DRIVER EDUCATION

NEW METHODS AND EXPANDED REQUIREMENTS

Joint Transportation Committee Study Update

May 14, 2014

JTC Budget Proviso

2014 Supplemental Transportation Budget (ESSB 6001, section 204(6))

"The joint transportation committee shall:

- coordinate a work group comprised of representatives from the department of licensing, the Washington state traffic safety commission, and other stakeholders as deemed necessary, along with interested legislators, to:

- develop parameters for and make recommendations regarding a pilot program that would allow students to meet traffic safety education requirements online.

- Additionally, the work group shall make recommendations related to requiring driver training to individuals between the ages of eighteen and twenty-four who have not previously passed a driver training education program or other methods of enhancing the safety of this high-risk group.

- The joint transportation committee shall issue a report of its findings to the transportation committees of the house of representatives and senate by December 1, 2014."

Work Group Members

- 18 members
- Four Legislators:
  - Senators Liias and Rolfes
  - Representatives Hayes and Ryu
- Department of Licensing, Traffic Safety Commission, State Patrol, Superintendent for Public Instruction
- 5 representatives of private driver training schools
- 1 representative from public schools
- AAA, Farmers Insurance
- Beth Redfield, JTC staff, facilitator

Study Outline

- **Two subject matters**
  - **Online Driver Education, 15 – 17 year olds**
    - **Parameters for a pilot program**
  - **New requirements for 18 – 24 year olds**
    - **Recommendations for enhancing safety**

- Three meetings of work group; staff group will assist in developing background materials, reviewing study and meeting materials
- Work Group questionnaire to gather info and facilitate discussions
- Background Information:
  - Existing WA requirements of novice drivers, driver training programs
  - Target Zero data on fatalities and injuries for both age groups
  - Other states' requirements and initiatives
  - National standards
  - Literature review on what works?

Online Driver Education, 15-17 year olds Draft Pilot Program Parameters

Goal/Purpose

Curriculum Schedule

• Current: 30 hours classroom; 6 hours behind the wheel

Oversight and Administration

• Current: DOL and OSPI

Online program providers, considerations

Instructor-led/Engaging the students

Instructor training

Security and quality assurance

• Identity verification

• Testing methods

• Inspection/auditing

Pilot project features
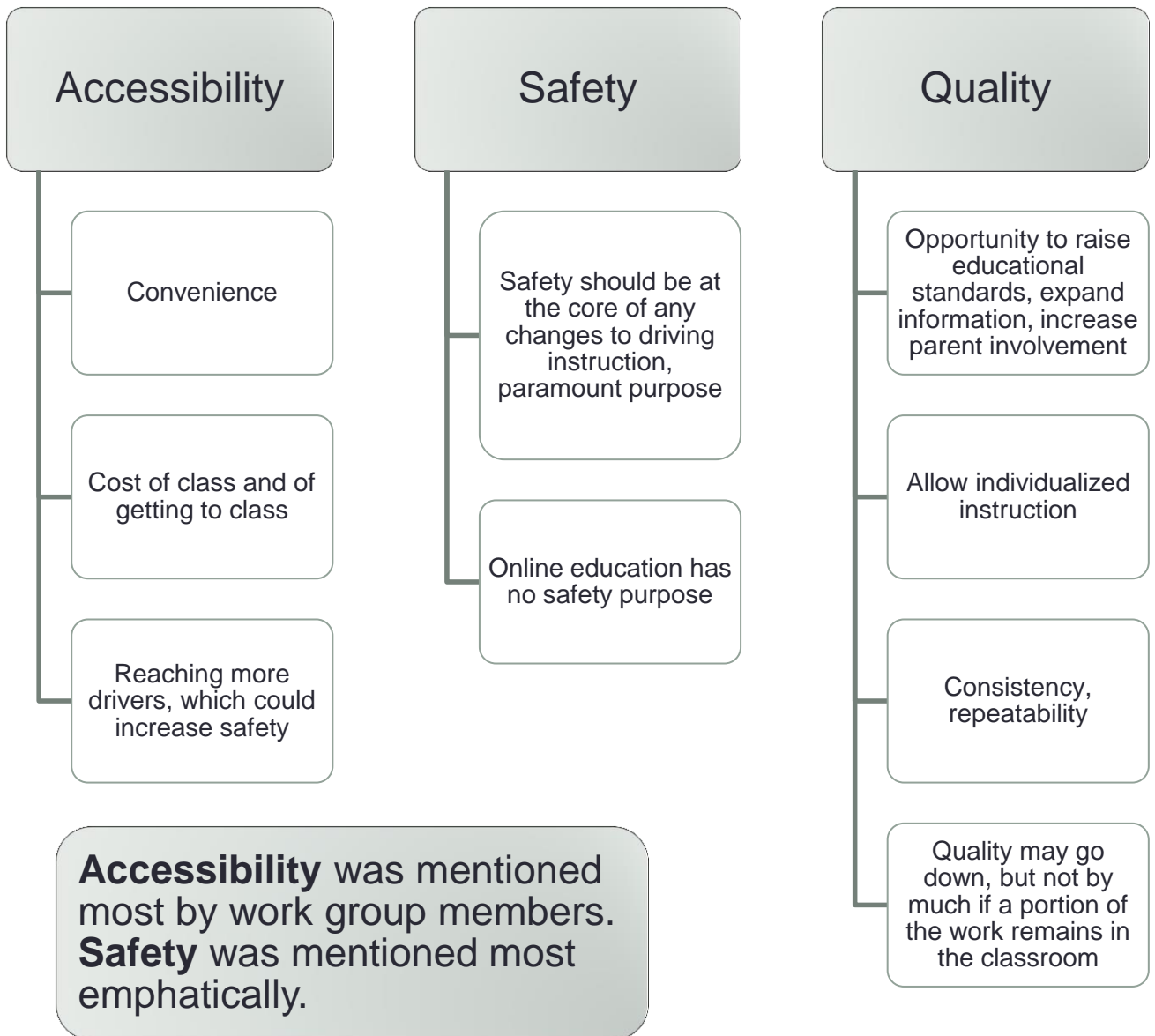
Driver Training for 18-24 year olds

