

MINUTES OF THE
GEORGIA DRIVER'S EDUCATION COMMISSION MEETING

June 28, 2019 at 10:00 am

Georgia Governor' Office of Highway Safety
Linda Bradford Conference Room
7 Martin Luther King Jr Drive, Suite 643
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

Vice Chairman Moore called the June 28, 2019, Georgia Driver's Education Commission meeting to order at 10:02 am. Those in attendance and constituting a quorum were as follows:

Board Members in Attendance	Board Members not in Attendance
Mr. Spencer Moore, Vice Chairman, by phone	Kevin Boyd
Mr. Allen Poole	Beth Graham
Mr. Alfred Barber, by phone	Lidell Greenway
Dr. Malika Reed Wilkins, by phone	

Non-Members in Attendance were as follows:

Mr. Jimmy Sumner, Georgia Governor's Office of Highway Safety
Mr. Josh Turner, Georgia Driver's Education Commission
Ms. Kisha Bell, Georgia Driver's Education Commission
Ms. Lisa Owens, Georgia Governor's Office of Highway Safety
Mr. Robert Hydrick, Georgia Governor's Office of Highway Safety
Mr. Toni Abasi Hill, Malcom Omari Hill Scholarship Fund, Inc.

Approval of June 28, 2019 Agenda

Vice Chairman Moore presented the agenda. Mr. Barber made a motion to adopt the agenda, as proposed. Dr. Wilkins seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of March 26, 2019 Minutes

Vice Chairman Moore presented the minutes from March 26, 2019 meeting. Mr. Poole made a motion to approve the meeting minutes, as presented. Mr. Barber seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, with no discussion.

Public Comment

Mr. Toni Abasi Hill, Malcom Omari Hill Scholarship Fund, Inc., stated the Georgia Driver's Education Commission Scholarship information is not reaching certain geographic area schools and he would like to know how the program can improve bringing awareness to intercity schools and the public. Mr. Turner stated that the scholarship program is advertised on the Georgia Driver's Education Commission website and frequently on social media. The program does not have a paid media campaign to inform the public. Marketing materials such as brochures are provided to the driver's education providers and every public and private a high school in Georgia. The providers assist with helping spread the word by using our website, newsletters and press releases to inform their community about the Georgia Driver's Education Scholarship program. Chairman Moore added that sometimes school administration changes and often-

times the information is delayed from being distributed to the public. However, the Georgia Driver's Education and providers do put forth an effort to make sure all forms of communication are used to advertise the program. Mr. Hill reemphasized that, based on his experience, he feels that the information is not reaching the schools and parents are not aware of the program. He suggests revising the marketing strategy.

Mr. Barber stated that he would like to make a comment regarding this subject. In the month of June, he had 59 scholarships submitted to Barber's Driving School. His business has an ongoing relationship with the high school counselors. He stated obviously not every student is going to pay attention when you are there because they are discouraged from even applying due to their own personal circumstances. The other providers are receiving a sufficient amount of applications online and it appears classes are full for the summer, which is a good sign. This is due to ongoing marketing in their community. Mr. Barber stated there is always room for improvement with the program's marketing. In addition, he thanked Mr. Hill for providing outreach education regarding the program to the schools and picking up the slack, when the providers are not able to reach all the schools.

Mr. Poole stated he would like to read an email from Mr. Mike Jenkins from Rome, Georgia to be included in the minutes. The email reads:

My name is Mike Jenkins. I am an instructor in Rome Georgia. I am sending this email as a personal attempt to get a policy changed in regard to the awarding of scholarships. I have a young lady who applied for the scholarship this month and was turned down because she applied too late and the scholarship money was gone. I understand that is a situation that cannot be controlled. However, I feel like she should be able to apply next month and try to get into the class in June. I was told that this was not possible because of a policy which does not allow students to apply more than once. I understand that the money was not available, but do not understand why she can't apply again. What can I do, if anything, to get that policy changed which would allow her and other young people like her to get the much needed scholarship. I understand this is a board policy and would be willing to appear in person before the board and have this discussion. I know these scholarships have greatly benefited many of Georgia's young people, and would like to see if we could tweak the current policy by allowing potential students to apply more than once. Please call me at XXX-XXX-XXXX if you need to. I look forward to your reply regarding this matter.

