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1965

Report To The  
**GENERAL ASSEMBLY**  
of  
**NORTH CAROLINA**

**THE DRIVER TRAINING PROGRAM**

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**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**  
**1965**

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FINAL REPORT

COMMITTEE FOR THE STUDY OF  
THE DRIVER TRAINING PROGRAM

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January 1965

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"A BILL TO BE ENTITLED AN ACT TO AMEND CERTAIN  
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LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL STUDY NO. 7  
(By House Resolution ratified 25 June 1963)

COMMITTEE FOR STUDY OF  
THE DRIVER TRAINING PROGRAM

Chairman : Representative Sam L. Whitehurst  
Bayboro Road  
New Bern, North Carolina

Ex-Officio : T. Clarence Stone, President of the Senate  
H. Clifton Blue, Speaker of House of Representatives  
Hugh S. Johnson, Jr., Chairman of the Council

Members from: Senator R. E. Brantley, Vice-Chairman of the Council  
the Council : Senator Irwin Belk  
Senator Thomas J. White

Others : Senator Henry G. Shelton  
Representative Earl H. Tate  
Representative James B. Vogler  
Representative A. A. Zollicoffer, Jr.

Legislative Council Study No. 7

Introduced By: Reps. Zollicoffer  
and Wilson  
Adopted : June 25, 1963

A HOUSE RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO MAKE  
A STUDY OF THE DRIVER TRAINING PROGRAM.

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate  
concurring:

Section 1. The Legislative Council is herewith  
requested and directed to make a study of the financing, opera-  
tions and administration of the Driver Training Program and  
to make a report to the General Assembly of 1965 including any  
recommendations for the improvement of said Driver Training  
Program which its study indicates to be desirable.

Sec. 2. This Resolution shall become effective  
upon its adoption.

## REVIEW OF COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

Following initial conferences with interested parties, Representative Sam L. Whitehurst called the Committee together on August 20, 1964. Meeting with the Committee were the following individuals:

Dr. Dallas Herring, Chairman  
State Board of Education

Dr. Charles F. Carroll, Superintendent  
Department of Public Instruction

Mr. A. C. David, Board of Education

Mr. John Noe, Department of Public Instruction

Mr. E. L. Peters, Motor Vehicles Department

Based on information gathered at this meeting, the Committee passed a recommendation to the Legislative Council that it request the State Board of Education to submit a request to the Advisory Budget Commission that additional state funds be appropriated for the operation of its Driver Education Program.

Following approval by the Legislative Council, this recommendation was forwarded to Dr. Dallas Herring and the request was complied with by the State Board of Education.

At its meeting on January 13, 1965, the Driver Training Committee adopted a final report with accompanying recommendations for submission to the Legislative Council.

## GENERAL STATEMENT

In North Carolina, accidents are the leading cause of death for persons 4-24 years of age; and for all other age groups, accidents rank high among the leading causes of death. Accidents also produce disabling injuries at the rate of about 10 to 1 accidental death. They produce annual economic losses, the value of which far exceeds the gross expenditures for construction, operation and maintenance of schools. The great number of accidents merit appropriate efforts by all who can contribute to their reduction. It seems appropriate to make expenditures for safety education in order that we might save both human resources and dollars.

High school driver education courses which include classroom and in-car phases of instruction and meet national recommendations for such programs are recognized among the most effective ways known for improving traffic performance of youth. Satisfactory completion of courses meeting minimum national recommendations can, through the "trained driver" reduced rate of insurance, produce direct cumulative savings in excess of what it would cost to teach each pupil the complete course.

Driver education is a highly significant part of general education in preparing young citizens for living efficiently

and responsibly. Programs of safety and driver education continue to grow, because they satisfy the social and economic needs of increasing numbers of youths and adults.

In 1927, the General Assembly passed legislation requiring that traffic safety be taught in the public schools. However, no great effort to establish a comprehensive program of driver education was possible until funds were authorized by the General Assembly of 1957.