- Proviso would limit driver training to 18-24 year olds who have not previously passed a driver training education program
- Other methods of enhancing safety

- Survey of other states

- Literature Review
  - Will driver education make a difference for 18 – 24 year old new drivers?
  - What works to reduce crashes?

Results from Work Group Questionnaire

- The purpose of the questionnaire:
  - Develop opening discussion materials for the Work Group
  - Learn from Work Group members' knowledge and experience

- Not a scientific survey
- Cannot use this information to count support for/against issues
- Any indication of areas of agreement among Work Group members is for the purpose of understanding the Work Group's opinions only.
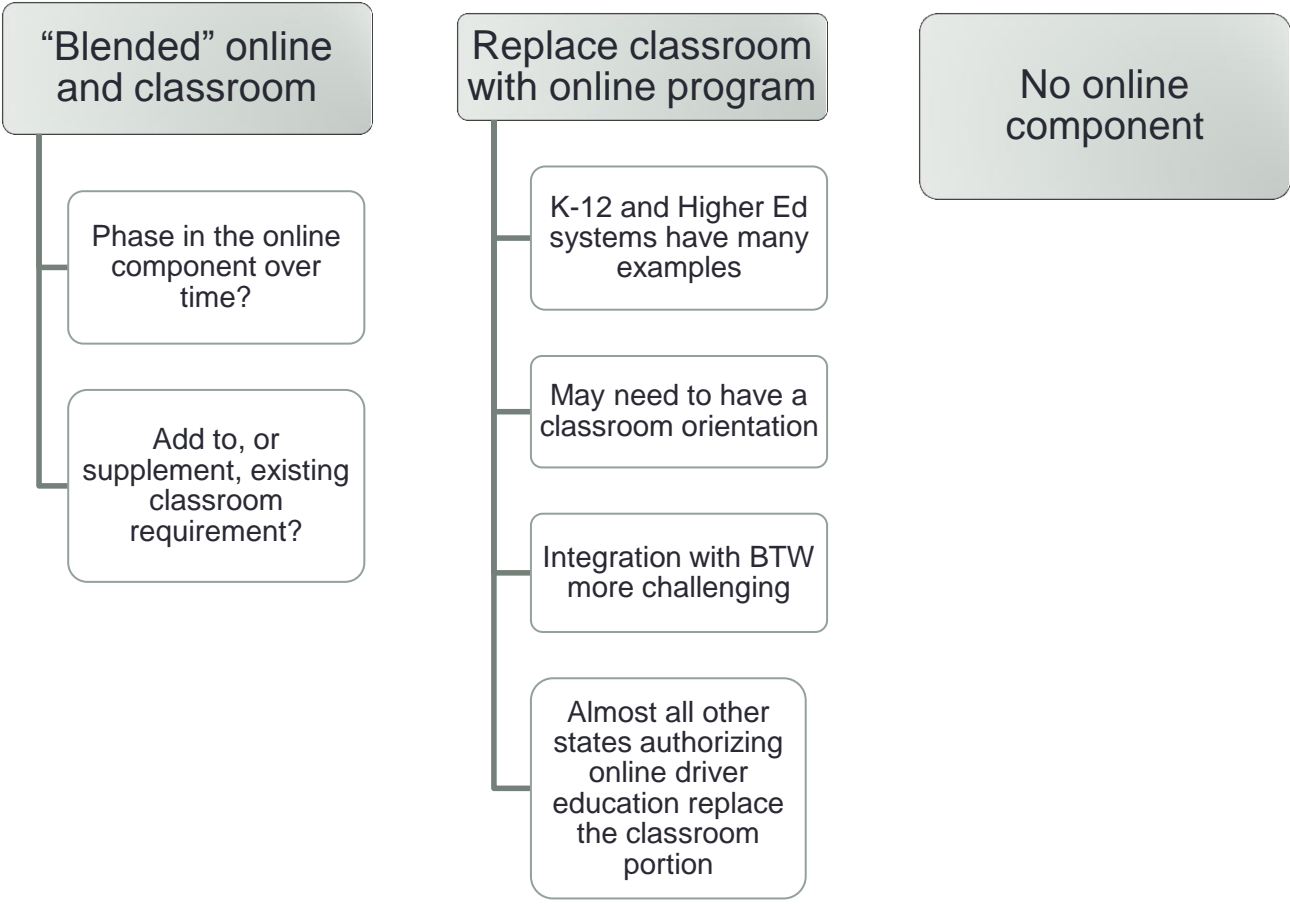
Results from Work Group Questionnaire Online Driver Education, 15-17 year olds

Purpose/Goal of Online Driver Education

Accessibility

- Convenience
- Cost of class and of getting to class
- Reaching more drivers, which could increase safety

Safety

- Safety should be at the core of any changes to driving instruction, paramount purpose
- Online education has no safety purpose

Quality

- Opportunity to raise educational standards, expand information, increase parent involvement
- Allow individualized instruction
- Consistency, repeatability
- Quality may go down, but not by much if a portion of the work remains in the classroom

Accessibility was mentioned most by work group members. **Safety** was mentioned most emphatically.

Results from Work Group Questionnaire
Online Driver Education, 15-17 year olds, cont.

Curriculum Schedule:

Currently 30 hours classroom, 6 hours behind-the-wheel (BTW), integrated/complementary