Email: XXXXXXXX@gmail.com

Sincerely,

Mike Jenkins

Rome Georgia

Mr. Poole continued that Mr. Jenkins is bringing up a point of concern regarding the policy that prevents students for applying more than once. Vice Chairman Moore acknowledged that this topic has been discussed many times in the past as asked Mr. Turner to explain the policy regarding the one-time application. Mr. Turner explained Paragraph A-7 of the Eligibility Criteria to the Commission and highlighted that students are eligible to apply only one time. Vice Chairman Moore asked for further information and background on why the policy existed. Mr. Turner explained that in the original proposal for the scholarship program students could apply up to six times over a six month period. However, the Commission changed it to a one-time application process after hearing concerns from the private driver's education providers that students would continually wait for a scholarship rather than pay for training out of pocket.

Mr. Barber stated that he would like to address this issue since it is a concern for many people. He stated that the program is not really overflowing with funding so students will have to be denied. When the scholarship program began, the Commission and private providers negotiated with the Commission on what made sense and would not harm the private industry. When the Georgia Driver's Education

Commission granted all funds to the technical colleges in 2015, all of the private schools began feeling the pressure of students attending technical colleges and not registering for training. Mr. Barber continued that when people hear that something is free and there is an unlimited time you can apply, they sit on the sideline and many go without driver's education at all. He maintained that it was unfair to continually allow someone to submit an application for a grant scholarship. He continued that students should be able to apply one time, and if approved, use the scholarship and if the scholarship application is denied, students should pay for the course and move forward.

The Commission had further discussion regarding funding and the legislative sunset of June, 30 2021.

Mr. Poole recommended that the Commission create a special committee to explore the application process and the policy that prohibits students from applying more than once. Mr. Barber interjected and advised that he is opposed of a special committee to revisit the policy that has been long-standing policy. Vice Chairman Moore state that he respects each Commission member and will hear their requests.

Mr. Poole made a motion to create a special committee, in accordance with the Commission's Bylaws, (Article 3, Section 1) to review and study the application rules specifically as it relates to students only applying for a scholarship one time. Dr. Wilkins seconded the motion. Mr. Barber objected to the motion due to a vacancy on the board representing private providers. The objection was unfounded ruled out of order. Dr. Wilkins asked the Chair to clarify that the motion only establishes a committee to review the policy and make a recommendation on the policy, not to change the policy. Vice Chairman Moore stated that Dr. Wilkins' assessment was correct. Mr. Barber moved to table the motion. Chairman Moore advised that the motion needed a second. The motion to table was not seconded and failed. Vice Chairman Moore called the previous question and asked Mr. Turner for a roll-call vote. The motion to create a special committee carried with three members voting in favor and one opposed.

Chairman Moore asked if there are any additional public comments; there were no responses.

Adoption of Fiscal Year 2020 Meeting Schedule

Chairman Moore presented the Fiscal Year 2020 meeting schedule for adoption. The proposed meeting dates are:

First Quarter: September 24, 2019

Second Quarter: December 17, 2019

Third Quarter: March 31, 2020

Fourth Quarter: June 23, 2020

Mr. Turner advised there was one Commission member who responded who had a conflict with the second quarter date, however; there was no additional feedback from other board members regarding the proposed meeting schedule. Chairman Moore stated as we get closer to those dates if there are recommendations that need to be made as far as changing those dates in order to get a quorum, we certainly can consider those at that time.

Mr. Poole made a motion to approve the meeting schedule and Dr. Wilkins seconded motion. The motion passed unanimously.

GDEC Budget Fiscal Year 2020

Vice Chairman Moore asked Mr. Turner to present the Fiscal Year 2020 budget. Mr. Turner advised that the \$2,913,000.00 is the amount in the state fiscal year 2020 budget. The proposed budget represents scholarships in the amount of \$2,309,900.00 which equates to roughly 4,600 scholarships or about 385 per month. That amount is likely to increase as students redeem the scholarships and we know the exact value

of each scholarship from the provider the scholarship recipient has chosen and any unused funds are allocated for additional scholarships.