On the other hand, experiments during the early 1930's led to the development of comprehensive driver education courses consisting of classroom and in-the-car phases of instruction, somewhat similar to present-day programs. Late in that decade, North Carolina and the nation focused attention upon further development and refinement of programs for safety in traffic and elsewhere. The stage was set for rapid expansion of driver education programs with use of cars; but as the efforts to expand began to gain momentum, the coming of World War II diverted attention from this activity.

During the years of World War II, driver education activities were largely restricted to classroom only courses or more complete courses provided in cooperation with the federal government to train young men for safe operation of military vehicles.

After World War II, cars were again available and expansion of the complete driver education course was resumed.



The General Assembly of 1949 appropriated funds to add a Director of Safety Education to the staff of the Department of Public Instruction. During the 1949-50 school year, 35 schools with 1,900 students enrolled in driver education classes. In addition, there were 21 schools with 750 students enrolled in more comprehensive courses concerning safety in traffic and elsewhere.

As the importance of safety and driver education was increasingly recognized, demands for such courses likewise increased. As a result of studying the program, the Department of Public Instruction changed its emphasis in driver education from that of merely trying to satisfy isolated local requests for assistance to that of providing the course for all pupils just prior to the time they would attain legal driving age.

More teachers were prepared for this work and county and city boards of education were encouraged to include driver education courses in more of the local high schools. High school programs increased; and as they increased, it became apparent that additional State supervisory personnel would be needed. The General Assembly of 1953 gave official recognition to this expanding program by authorizing the teaching of driver education in public schools and by providing the Department with funds to employ additional supervisors of safety education.

Between the years 1953 and 1957, operations increased and leveled off on a plateau, with about 200 schools providing courses

for approximately 10,000 students annually. The General Assembly established new laws to facilitate expansion of the program with local financing; however, appropriations by county and city governments rarely exceeded two percent of the cost for these programs. In a few locations, full-time instructors were employed with funds from some local source. In most cases, driver education was taught as one of the school's elective courses, using teachers employed under the State Nine Months School Fund. Most of the cars were made available on a free-loan basis.

At this point, it was apparent that State financing would be necessary to expand the program at a rate commensurate with the needs of youth.

Therefore, the General Assembly of 1957 enacted G.S. 20-88.1 providing State financial assistance for driver education by an annual automobile registration tax of \$1.00.

On January 2, 1958, the rules and regulations were adopted by the State Board of Education.

OPERATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE DEPARTMENT  
OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION PROGRAM FROM 1957 - 1963

The revenue act and rules and regulations provide that funds shall be allotted annually to the State Department of Public Instruction for the proper administration and supervision of a program of driver training and safety education in the public high schools. Provisions are also made for annual allotment of funds to each administrative unit on the basis of current annual enrollment of eligible pupils, such funds to be cumulative.

Funds are allotted to a State account for each county and city school administrative unit and may not be expended until a proposed plan of operation and a supporting budget have been submitted to, and approved by, the State Department of Public Instruction. Upon State approval of the plan and budget, local school systems request funds on the first of each month for one month's operation; at the end of each month, they report on funds expended. If any system requests more money for the month than is used, the cash-on-hand balance is adjusted when funds are advanced for the next month's operation.

Funds are allotted each year to county and city school administrative units on the basis of the number of students

enrolled in grades 9-12 inclusive. This allotment has varied from \$5.24 per student in 1958 to \$5.88 in 1963. Basing the allotment of funds upon the enrollment in four school grades provides a fair means for distribution; however, this does not mean that courses can or should be provided for all students at each of the four grade levels.

OPERATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF  
DRIVER EDUCATION SINCE 1963

1. DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

In 1963, growing public understanding of the severity of the accident problem resulted in the passage of G.S. 20-11 which made driver education a prerequisite to licensing for persons below 18 years of age and an amendment to G.S. 20-13 which established provisional licenses for persons below 18 years of age.

These amendments established two desirable requirements but no State appropriation was made to make them effective.

Therefore, upon enactment of the new driver education requirements, an analysis was made of their probable impact upon schools and of ways to meet the problems caused thereby.