"Blended" online and classroom

- Phase in the online component over time?
- Add to, or supplement, existing classroom requirement?

Replace classroom with online program

- K-12 and Higher Ed systems have many examples
- May need to have a classroom orientation
- Integration with BTW more challenging
- Almost all other states authorizing online driver education replace the classroom portion

No online component

No one supported replacing any of the behind-the-wheel requirement with an online program.

Results from Work Group Questionnaire
Online Driver Education, 15-17 year olds, cont.

Who should oversee and administer?

- What entity can balance cost, quality, and the ability to maintain privacy, reliable access, consistency?
- Continue the current arrangement
  - DOL oversees private driver training schools
  - OSPI oversees public schools
- Driver Education should be overseen by a single entity
- Detailed oversight of online curriculum, not just approval of generic curriculum
- State oversight agencies need resources, are already stretched

Who should deliver program? Options & Considerations

- Responses reflected the range of existing program developers:
  - National providers of online programs
  - Private schools designing their own programs
  - State designed (Higher Ed, K-12, DOL)
  - Online content should be delivered in school computer labs with teachers present
  - Partnerships of any/all of the above
- Expensive to design
- Must meet unique WA requirements
  - Work with driver education community to define

Results from Work Group Questionnaire Online Driver Education, 15-17 year olds, cont.

How to actively engage students online?

