

VSBEPE Agenda Item 4(A)**Driver Education Program Plausibility Paper**

Purpose: The purpose of this paper is to provide the Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators (VSBEPE) with a starting point to consider a solution to the problem of a Driver and Traffic Safety Education teacher shortage. The purpose is to put forth a hypothetical and plausible prototype program that Board members can conceive so that it assists the conversation around the driver ed. teacher shortage issue. The scenario put forth in this paper is not a recommendation from the Agency of Education. The driver ed. program scenario put forth in this paper is not an expressed preference of the Agency regarding how the driver ed. teacher shortage issue should be addressed. It is merely meant to assist the conversation of how the driver ed. teacher shortage issue could be addressed as the VSBEPE deliberates.

Background: Driver ed. teacher shortage has been an ongoing topic of discussion at VSBEPE meetings over the last year, perhaps longer. The Education Quality Division (EQ) has spent considerable effort on the topic notably working with Keene State College in New Hampshire to put together a sequence of classes in the area of driver education. EQ now meets routinely with the Agency's Federal Education Support Programs (FESP) which has responsibility over driver ed. funding in Vermont schools. FESP personnel are the Agency's liaison with the Vermont Driver and Traffic Safety Education Teacher Association. While the sequence of driver ed. classes at Keene state is a good thing that works to mitigate the teacher shortage issue, there is general consensus among the VSBEPE, EQ, FESP and the Vermont Driver and Traffic Safety Education Teacher Association that a driver ed. teacher preparation program located in Vermont would better address the driver ed. teacher shortage issue. EQ staff are also in regular communication with representatives from Vermont Technical College (VTC) who have expressed interest to the VSBEPE and EQ in creating a driver ed. teacher preparation program.

It is of the Agency's opinion that it is plausible that a teacher preparation program could be run out of VTC utilizing the apprenticeship licensure model. As VSBEPE members are aware, VTC currently has the authority to recommend for initial licensure utilizing the apprenticeship license model. To be brief, part of this model works by hiring an unlicensed, qualified individual to teach at a Career Technical Education Center (CTEC). That individual is then mentored and given instruction by VTC staff so that the person

meets the Core Teaching Standards. This could be done with someone who seeks to be a Driver and Traffic Safety Education teacher. This candidate for licensure would receive the same instruction and support as VTC's other candidates that hold an apprenticeship license. This plausible scenario would also entail VTC offering the entire 18 credit sequence of course work required to attain the driver ed. endorsement. EQ would work with VTC as it did with Keene State to ensure course work, for college credit issued at VTC, would meet the Driver and Traffic Safety Education endorsement competencies. In this scenario it is conceivable the program could attract different types of candidates. For example, a licensed educator seeking to add the driver ed. endorsement would have a place, located in Vermont, to take all 18 credits necessary to add the endorsement. Also, an individual who was certified by the Vermont Department of Motor Vehicles to teach driver ed. at a private driving school, could be hired by a CTEC, by virtue of being qualified, to teach driver ed. on an apprenticeship license. This would enable the school district affiliated with the CTCE to offer driver and traffic safety education classes. Lastly, the scenario creates the possibility for individuals to attain their initial educator license in Driver and Traffic Safety Education. Although prudent due diligence would be taken to assure this is done appropriately.

One reason this scenario is considered plausible is because VTC's licensure apprenticeship program has experience with and is subject to the ROPA review process. This hypothetical includes the VTC driver ed. program becoming subject to ROPA. As such, ROPA would necessitate VTC submit a detailed proposal. The proposal would be reviewed by a team that provides prudent due diligence at a granular level.

While this hypothetical scenario is put forth as plausible, the Agency understands that currently it is not actionable. For one, the VSBPE would need to act so that there exists a CTE sub-endorsement in the area of Driver and Traffic Safety Education. There are also other things to consider and actions that may need to be taken before this scenario, or some iteration of it, comes to fruition.

For example, it is not yet known if the scenario is desirable to CTECs and districts. However, it is the understanding of EQ personnel that VTC personnel are currently having conversations with CTECs about some form of this hypothetical. It is possible the scenario could be problematic in terms of offering driver education equitably if it must be taught in a CTEC exclusively. For example, transporting non-CTE students to and from CTECs could be costly or cost prohibitive. Further still, if the idea was entertained that the CTEC apprenticeship driver ed. teacher float around the district to offer driver ed. equitably, contractual issue may arise because current practice entails CTE teachers teaching at CTECs exclusively.

Also, while considered plausible, the Agency acknowledges the unusual aspect of this scenario in that it would entail the creation of a CTE sub-endorsement for licensure where there is no student curriculum associated with it. That is, with the current CTE sub-endorsements there are corresponding student curricula that are career paths. The hypothetical Driver and Traffic Safety Education sub-endorsement does not entail a student curriculum career path so that students may become driver ed. teachers. While this would be unusual, based on conversations with the Agencies' CTE staff, it is the understanding of EQ personnel that other classes are taught at CTEC's that are not part of a career pathway.

Finally, as previously stated the purpose of this paper is to provide a prototype conception to help facilitate a discussion about the driver ed. teacher shortage issue. Most likely there are many other factors to consider not mentioned here.