Dr. Wilkins made a motion to adopt the Fiscal Year 2020 budget and Mr. Poole second the motion.

Mr. Barber asked about the line item regarding GTA Service Agreement. Mr. Turner responded that the GTA service agreement fee is a maintenance and support agreement with the Georgia Technology Authority for our scholarship program website. Mr. Barber asked for clarification on the \$75,000 Software License. Mr. Turner stated the Software License is an annual licensing fee for the use of the software. Mr. Barber further inquired about the personnel services line item and Mr. Turner responded that the line item covers salaries and fringe benefit for the Commission staff. In addition, Dr. Wilkins asked if the Travel in the amount of \$25,000.00 included board member travel. Mr. Turner responded that the Travel line item was for staff travel for program audits and training and that Commission member travel is covered under the line item for Board Member Expenses and Per Diem.

Mr. Poole recognized Mr. Turner for reducing the personal services budget by \$63,000 and commented that that was a huge saving that would benefit students by increasing the number of scholarships and commented that the budget for scholarships is the highest amount allocated by the Commission

There was no further discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

Adoption of Amendment to the Driver's Education Grant Scholarship Program Eligibility Requirements (Changing Application Deadline and Award/Denial Date and adding Language regarding the Statewide Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy)

Chairman Moore stated, for the record, he would like to thank Mr. Turner and his staff for proposing that the eligibility requirements be amended to include the Statewide Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy championed by the Governor. Chairman Moore asked Mr. Turner to present the proposed changes. Mr. Turner advised the first set of proposed changes are in section A-8 regarding awarding scholarships. At the request of the Office of Planning and Budget, the Governor's Office, and the State Accounting Office, the scholarship award date will be changed to the first day of each month instead of the twentieth of each month. This will help with year-end close out and require all the scholarships are redeemed by the provider by the last day of the fiscal year. Secondly, the Statewide Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy is added as a requirement for any provider that has staff that regularly interacts with the Commission. Mr. Turner explained that the Commission members are not required to complete the training, but are encouraged to complete the training and he would be happy to provide Commission members with the Sexual Harassment training for completion.

Mr. Barber made a motion to adopt the amendments and Dr. Wilkins seconded motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Staff Report

Mr. Turner presented the Provider Scholarship Redemption Report from March 24, 2019 through June 27, 2019 which shows the number of scholarships each provider has redeemed since the last board meeting. There is an error on the redemption dates highlighted in blue. It should read March 24, 2019 to June 27, 2019. A copy of the report is attached to these minutes.

The fourth quarter customer service report for the months of April, May and June shows the staff answered 3,303 provider inquiries and 2,633 students and parent inquires. The staff has addressed 978 voicemails. 456 invoices have been processed which is an increase of 5% since last quarter.

The April 2019 Scholarship reports shows 832 applications were submitted with 0 applicants in Tier 1, 432 applicants in Tier 2, and 400 applicants in Tier 3. 350 applicants were awarded scholarships. All 350 applicants awarded scholarships were in Tier 2. 82 applicants in Tier 2 were denied and all 400 applicants from Tier 3 were denied scholarships.

The May 2019 Scholarship report shows 1,000 applications were submitted with 1 applicant in Tier 1, 487 applicants in Tier 2, and 512 applicants in Tier 3. 900 applicants were awarded scholarships. The one applicant in Tier 1 was awarded a scholarship. All 487 applicants in Tier 2 were awarded scholarships and none were denied. 412 applicants in Tier 3 were awarded scholarships. 100 applicants in Tier 3 were denied.

The June 2019 Scholarship report shows 1,460 applications were submitted with 0 applicants in Tier 1, 718 applicants in Tier 2, and 742 applicants in Tier 3. 1,231 applicants were awarded scholarships. All 718 applicants in Tier 2 were awarded scholarships. 514 applicants in Tier 3 were awarded scholarships and the remaining applicants from Tier 3 were denied.

Mr. Turner explained the increase in scholarship applications awards from April to May is due to a staff vacancy between the months of February, March and April which allowed the Commission to award additional scholarship applications with the budget surplus. The additional scholarships for June were made available by re-awarding scholarships that either expired or were never redeemed by the student. Also, additional scholarships were awarded by re-allocating the difference between the maximum value of each scholarship awarded (\$500.00) and the actual amount of the scholarship once it was redeemed by the provider using their publicly advertised rate.