- One of the most widespread concerns expressed about such programs
- Different opinions about whether student engagement requires an instructor:
  - No online program can adequately engage students **VS.**
  - Effective online content is better than a remote instructor

Maintain the instructor-led classroom experience?

- Work Group: online instruction should *to some degree* be instructor-led; in a "blended" model, instructor-led discussions would remain in the classroom
  - K-12 online courses are teacher-led and available either in real time or asynchronously
  - Community Colleges: online-only on the decline, hybrid/blended courses are proving more successful/cheaper
- National standards for online courses (general education) describe a blended approach
- Range of other state models: virtual classrooms, online classes with varying degrees of access to instructor, textbook-like online programs

Results from Work Group Questionnaire
Online Driver Education, 15-17 year olds, cont.

Changes to instructor training?

- Not many responses to this question
- Training needs would depend on what degree instructors would be involved in the delivery of the online content.
- Specific areas of training that may be needed:
  - delivery and security methods,
  - how to accommodate different learning styles,
  - monitoring the online portion of the class,
  - computer skills needed to manage the online program,
  - how to use the technology to individualize material and make it more interesting to the students.
  - Schools would also need some training about how DOL's curriculum approval and auditing processes would work.
- For those who think *no* new training would be required, the idea is that the implementation of an online component would narrow the subject matter instructors teach.
- There should be consistency in the training for public school teachers and the driver training school instructors.

Results from Work Group Questionnaire
Online Driver Education, 15-17 year olds, cont.

Security and Quality Assurance

- Security:
  - How to verify the identity of the student taking the course and the exam?
    - WA can learn from other states, institutions of higher education, and use the pilot project to evaluate security measures.
    - Require final testing in a physical classroom.
  - Security/privacy of personal email: options that allow login without mandatory communications through email.
- Quality assurance:
  - Combination of testing throughout and at the end
  - Student may not move on to the next set of materials until they've shown mastery
- DOL would require access to programs for audit purposes, curriculum review and approval.

Results from Work Group Questionnaire
Online Driver Education, 15-17 year olds, cont.

Pilot program

- ## What to evaluate?
  - Depends on goal/purpose
  - Implementation
  - Accessibility
  - Outcomes (Safety, Student learning)

- ## Features
  - Size of pilot?
  - How are schools chosen?
  - How long does it last?
  - Instead of a pilot, should program be phased in?
  - Work with driver education community

- ## Who will conduct an evaluation, how much will it cost?

Results from Work Group Questionnaire
Driver Training for 18-24 year olds

Why?

- Youth Drivers, 16 – 24, Target Zero Priority One
- Trend of delaying licensure
- Lack of experience can be mitigated by training
- An online requirement may be better than nothing

Policy questions

- Cost of program vs. actual benefit?
- Would it increase unlicensed drivers?
- Maybe waiting until 18 improves highway safety?
- Is there data supporting training programs for 18+?
- Who is targeted? People who have not passed driver education? Should this exclude licensees with at least a year of driving experience?

Results from Work Group Questionnaire
Driver Training for 18-24 year olds

What would the requirement be?

- Combination of online and BTW
- Blended online/classroom and BTW
- Some specific suggestions:
  - 8 hour online class, 6 hours BTW
  - A minimum of 8 hours, divided among Classroom, Online, and BTW.
  - 8 hours classroom, of which some may be on-line, 2 hours BTW
- Pilot project for online?

Reasons for different approach for older students?

- Length of course, expense may be more difficult for this population
- Same or different skill set: full training or narrower risk-prevention course?

Results from Work Group Questionnaire
Driver Training for 18-24 year olds

Instruction permit?

- Currently, must have an instruction permit to learn to drive, but not needed to take the driving test. Intermediate Driver License restrictions for under 18.
- Work Group:
  - Should have permit for BTW, 1 to 6 months
  - Should only be required to pass the licensing exams
- Other states have "Rookie Driver" programs which apply to 18+
  - TX, NJ, VA, MI, CT, MD (survey not complete)
  - Generally, must pass knowledge exam to get instruction permit, must practice for specified time with permit before road test
  - May require driver education course

Next Steps

- May 22nd meeting with staff work group
- June 4th meeting with Work Group
- 2 more meetings of Work Group in Summer and Fall
- Draft report to JTC for November meeting

Questions?

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