



PA Content and Performance Expectations: Driver Education

Introduction

The 2020–21 school year presents a unique set of opportunities and challenges due to the disruption to instruction in spring 2020 as well as the uncertainty as the school year unfolds. Educators know that every school year there are students who require support in addressing unfinished learning from prior grades; a challenge that will be felt more prominently in the 2020–21 school year. It is vitally important that educators are supported to make deliberate instructional choices that allow all students to effectively engage.

The most effective and equitable way to support students in their learning is to ensure that the vast majority of time is spent engaging with content, remediating with precision, and accelerating as needed. It is entirely possible to hold high expectations for all students while addressing unfinished learning. Since time is a scarce commodity in classrooms — made more limited by anticipated closures and remote or hybrid learning models in the fall of 2020 — strategic instructional choices about which content to prioritize must be made.¹

Assessing students at the start of the year will identify learning gaps and provide data to inform instruction — as well as incorporating both remediation and acceleration along the way. Diagnostic Assessments determine student strengths, weaknesses, knowledge, and skills. Administering diagnostic assessments permits the instructor to intervene at the point where students begin to struggle or when they are performing below expectations. Diagnostic assessments allow teachers to adjust the curriculum to meet the unique needs of all students. While some concepts have greater emphasis in a particular year, all standards deserve a defined level of instruction. Neglecting concepts may result in learning gaps in student skill and understanding and may leave students unprepared for the challenges of becoming a safe driver.

This guidance document is designed to identify areas of focus and define areas of high-level focus in Driver Education instruction supported by key PA Academic Standards AKA the Content and Performance Expectations for Driver Education. Note that while all standards deserve a defined level of instruction, neglecting key concepts may result in learning gaps in student skill and understanding and may leave students unprepared for the challenges of driving. Not all content in a given area is emphasized equally in the standards. Some focus areas require greater emphasis than others based on the depth of the ideas, the time taken to master, and/or their importance to the driving task. More time in these areas is also necessary for students to meet the Standards for safe driving.

¹ Adapted from 2020–21 Priority Instructional Content in English Language Arts/literacy and Mathematics, Student Achievement Partners/Achieve the Core. May 2020

FOCUS OF INSTRUCTION (2020-2021)

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Focus Areas of Instruction	PA Academic Standards
<p>PA Laws and Regulations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place emphasis on interacting with signage, signals, road markings, laws as they relate to responsible driving, and the licensing process. Utilize the Supporting Material that accompany the Enhanced Program Guide for Driver Education. Students should have a comprehensive understanding of the rules of the road, and their responsibilities as members of the highway system. 	<p>14.1 A, B, C: <i>Incorporate the 14 essential driving skills through all phases of instruction.</i></p> <p>14.2 A, B, C, D, E: <i>Continue emphasis on specific essential skills.</i></p> <p>14.3 A, B, C, D: <i>Emphasize essential skills 2, 6, 8, 9.</i></p> <p>14.4 A, B, C, D, E, F, G: <i>Emphasize the dangers of driving distracted. Emphasize the importance of making good, sound, safe decisions.</i></p> <p>14.5 A, B, C, D: <i>Emphasize the essential skills 10, 11, 12</i></p> <p>14.6 A, B, C, D, E, F, G: <i>Extended emphasis needs to be placed on these expectations. Because these expectations are omitted from the performance component, it does not prohibit discussion regarding the dangers of this section from taking place during the behind-the-wheel phase.</i></p>
<p>Knowledge of Vehicle Operations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students should be able to demonstrate the proper pre and post trip procedures. Students need to be familiar with all instruments, controls, and vehicle technology, as well as their location, purpose, and function. Incorporate essential skills numbers 3, 4, 5, 7, and 14. 	
<p>Perceptual Skills Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasize the importance of paying attention to the task of driving specifically visual field, scanning, Stop, Think & Go, perception. Devote time to searching path of travel. Utilize the supporting materials Perceptual Skill Development and Scanning that accompanies the Enhanced Program Guide. 	
<p>Decision Making/Risk Reduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students need to be able to identify the steps for reducing distractions and making good, logical, safe decisions. Emphasize that a distraction is described as anything that causes the driver to take their eyes off the road, take their hands off the wheel or take their attention away from driving. 	
<p>Driving Conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students should be aware that PA. GDL requires the novice driver to practice drive a minimum of 10 hours in nighttime and a minimum of 5 hours in inclement conditions. Emphasis on essential skills 11 and 12. Students should be able to identify the dangers of vehicle malfunctions. Students should be able to identify how to properly respond to vehicle malfunctions. 	
<p>Influences on Driving Performance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasis needs to be placed on the dangers of DUI, DUID, and driving when taking OTC and prescribed medications including marijuana and CBD. Students need to be aware of the PA zero tolerance laws. Do not overlook the effects of fatigue on driving. Because these expectations are omitted from the performance component, extra emphasis needs to be placed on the importance and dangers associated with this section. 	