

FISCAL YEAR

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

GEORGIA DRIVER'S
EDUCATION COMMISSION



Georgia Driver's Education Commission

In accordance with O.C.G.A. § 15-21-181(b), the Georgia Driver's Education Commission (GDEC) submits this report to the Governor, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House, and the committee chairpersons for the standing committees in the Senate and House of Representatives that are assigned issues related to motor vehicles. This report contains data on the amount of funds collected from the additional penalty imposed on traffic citations for driver's education for the previous three fiscal years, the amount of such funds appropriated to the commission for each corresponding year, and the manner and purposes for which such funds have been expended.



MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Georgia Driver's Education Commission is to maximize participation in driver's education and training to reduce motor vehicle crashes by making driver's training accessible and affordable to all Georgians.



Content

Commission Composition.....	1
Problem Identification	2
Young Driver Licensing.....	3
Commission History	5
Fiscal Year 2020 Activities	8
Funding History	11

Commission Composition

Pursuant to O.C.G.A § 15-21-173, the Georgia Driver's Education Commission consist of eight (8) members who can serve four years terms. The State Board of Education shall appoint one member of the commission and the Department of Driver Services shall appoint two members of the commission. The director of the Governor's Office of Highway Safety shall appoint one member of the commission. The remaining four members of the commission shall be appointed by the Governor, two of whom shall be public school driver's education providers and the other two shall be private driver's education providers. The Governor shall designate a chairperson of the commission from among the appointed members.



Allen Poole, Chairman

Director

Governor's Office of Highway Safety

Appointed by the Governor's Office of Highway Safety



Spencer R. Moore, Vice Chairman

Commissioner

Department of Driver Services

Appointed by the Department of Driver Services



Malika Reed Wilkins

Sr. Principal, Transportation Marketing Manager

Atlanta Regional Commission

Appointed by the Department of Driver Services

Five (5) Vacancies

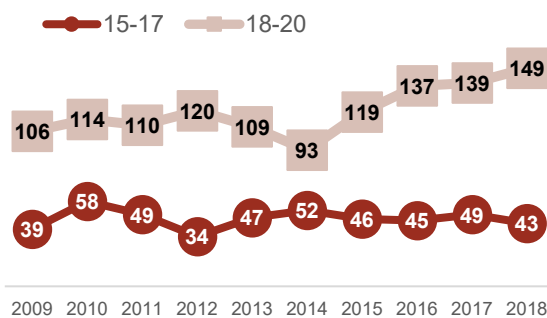
- One (1) appointed by the State Board of Education
- Two (2) appointed by the Governor representing public driver's education providers
- Two (2) appointed by the Governor representing private driver's education providers

Problem Identification

According to the Georgia Young Adult Drivers Traffic Safety Facts¹, there were 192 young drivers (18-to-20 years of age) involved in fatal crashes on Georgia roadways in 2018. This is a 32.4 percent increase (+47 young drivers) since 2014. This does not imply that young drivers caused the crash either by their actions or failure to act. In 2018, the top three contributing factors of fatal crashes involving young drivers were: (1) Failure to yield right of way; (2) Overcorrecting; and, (3) Improper lane usage.

Over the past 5-years (2014-2018), young drivers consistently represented 8.5 percent of all drivers involved in fatal crashes. Over the past decade, the majority of young drivers involved in fatal crashes were 18-to-20 years of age (Figure 1, squares icons). In 2018, 78 percent of young drivers involved in fatal crashes were between 18 and 20 years old. The number of 18 to 20 years old drivers increased by 60 percent from 93 drivers in 2014 to 149 drivers in 2018.

Figure 1. Number of Young Drivers (15-17 and 18-20 Years) Involved in Fatal Crashes, 2009–2018



Source: Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) 2009–2018

In 2018, there were 74,735 crashes that involved young drivers in Georgia. The top contributing factors for all motor vehicle crashes involving young drivers were: (1) following too close; (2) operating vehicle in erratic manner (e.g., speeding); and (3) driving while distracted². According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention³, teens are at a higher risk of being in a motor vehicle crash compared to any other age group. This fact also holds true for Georgia where the overall rate of young drivers involved in fatal crashes was among the highest compared to other age groups. In 2018:

- 2.57 out of every 1,000 crashes involving drivers ages 15-to-20 were fatal
- 3.04 out of every 10,000 licensed drivers ages 15-to-20 were involved in a fatal crash
- 2.18 out of every 10,000 Georgia residents ages 15-to-20 were involved in a fatal crash

Fortunately, teen and young driver motor vehicle crashes, injuries, and fatalities are preventable and there are proven strategies that can improve the safety of young drivers on the road through effective driver's education. While our highway safety partners across Georgia will focus on other techniques to reduce injuries and fatalities on our highways, fostering and facilitating strong driver's education remains a paramount and effective component in the fight to reduce crash injuries and fatalities among young Georgia drivers.

