

SUPPORT QUALITY DRIVER EDUCATION FOR TEENS

- Driver Education is an underfunded mandate not an unfunded mandate. A significant amount of additional state funding needs to be created by the state legislature in order to help offset the rising costs of fuel and to meet the new costly mandated Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) requirements that the state imposed on school districts.
- Vehicle crashes are the #1 cause of death in the 15-20 year old age group in Illinois. As such, legislators and public school administrators have a civic duty to ensure the public that the instruction of driver education is taught by highly-trained ISBE certified and DE endorsed instructors.
- Driver education needs to remain economically affordable and available in a timely manner to all students regardless of their socio-economic backgrounds in a non-discriminatory way.
- Driver education needs to be available to students during the traditional school day. In the Illinois School Code, all public and non-public high school students and their parents are guaranteed equal access and equal opportunity. The practice of school districts only teaching before and after school discriminates against those students who participate in before and after school clubs, sports, tutoring, activities, as well as employment or watching siblings to help support their family.
- Additionally, students with special needs are best handled during the traditional school day by a highly trained instructor and support staff. Forcing these students to enroll in driver education before or after school could have a detrimental effect on their ability to learn how to drive.
- As the cost of driver education goes up and students are limited to when and where they are capable of taking the driver education course and licensure requirements, many will simply elect to not take any formal training, wait until they reach the age of 18, or worse yet, simply drive with no license at all. This will further put the public and those students at risk. New data seems to suggest that this is occurring, as more and more teens lack the ability or means to take the course.
- School districts contemplating contracting-out driver education with a commercial driver training school will lose total control of hiring highly qualified teachers and the implementation of a nationally recognized curriculum. We believe this will create an atmosphere for extremely high liability and risk for a school district.