Mr. Turner would like to make the board aware that in June of 2019 there was an error in the way the software processes the applications. 111 students were sent a denial by electronic email, when in fact their application scholarship was, indeed, approved. We worked with our service provider to correct that issue and those students were sent a redemption code for their approved scholarship. We have corrected that issue; therefore, it will not happen again in the future.

Mr. Turner further reported that the collections for the driver training education fund for Fiscal Year 2019 to date is \$2,964,342.00 with today being the final day for jurisdictions to submit collections from the 1.5% fee assessed on traffic citations. That figure is used when the state budget is prepared to for the following fiscal year's budget. Mr. Turner notified the board that he will begin communications with state officials and state support agencies to explore a different and more efficient way of allocating scholarship funds that may keep unused and expired scholarship funds from being returned to the state treasury at the end of the fiscal year. I hope to have a proposal for your consent at the next board meeting.

The 2019 Georgia Highway Safety Conference, hosted by the Governor's Office of Highway Safety, will be held in Savannah, Georgia at the Hyatt Regency Savannah on August 11-14, 2019. As always, the Georgia Driver's Education Commission members are invited to attend.

Finally, Mr. Turner announced the hire of Ms. Kisha Bell in the position Business Support Analyst effective May 1, 2019. Ms. Bell previously was employed with the Commission through a temp service as an Administrative Assistant. In her new role, she will continue to assist students, parents and providers with scholarship application and business processes, as well as take on new responsibilities including shared oversight of provider reviews and program audits.

Respectfully submitted,
Kisha Bell
Business Support Analyst
Georgia Driver's Education Commission

Georgia Driver's Education Commission
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Suite 643
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

Provider Scholarship Redemption Report (03/24/2019 through 06/27/2019)

PROVIDER NAME	SCHOLARSHIPS REDEEMED (12/20/2018 – 03/24/2019)
A-1 Driving School, Inc.	333
Barber's Driving School, Inc.	135
A+ Driving Services, Inc.	77
Marietta City Board of Education	73
Wiregrass Georgia Technical College	63
South Cherokee/Jasper Driver Improvement Clinic Inc.	52
Southern Crescent Technical College	52
Southern Regional Technical College	52
New London School of Driving Inc.	51
Georgia Northwestern Technical College	49
Lanier Technical College	48
DriveSmart Systems, Inc.	44
Taggart's Driving School	43
Augusta Technical College	41
West Metro Driving School	41
Ogeechee Technical College	41
AABACUS, Inc.	40
Dickerson Driving School, Inc.	35
North Georgia Technical College	35
Central Georgia Technical College	34
Southeastern Regional Driving and Safety Academy Inc	34
Savannah Technical College	33
Gwinnett County Board Of Education	30
Advance Driving Academy	25
Georgia Driving School, Inc.	24
Jones Driver Education School of Augusta, Inc.	24
Safety 1st Driver Education	24
Classic VIP Driving School, LLC	23
Thumbs Up Driving Inc.	23
Coastal Pines Technical College	22
Oconee Fall Line Technical College	21
Southeastern Technical College	21

Brock's Driver Education School, Inc.	18
Just Driver Training	18
AA Academy of Action Driving School	17
Albany Technical College	17
FB Driving, Inc.	17
Kennesaw Driving School	17
Gordon County Board of Education	13
Duluth DUI and Driving School	11
Executive Results DUI & Defensive Driving School, LLC	11
1st United Driving & DUI School	10
Athens Technical College	10
South Georgia Technical College	10
West Georgia Technical College	10
Calhoun City BOE	8
Columbus Technical College	8
Towne Lake Driving School, LLC	7
Georgia Piedmont Technical College	7
Nathan's Driving School, Inc.	7
White County Board of Education	7
Rockdale-Newton Driving School	6
Atlanta Technical College	5
First Class Defensive Driving	5
Oconee County Board of Education	5
Southern Defensive Driving School	4
Safe America Foundation, Inc.	4