¹ Crash Outcomes Data Evaluation System. (2020, May). Young Adult Drivers: 2018 data. (Georgia Traffic Safety Facts). Atlanta, GA: Governor's Office of Highway Safety.

² Distracted driving includes texting, talking on hands-free device, talking on hand-held device, other activity-mobile device, occupant distraction, other interior distraction, or other exterior distraction.

³ "Teen Drivers: Get the Facts." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 30 Oct. 2019, www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/teen_drivers/teendrivers_factsheet.html.

Young Driver Licensing

The Teenage and Adult Driver Responsibility Act (TADRA) was enacted on July 1, 1997. TADRA established a Graduated Driver's License program for young drivers ages 15 to 18 in Georgia. The law significantly changed the way young motorists earn and maintain the driving privileges (Provisional License, Class D).

The methods available to young drivers to obtain their license includes a combination of 30-hour course instructions, behind-the-wheel training, supervised driving, and use of the Parent Teen Driving Guide. These methods are designed to gradually introduce young drivers to Georgia roadways and reduce high-risk driving situations. Young drivers can obtain their license using any of the four methods described below.

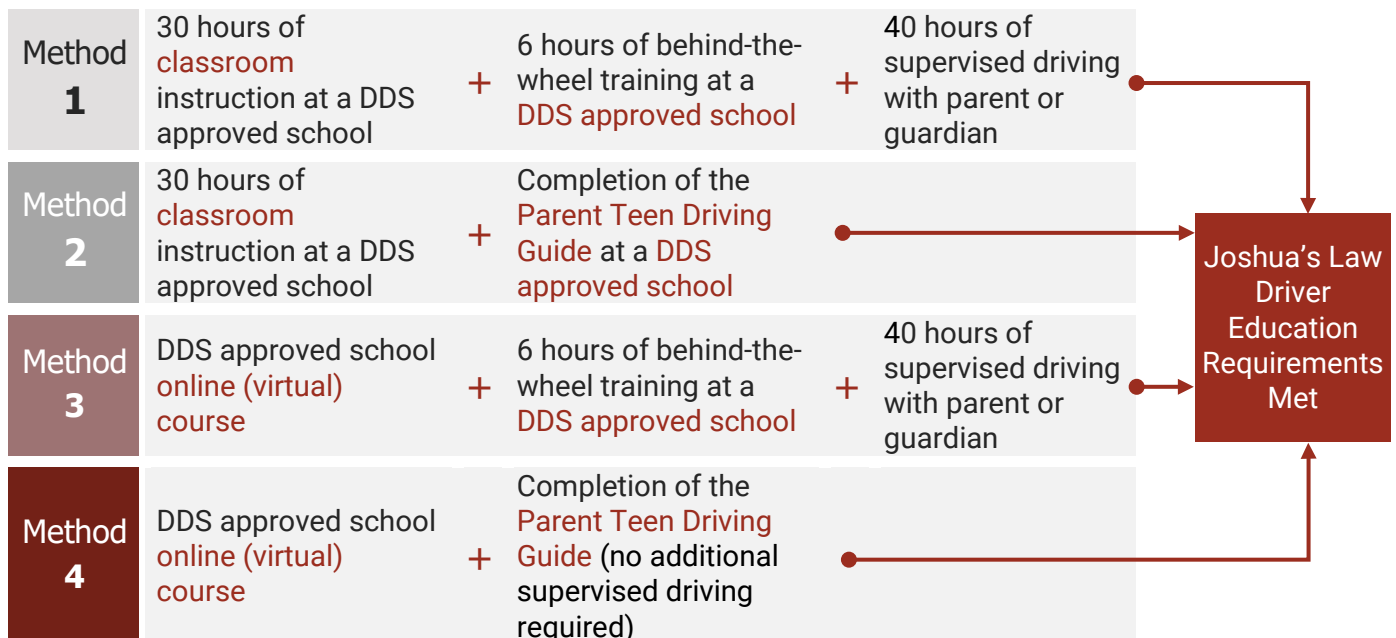


Figure 2 shows the how young drivers obtained a Provisional License (Class D) across the various methods in FY2020.

