently NHTSA does not have any assessments scheduled because of other projects and due to upcoming reports to the General Assembly, he would formally request to GHSP after the first of the year.

Chairman Sessoms stated that he is in full agreement with an assessment being done. He said, “What we do is good. Driver Education is an integral part of the driver licensing process, which has been proven to reduce crashes and saves lives. Now we get a chance to show what we do and prove how good we are.”

All members were given a copy of the Strategic Plan Implementation Matrix to review. Members were asked to take the time to evaluate the matrix, timelines and make recommendations for improvement or changes at the next meeting. Mr. Flythe mentioned that the Parent/Teen Information had not yet been completed and sent to LEAs.

Mr. Flythe asked that the Chair consider establishing a subcommittee to review SBE driver education policies. He stated that some are outdated and no longer reflect the current status of driver education and need to be updated to align with current budget conditions and align with the strategic plan. Chair Sessoms asked for volunteers to serve on the policy subcommittee. Debra Horton, Don Johnson, Chris Oliver and Dr. Tina Poltrock agreed to serve on the committee. Chair Sessoms asked Mr. Flythe to set up a “go to meeting” before our next meeting in February to review current policy and provide recommendations for the full committee to discuss at the February meeting.

Arthur Goodwin, Senior Researcher of the UNC Highway Safety Research Center gave an update of the phone application developed by UNC-HSRC. Mr. Goodwin described the app which keeps up with driving logs, maps the routes that the student drives and provides a printable driving log acceptable to NCDMV. Currently the app only works with Apple I-Phones, however, he stated that UNC-HSRC is looking for additional funding to develop an app that works with android devices as well.

Allie Pezza, the committee Student Representative, was given the opportunity to share what the Johnston County Teen Drivers group is doing to promote highway safety in the Johnston County schools.

Allie mentioned how happy she was to be a part of this committee and would do her best to share information with others and try to help get other school systems students involved.

Chair Sessoms thanked all for coming. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 18 at 11:00 am. The meeting adjourned at 12:55 pm.