

# WTSEA NEWS – *The Newsletter of the Washington Traffic Safety Education Association*

March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2019 – First Edition

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## PURPOSE OF NEWSLETTER

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The main purpose of this newsletter is to bring you up-to-date on Traffic Safety Education issues in our state. Our intent is to publish a newsletter each quarter. We know that you often don't hear from us for long segments of time. We intend to "fix" that. We feel that it is important for you to be aware that changes are occurring constantly.

A second purpose is to make you aware that your WTSEA Board has been working, daily, to affect positive changes in TSE. To ensure that we are acting on your behalf, we will include brief survey questions at the end of each newsletter. Please let us know your thoughts to ensure we are "spot on" in our efforts to represent and inform you. Your WTSEA Board of Directors.

## BELLINGHAM PROVIDES "FIRST-OF-ITS KIND" TSE PROGRAM

Submitted by Skeet Gaul

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In a newsletter directed to parents and students of the Bellingham School District, Superintendent Greg Baker announced last fall that the High School will be providing a comprehensive Traffic Safety Education program. In his words, "We will be doing something nearly no one else is doing".

He reminded parents that in 2002 the legislature stopped funding TSE which lead most public schools to phase out their programs. This meant that more teens were waiting until they turn 18 to become licensed and were not taking a TSE course at all. He pointed out a Nebraska study that found drivers who never take driver's education were 24% more likely to be involved in a fatal crash. He also cited a AAA survey that showed that 28% said that cost was a barrier.

After an in-depth fiscal study, he announced that they would be bringing back Traffic Safety Education as a "regular part of their classroom

catalog". He further stated that, "The new semester-long class will allow students to take the driver's safety education course during the school day, and to experience the driver training (BTW) portion after school and on weekends." The driver's education course will be combined with financial management topics including how to purchase, own and maintain a car, as well as well as other topics. The high-school catalog will list the semester-long course as "Traffic Safety and Financial Education."

The TSE Program Coordinator, Stu Soderquist, and his staff were trained by CWU, and earned their OSPI TSE certification during the summer of 2018. This miracle program is currently up and running for the 2018-2019 school year.

## PROPOSED RULE CHANGES & TARGET ZERO PARTNERS MEETING

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On November 8<sup>th</sup>, we became aware that the DOL was proposing [Rule Changes to WAC 308-108-150](#). Essentially, these changes would strip the requirement of having an integrated curriculum for commercial driver training schools, while OSPI would still require the standard for public and private school TSE programs. Since then, WTSEA Board members have been doing what they can to prevent these changes, which we feel would be detrimental to TSE. Our position is that BTW and classroom instruction must be sequenced in an integrated, concurrent fashion to be most effective.

Board members Gerry Apple, Jack Coburn, Skeet Gaul, and Dave Slipp, attended the Washington Traffic Safety Commission's (WTSC) **Target Zero Partner's Meeting at Great Wolf Lodge on December 13<sup>th</sup>**. Every three years the WTSC calls a meeting of stakeholders to review and offer feedback on our state's strategic highway plan, Target Zero. In preparation for the meeting Skeet sent a "[Letter to Angie Ward](#)," WTSC Young Drivers Program

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Manager. Alex Hansen also prepared a [“WTSEA Policy Agenda to Improve the Quality of Drivers Education in Washington,”](#) to be shared with appropriate individuals

## PROPOSED RULE CHANGES & TARGET ZERO PARTNERS MEETING (cont.)

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at the meeting. The four of us talked with **Angie Ward**, **Pam Meyers** (DOL), **Patti Enbody** (OSPI), **Beau Perschbacher** (DOL Legislative & Policy Director), **Darrin Grondel** (Director, WTSC) and others about the proposed rule changes and other issues. We did our

best to dissuade them from proceeding with the changes and to call attention to other TSE concerns.

## TSE CURRICULUM SUPPORT MATERIALS

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On **January 4<sup>th</sup>**, the DOL sent out a **Driver Training Curriculum Support Materials Update**. Now that Phase I is completed (Drafting a “Required Curriculum” of concepts that must be taught), the DOL is searching for a way to implement Phase II (Developing lesson plans and ancillary support materials) The significance of this document was the fact that the DOL investigated a plan to purchase the **Oregon Playbook** curriculum, which is a “gold mine” of supplementary classroom and BTW activities and information. It was stated that this avenue was blocked due to “copyright issues.” The DOL is now looking at other options including creating our own materials “from the ground up.” They are still planning on completing this task by the end of 2019. This might prove difficult as Pam Myers, the DOL curriculum specialist, has left her position at the DOL. Meanwhile, more importantly, the DOL will not begin auditing for adherence to teaching the Required Curriculum until the rule-writing for it is complete, and after schools have had time to become familiar with the training support materials. This won’t happen until fall of 2019 at the earliest.

## PUBLIC HEARING ON DOL’S PROPOSED RULE CHANGE

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On **January 9<sup>th</sup>**, Alex Hansen, Mike Shephard, Gerry Apple and Skeet Gaul attended the public hearing on the [proposed WAC changes](#). We all spoke, separately, in opposition to the changes. Alex, by far, was the most comprehensive and vocal in regard to this issue. He spoke passionately and powerfully. Afterwards, two individuals who had favored the proposed changes rose to support Alex’s comments, and one officially changed his position to oppose the changes. We await the DOL’s official announcement of their decision.

## PAC NW CONFERENCE & HOPEFUL MOVEMENT

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On **March 1<sup>st</sup> thru 3<sup>rd</sup>**, several board members attended the Pac NW regional TSE Conference in Portland. We attend this conference partly to identify potential speakers and sponsors for our WTSEA conference. We also value, greatly, the opportunity to network with people important toward advancing our goals.