The new requirement of driver education before licensing was not ratified until June, 1963, after school programs had been set for summer, 1963. Schools took immediate steps to enroll additional students in the previously planned summer courses, to provide additional summer courses, and to employ additional full-time teachers for work during the 1963-64 school year. On August 30, 1963, local superintendents were requested to report to the State Department of Public Instruction regarding

the number of eligible students and the local potentials for teaching the complete school course of 30 hours in the classroom plus 6 hours of individual instruction in-the-car. These reports indicated a need for special emergency operations during the 1963-1964 school year.

In September, the State Board of Education modified the rules and regulations providing for these emergency operations to December 31, 1963.

Summaries of information submitted by local superintendents in reply to requests of August and October revealed the nature of emergency situations then developing and made it possible to estimate how rapidly these situations would reach critical proportions.

Conditions also indicated the need of additional approval for schools to extend their emergency operations in the second half of the 1963-1964 school year. Following this additional approval by the State Board of Education, local school systems were encouraged to operate to the limits of their financial abilities.

Some school administrative units depleted their funds by September, 1963; others ran out of funds in November and December. In January, 1964, eight administrative units had depleted their allotment of funds and four had balances of less than \$500. Other units will follow each month. At the same time regular and emergency programs are increasing where funds are available,

and are likely to continue to do so until funds are depleted.

High school driver education courses which meet nationally recommended standards, including provisions for at least 30-clock hours of instruction in the classroom and 6-clock hours in-the-car for individual instruction and practice, are recognized as the most effective means known for improving traffic behavior of youth. Programs which meet at least the minimum national recommendations are now in operation throughout North Carolina, but their continuance is dependent upon adequate financing of the program.

## 2. MOTOR VEHICLES DEPARTMENT

Following the passage of G.S. 20-11 and 20-11.1 by the 1963 Session of the North Carolina General Assembly, the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles instructed the Director of the Driver Education and Accident Records Division to formulate plans for a Driver Education program for the benefit of Driver License applicants under age eighteen to whom the standard high school course was not available. In view of the fact that no funds were appropriated for the purpose of implementing this program, the Budget Commission was requested to allocate sufficient funds to cover the cost of the planned program for two years.

It was the desire of the Motor Vehicle Department Officials to offer a driver education course equal to that provided in the standard high school program. Unfortunately, the Department did not have adequate facilities and manpower to provide such a course for the large numbers of young people to whom the program would need to be made available. The initial problems were further complicated by the fact that qualified teachers in the field of Driver and Traffic Safety Education were, for the most part, already under contract to teach in the public schools. Therefore, it was decided to incorporate the Driver Education program for Provisional Licensees into the existing responsibilities assigned to specialists employed by the Driver Education and Accident Records Division.



Recognizing the impossibility of providing a complete driver education program, Department officials resorted to the next best avenue of approach to solution of the problem by developing a concentrated eight hour classroom course covering the most significant phases of the formal driver education course. Students completing the course in a satisfactory manner would receive a certificate authorizing them to make application for a Driver License.

Between the dates of November 1, 1963 and August 1, 1964, Departmental personnel conducted a total of 416 courses, with a total enrollment of 9,226 students. Courses have been offered in every county in the state and have been conducted in eighty-eight counties.

Effective and successful as the Provisional Licensee Driver Education program has proved to be, it is inadequate. Those to whom the standard high school course is not available should be provided equal advantage and preparation. They should have the same training opportunities as do high school students who are afforded a complete driver education course.

The Department of Motor Vehicles has on several occasions recommended that Driver Training and Safety Education be administered exclusively by the State Department of Public Instruction and State Board of Education and that it should be taught in the high schools.

## FINANCING

As pointed out earlier, the Motor Vehicles Department conducted an abbreviated Driver Education course. The cost of this program for July 1, 1963 through June 30, 1964 amounted to \$85,171. However, in the Department's opinion and in the opinion of this Committee, the course offered was greatly inadequate and failed to reach the final goal of training responsible drivers.

On the other hand, the Department of Public Instruction offers a complete, nationally-recognized course.

