

During August and September, 2023, a Technical Assessment was conducted of the Iowa Driver Education Program by NHTSA Technical Assistance Team. GTSB provided the funding for the assessment while the Iowa DOT Driver Education Division provided information and coordinated the experts for the assessment. The driver education program state assessment is based on the information included in the Novice Teen Driver Education and Training Administrative Standards (NTDETAS). The five major sections in the standards include:

- Program Administration
- Education/Training
- Instructor, Mentor, and Instructor Trainer Qualifications
- Coordination, Collaboration, and Communication with Driver Licensing
- Parent/Guardian Involvement

The NHTSA Technical Assistance Team was composed of six non-federal subject matter experts who have expertise in at least one of the five key NTDETAS sections.

The progress in meeting each of the five sections in the Novice Teen Driver Education and Training Administrative Standards (NTDETAS) below:

Program administration: Iowa is underway in the Program Administration section. For the six standards and 31 strategies in this section, 39 percent are considered complete or show substantial progress, 16 percent are underway, and 45 percent have shown early progress or are not started.

Education/Training: Iowa is in early progress in meeting standards in the Education/Training section. For the eight standards and 25 strategies, 8 percent are considered complete or show substantial progress, 20 percent are underway, and 72 percent have shown early progress or are not started.

Instructor, Mentor, and Instructor Trainer Qualifications: Iowa is underway in this section. For the four standards and 22 strategies, 50 percent are considered complete or show substantial progress, 9 percent are underway and 41 percent are in early progress or are not started.

Coordination, Collaboration, and Communication with Driver Licensing: Iowa is in early progress in meeting standards in Coordination, Collaboration, and Communication with Driver Licensing section. For the five standards and 19 strategies, 16 percent are considered complete or show substantial progress, 21 percent are underway, and 63 percent are in early progress or not started.

Parent/Guardian Involvement: Iowa is underway in this section. For the three standards and 12 strategies, 33 percent are underway, and 33 percent have shown early progress or are not started.

Some of the priority recommendations in the five major sections are as follows:

Program Administration

- Establish formal coordination, through an interagency working group, between the Motor Vehicle Division individual program sections (for course approvals, instructor certifications, course content, driver licensing, and driver records), the Department of Education (for classroom instructors), and the Iowa State Patrol (for enforcement of traffic and driver license laws), which are the three primary State agencies that have a role in the regulation, administration, and oversight of all novice driver education programs.
- Establish and maintain an advisory board representative of all stakeholders to provide input to the trio of coordinated State agencies (Motor Vehicle Division, Department of Education, State Patrol).
- Establish standardized pro-active monitoring, evaluation/auditing, and oversight procedures through the Motor Vehicle Division for its providers and the Department of Education for its approved public schools, to ensure compliance with the NTDETAS and State standards.

Education and Training

- Require, at a minimum, driver education course requirements as outlined in the NTDETAS: be taught by State approved instructors who meet Section 3.0 of the NTDETAS; distribute classroom/theory instruction over a period of 30 days or more; consist of classroom/theory instruction with a maximum of 120 minutes per day; consist of BTW instruction with a maximum of 90 minutes per day per student (may be in addition to classroom instruction provided daily); consist of a maximum number of 30 students for classroom; be culturally equitable and apply multicultural education practices for all students; and accommodate those with disabilities.
- Require driver education and training providers to use State approved formalized curricula as outlined in the NTDETAS.
- Ensure that providers and instructors deliver timely and ongoing feedback to students and parents/guardians on students' progress in classroom, behind-the-wheel, and any other laboratory phases, including remedial instruction, during and at the conclusion of the driver education and training course consistent with the concepts, lessons, and course objectives; provided following the teaching of classroom and driving instruction; and constructive, informative, and frequently provided.
- Require training vehicles used for driver education and training to meet requirements as outlined by NTDETAS.

Instructor, Mentor, and Instructor Trainer Qualifications

- Require instructors to successfully complete approved continuing education and professional development.
- Require instructor candidates to successfully complete supplemental courses/requirements.

Coordination, Collaboration, and Communication with Driver Licensing

- Establish a formal communication, coordination, and collaboration process between the Motor Vehicle Division and Department of Education to share information, resolve issues and to improve and assess the total Minor and Intermediate License Program.
- Enhance the Graduated Driver Licensing (multi-state) Minor and Intermediate Driver License program to meet nationally recognized standards.

Parent/Guardian Involvement

- Require the parent/guardian certifies the novice teen driver completes: a) minimum of 50 hours of supervised on-street practice driving (optimally 100 hours) distributed over the Learner Permit period and b) at least 10 hours of nighttime on-street practice driving as part of the minimum 50 hours. (Note: The minimum of 50 hours of supervised practice driving should not be reduced by a novice teen driver's participation in driver education and training programs.)
- Require the parent/guardian of a novice teen driver to complete a parent/guardian seminar and ensuring the content in parent/guardian seminars describes their responsibilities and opportunities to manage the novice teen driver's overall learning to drive experience to reduce the novice teen's risk.

The assessment was very beneficial for the State of Iowa and young drivers within Iowa. GTSB is looking forward to working with the Iowa DOT Motor Vehicle Division, Department of Education and Iowa State Patrol to enhance the driver's education program.