Alex Hansen, Dave Slipp, Gerry Apple, Mike Hahn, Kara Bartlett and Skeet Gaul had occasion to meet with [Angie Ward](#) (WTSC) and [Patti Enbody](#) (OSPI) to discuss the current state of driver education instructor training in Washington.

We also had a meeting with [Brett Robinson](#), Executive Director, American Driver and Traffic Safety Education Association (ADTSEA), in regard to **Washington’s Driver Education Program Assessment** that was held in May 2016. Through the Association of National Stakeholders in Traffic Safety Educational (ANSTSE) and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), **funding is available for technical assistance to states who’ve had assessments**—to help implement the priority recommendations that came from their assessment.

The two **instructor training priority recommendations** from our May 2016 Driver Education Assessment were:

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3.1.2 Develop standardized instructor training that applies to instructors and teachers in all public and private driver education training programs.

3.1.3. Standardize and require training in best practices for all licensed instructors in both public and private driver education and training programs.

## **PAC NW CONFERENCE & HOPEFUL MOVEMENT (cont.)**

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A meeting is being scheduled, in April, to further examine these issues and to create a plan to move forward toward implementation. Attendance will include WTSEA Board representatives, as well as representatives from the DOL, OSPI, CWU, PDSA and other stakeholders, and the WTSC

## **AUTONOMOUS VEHICLES WORKGROUP SAFETY SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULED**

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Skeet Gaul has been attending these meetings in Olympia for the past year. For those who are interested in knowing what this is all about, here are some particulars on the charter.

### **Background**

In 2018, the Washington State Legislature enacted SHB2970, establishing an autonomous vehicle work group, administered by the Transportation Commission (WSTC). The workgroup was determined to have an executive committee and multiple subcommittees, including a safety subcommittee organized by the Washington Traffic Safety Commission (WTSC) and Washington State Patrol (WSP).

### **Purpose**

Based on direction from the Washington State AV Workgroup Executive Committee, the subcommittees will:

\* Consider, explore, develop and identify challenges, needs, gaps and expectations related to AV policy, funding and jurisdiction.

\* Assess what other states are doing and seek model policies.

\* Inform the public of subcommittee discussions and recommendations in a transparent and accessible manner.

\* Report information gathered and findings, along with recommendations, to the Executive Committee.

Topics of discussion for the AV Safety Subcommittee will be focused around safety-related matters regarding automated vehicle technology and its potential impacts on our state, road users, and all Washingtonians.

### **Scope and High-level Requirements**

The subcommittee will discuss the issues, assess the options, and make recommendations. This will be achieved through open sharing of participants' perspectives, ideas and concerns, research of multiple possibilities, and open group discussion.

The safety subcommittee will focus on developing recommendations regarding automated vehicles in the following areas:

\* Educating new and existing road users on current and emerging safety technology

\* Vehicle's recognition of and response to hazards and vulnerable road users

\* Law enforcement and EMS training on responding to and reporting on AV-involved crashes

\* Determining and planning for public health impacts and equitable access

The subcommittee will develop recommendations to be submitted in October of each year to the Autonomous Vehicle Workgroup Executive Committee for consideration.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 12<sup>th</sup>.

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## **ESD 113 ENDS ITS TSE PROGRAM**

Submitted by Dave Slipp

The ESD 113 Traffic Safety program has served more than 25 school districts throughout the state for over three decades. Alex Hansen, WTSEA President, stated that the ESD 113 TSE Co-op was in existence in 1987 when he graduated from CWU and started looking for positions. He said, “The ESD 113 TSE Co-op has faithfully served thousands of families in many rural communities with little access to a TSE program. This is a tragic setback for those communities.”

## **ESD 113 ENDS ITS TSE PROGRAM (cont.)**

The last few years have seen a decline in student enrollment across all the ESD 113 districts, continually increasing program costs, and meeting the requirements of newly passed legislation governing public school TSE programs. After a review and fiscal analysis, the ESD has determined that the program was no longer financially viable. Another strain has been the inability to find trained TSE teachers to sustain the programs.

This sad development left 26 WTSEA member teachers out of work, and more sadly, hundreds of families without affordable access to a quality TSE program available in their public schools.

## **WTSEA SURVEY**

The WTSEA Board wishes to be a more representative body, and we desire to meet your needs and concerns as best we are able. As a part of this Newsletter, we will reach out to seek your opinions on pertinent issues. We always welcome your questions, concerns and feedback through contacting us on our website Home Page or by emailing our Webmaster at the address below.

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**Strongly Disagree-1; Disagree-2; Neutral-3; Agree-4;  
Strongly Agree-5**

1. How important is it that our state implement a “TRAINER OF TRAINERS” program that would

involve uniform and comprehensive training for both commercial and public-school programs?

**1 2 3 4 5**

2. How important is it that our state implement a “TSE TEACHER TRAINING” program that would involve uniform and comprehensive training for both commercial and public-school programs?

**1 2 3 4 5**

3. It is important for both OSPI and DOL to maintain the standards of an integrated, concurrent curriculum between BTW and classroom instruction in all TSE programs.

**1 2 3 4 5**

If you are administering a TSE school program and are in need of “teachers” and/or “teacher training” please contact Skeet Gaul at [sgaul@live.com](mailto:sgaul@live.com) and your issues will be forwarded in an effort to promote teacher training in our state. We will post these needs on our Home Page.

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## **HELPFUL SUGGESTIONS / COMMENTS**

Please forward suggestions / comments to [sgaul@live.com](mailto:sgaul@live.com)

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