

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2266

As Reported by House Committee On: Education

Title: An act relating to clarifying the nature of the driver training education curriculum developed and maintained by the department of licensing and the office of the superintendent of public instruction.

Brief Description: Clarifying the nature of the driver training education curriculum developed and maintained by the department of licensing and the office of the superintendent of public instruction.

Sponsors: Representatives Hayes, Kilduff, Muri, Young, Appleton and Harris.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 1/11/18, 1/18/18 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Clarifies that the driver training education curriculum developed and maintained by the Department of Licensing and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction is the core curriculum for driver training education courses.
- Requires any supplemental curriculum used by a private driver training school to be displayed with the required core curriculum at the school's established place of business.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 19 members: Representatives Santos, Chair; Dolan, Vice Chair; Stonier, Vice Chair; Harris, Ranking Minority Member; Muri, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bergquist, Caldier, Hargrove, Johnson, Kilduff, Lovick, McCaslin, Ortiz-Self, Senn, Slatter, Steele, Stokesbary, Valdez and Volz.

Staff: Katie Choate (786-7296) and Ethan Moreno (786-7386).

Background:

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Separate sets of laws govern driver training schools and traffic safety education courses offered by some secondary schools in the state, but changes taking effect in 2018 will align certain aspects of both programs (see below for details). The completion of driver training at either type of program is one of the mandatory criteria for those under the age of 18 to be eligible to receive an intermediate driver's license.

Traffic Safety Education.

Legislation enacted in 2017 (Engrossed Substitute House Bill 1481, enacted as Chapter 197, Laws of 2017) obligates the Department of Licensing (DOL) and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to jointly develop and maintain a required driver training education curriculum. School districts and Washington State Board of Education-approved private schools (approved private school) operating a driver training education program, as well as private driver training schools, are required to use this curriculum. The jointly developed curriculum must be prepared by August 1, 2018.

The 2017 legislation also:

- requires the DOL to develop and administer a certification process for a school district's traffic safety education program or the traffic safety education program of an approved private school;
- requires the OSPI and the DOL to consult with Central Washington University traffic safety instructors or program content developers in developing the curriculum;
- requires each school district and approved private school to maintain driver training education course records for three years following completion of instruction; and
- authorizes the DOL to conduct audits of driver training education programs at least once every five years to ensure that instructors are qualified teachers of driver training education and are teaching the required curriculum material, and that accurate records are maintained and accurate information is provided to the DOL regarding student performance.

In addition, the 2017 legislation authorized the DOL to suspend a school or school district's traffic safety education program certification if:

- the school or school district does not follow the curriculum set by the OSPI;
- any program instructors are not qualified teachers of driver training education; or
- accurate records have not been maintained.

Summary of Bill:

The curriculum to be jointly developed by the DOL and the OSPI is designated the "core curriculum" for driver training education courses. Private driver training schools may use a supplemental curriculum, but any supplemental curriculum used by a private driver training school must be displayed with the required core curriculum at the school's established place of business.

A technical correction is made to the definition of "traffic safety education program," which is modified to be consistent with current law adding "approved private schools" to the list of specified entities that may offer driver training education courses.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on August 1, 2018.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Teachers of traffic safety education are working with the DOL and the OSPI to create a curriculum so that every student in the state will have driving basics information. This bill is a small fix to House Bill 1481 from 2017 and will allow the DOL and the OSPI, to partner and develop a core curriculum. The bill will also allow others who have developed their own curriculum to continuing using that curriculum as long as it meets core standards. Also, driving schools may still use the supplemental curricula if it meets the core curriculum standards. The bill should be passed and it will help keep students safe.

(Opposed) None.

(Other) Stakeholders have been at the forefront of advocating for and helping to develop quality driving curriculum, and serving on many national committees and task forces that look at quality standards of driver education. The bill should be clarified so that driving schools may use other curricula as long as it meets minimum or core requirements. Language in the bill should be amended so that currently used curriculum will still meet standards. It is difficult for one curriculum to meet new requirements and to keep up with new information for our driving schools.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Hayes, prime sponsor; and Debra Grenier, Professional Driving School Association of Washington and Washington Traffic Safety Education Association.

(Other) Janet Ray, American Automobile Association of Washington.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.