Funds derived from the \$1.00 tax are usable to pay any and/or all costs essential to the operation of the program insofar as available funds permit. However, the revenue measure was not expected to pay all costs for 100% of the students who would attain legal driving age annually. It was expected to finance a Statewide program of elective courses involving about 70% of the number of students attaining legal driving age each year. It was recognized that the backlog of 17 and 18 year old school students, who had not completed the course, could, in any year, enroll in such numbers that demands for driver education would far exceed the funds available. Operations on this financial base for program development at a voluntary rate were calculated

so closely that most local school administrative units have not had the margin of safety which would permit a more rapid rate of expansion.

School systems which operated at or near full capacity in 1957 have, since the beginning of State financing, been paying from 40 to 60 percent of the cost from local funds, and the balance from State funds. On a Statewide basis, however, the rate of local financing has continued at about 2 percent of total expenditures.

State expenditures and receipts for 1962-63 are as follows:

<u>Expenses</u>	<u>Receipts</u>
\$1,690,539.07	\$1,858,630.00

Local administrative units expended a total of \$36,126.08 in 1962-1963.

The Department of Public Instruction estimates that annual costs of the program per student is \$47.54.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Upon evaluation of the facts presented, the Driver Training Committee respectfully submits the following recommendations to the Legislative Council:

1. That the Legislative Council recommend to the 1965 General Assembly that the State Board of Education and Department of Public Instruction administer the driver training program for all eligible drivers eighteen years of age and under.
2. That the State Board of Education be authorized to allot driver education funds as needed.

INTRODUCED BY:

Referred to:

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED AN ACT TO AMEND CERTAIN SECTIONS OF  
2 CHAPTER 20 OF THE GENERAL STATUTES OF NORTH CAROLINA  
3 RELATING TO DRIVER TRAINING AND SAFETY EDUCATION OF  
4 PROVISIONAL LICENSEES.

5 The General Assembly of North Carolina do Enact:

6 Section 1. G. S. 20-88.1, as the same appears in  
7 the 1963 Cumulative Supplement to the General Statutes, is  
8 hereby amended by rewriting the same to read as follows:

9 "§ 20-88.1. Driver Training and Safety Education  
10 Fund. Beginning July 1, 1965, each and every passenger or  
11 property carrying vehicle registering with the Department  
12 of Motor Vehicles, for which the registration tax is now  
13 being paid at the annual rate of ten dollars (\$10.00) or more,  
14 shall pay an additional annual registration tax of one dollar  
15 (\$1.00). The revenue derived from the additional tax of one  
16 dollar (\$1.00) shall be placed in a separate fund to finance  
17 a program of driver training and safety education at the  
18 public high schools of the State, and the amounts so collected  
19 shall be transferred periodically to the account of the State  
20 Board of Education. The State Department of Public Instruction  
21 shall establish standards for driver education courses to be  
22 offered at the public high schools of the State for all persons  
23 of provisional license age. The State Board of Education shall  
24 allocate funds for the provision of such courses in each county

1 and city school administrative unit of the State. The  
2 allocation of such funds by the State Board of Education  
3 shall be sufficient to provide for said courses and shall be  
4 allocated from the revenue derived from the additional  
5 registration tax herein provided for, and from additional  
6 funds which the State Board of Education shall request as  
7 may be needed to provide said courses at the public high  
8 schools for all persons of provisional license age, including  
9 public high school students, non-public school students, and  
10 out of school youths (persons under 18 years of age whose  
11 physical and mental qualifications meet license requirements).

12           Sec. 2. Section 2 of Chapter 682 of the Session  
13 Laws of 1957 is hereby repealed.

14           Sec. 3. G. S. 20-11, as the same appears in the  
15 1963 Cumulative Supplement to Recompiled Volume 1C of the  
16 General Statutes, is hereby amended by rewriting the same to  
17 read as follows:

18           "§ 20-11. Application of minors. - The Department  
19 shall not grant the application of any minor between the ages  
20 of sixteen (16) and eighteen (18) years for an operator's  
21 license or a learner's permit unless such application is signed  
22 both by the applicant and by the parent, guardian, husband,  
23 wife or employer of the applicant, or, if the applicant has no  
24 parent, guardian, husband, wife or employer residing in this  
25 State, by some other responsible adult person. It shall be  
26 unlawful for any person to sign the application of a minor  
27 under the provisions of this section when such application  
28 misstates the age of the minor and any person knowingly

1 violating this provision shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

2           The Department shall not grant the application of any  
3 minor between the ages of sixteen and eighteen years for an  
4 operator's license unless such minor presents evidence of  
5 having satisfactorily completed the driver training and  
6 safety education courses offered at the public high schools  
7 as provided in G. S. 20-88.1."

8           Sec. 4. G. S. 20-11.1, as the same appears in  
9 the 1963 Cumulative Supplement to Recompiled Volume 1C of  
10 the General Statutes, is hereby repealed.

11           Sec. 5. G. S. 20-7, subsection (1-1), as the same  
12 appears in the 1963 Cumulative Supplement to Recompiled  
13 Volume 1C of the General Statutes, is hereby amended by  
14 striking the words "approved by the Department" immediately  
15 following the word "program" and immediately preceding the  
16 word "even" in line 3 of subsection (1-1), and inserting  
17 in lieu thereof the words "as provided for in G. S. 20-88.1".

18           Sec. 6. All laws and clauses of laws in conflict  
19 with this Act are hereby repealed.

20           Sec. 7. This Act shall become effective on and  
21 after July 1, 1965.

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INTRODUCED BY:

Referred to:

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED AN ACT TO AMEND CERTAIN SECTIONS OF  
2 CHAPTER 115 OF THE GENERAL STATUTES OF NORTH CAROLINA RELATING  
3 TO DRIVER TRAINING AND SAFETY EDUCATION COURSES IN THE PUBLIC  
4 HIGH SCHOOLS.

5 The General Assembly of North Carolina do Enact:

6 Section 1. G. S. 115-201, as the same appears in  
7 the General Statutes of North Carolina, is hereby amended by  
8 striking therefrom the words "noncredit courses" immediately  
9 following the word "be" and immediately preceding the word  
10 "taught" in line 4 thereof.

11 Sec. 2. Subsection (a) of G. S. 115-202 is hereby  
12 amended by rewriting the same to read as follows:

13 "(a) Course of Training and Instruction Required  
14 in Public High Schools. - The State Board of Education and  
15 county and city boards of education in this State are hereby  
16 required to provide as a part of the program of the public  
17 high schools in this State a course of training and instruction  
18 in the operation of motor vehicles and to make such courses  
19 available for all persons of provisional license age, including  
20 public school students, non-public school students and out of  
21 school youths (persons under 18 years of age whose physical  
22 and mental qualifications meet license requirements) in  
23 conformance with course requirements and funds made available  
24 under the provisions of G. S. 20-88.1 and/or as hereinafter



1 provided."

2           Sec. 3. G. S. 115-202, subsection (b) of the  
3 General Statutes of North Carolina, is hereby amended by  
4 inserting the word "such" immediately following the word  
5 "maintain" and immediately preceding the letter "a" in line  
6 5 of said subsection (b), and by striking the word "student"  
7 immediately following the word "eligible" and immediately  
8 preceding the word "in" in line 5 of said subsection (b)  
9 and inserting in lieu thereof the word "persons".

10           Sec. 4. G. S. 115-202, subsection (e) of the  
11 General Statutes of North Carolina, is hereby amended by  
12 rewriting the same to read as follows:

13           "(e) Content of Course; What Persons Eligible. -  
14 The words 'a course of training and instruction for eligible  
15 persons in the operation of motor vehicles' as applied to this  
16 section shall be construed to mean such course of instruction  
17 in the operation of motor vehicles as shall be prescribed or  
18 approved by the State Department of Public Instruction,  
19 provided that every such course shall include actual operation  
20 of motor vehicles by the persons eligible for same, under the  
21 supervision of a qualified instructor. Only such persons of the  
22 completed age of 14 years and 6 months, and as shall be approved  
23 by the principal of the school, shall be eligible for such  
24 course of instruction, subject to rules and regulations prescribed  
25 by the State Department of Public Instruction."

26           Sec. 5. All laws and clauses of laws in conflict  
27 with this Act are hereby repealed.

28           Sec. 6. This Act shall become effective on and after

1 July 1, 1965.

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