- **10.5** out of every 20 young drivers (53%) used Method 4
- **7.5** out of every 20 young drivers (37%) used Method 1
- **1** out of every 20 young drivers (5%) used Method 2
- **1** out of every 20 young drivers (5%) used Method 3

Figure 2. FY2020 Class D Licenses Issued by GDL Method (July 2019- June 2020)

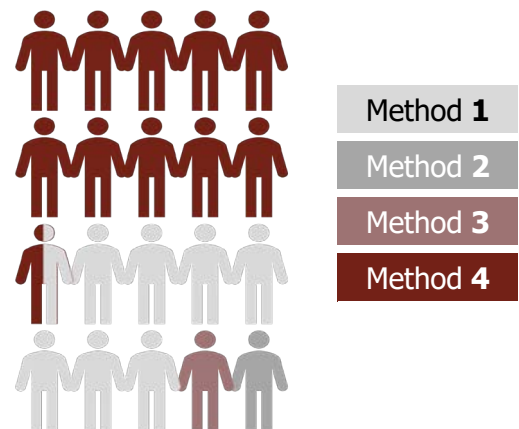


Figure 3 shows the percent of young adults (15-to-20 years old) with an instructional permit, Class D provisional license, or Class C license by county. Young drivers generally obtain their licenses for the first time under a Graduated Driver Licensing program as they learn driving skills.

- There were 8 million licensed drivers in Georgia in 2019. Young drivers (ages 15 to 20 years old) accounted for **7.9 percent (631,790)** of the all licensed drivers in 2019.
- Across the state, **71.1 percent** of all youth (ages 15 to 20 years old) held either an instructional permit or driver’s license in 2019.
- The percentage (**72 percent**) of young adults that held an instructional permit or driver’s license in 2019 was the same across all rural and urban counties⁴.

Figure 3. Percent of Young Adults (Ages 15-20) with an Instructional Permit, Class D Provisional License, or Class C License⁵ by County, 2019

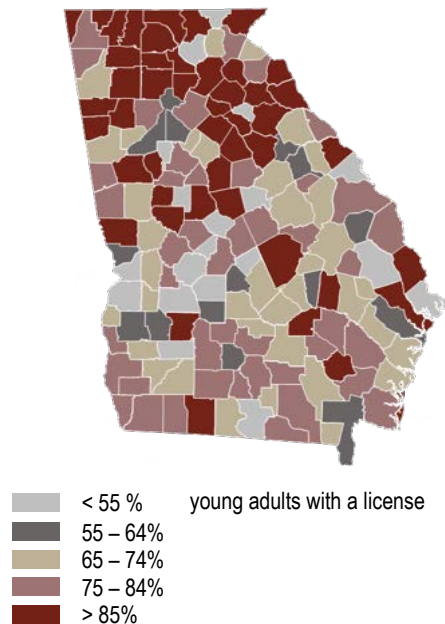
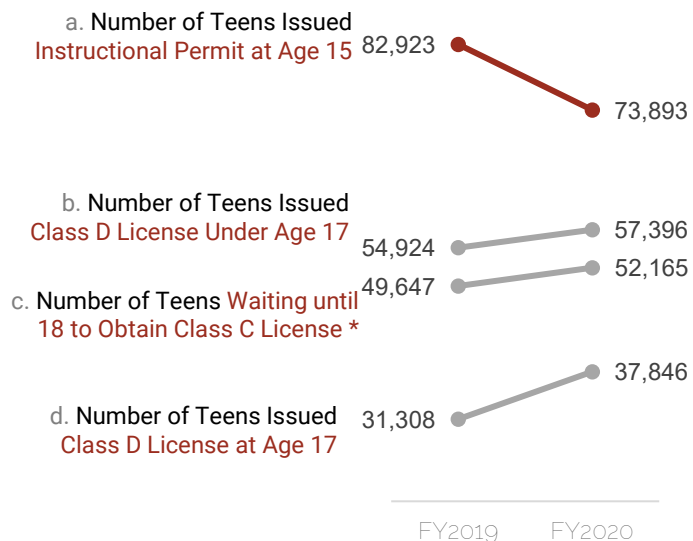


Figure 4 compares the types of licensing obtained across various age groups in FY2019 and FY2020.

- The number of teens number of teens issued an instructional permit at age 15 **decreased by 11 percent** (Figure 4a).
- The number of teens issued a Class D license under age 17 years **increased by 5 percent** (Figure 4b).
- The number of teens (16-17 years) waiting until 18 to obtain a full license (Class C) **increased 5 percent** (Figure 4c).
- The number of teens issued a Class D license at age 17 years **increased by 21 percent** (Figure 4d).

Figure 4. Young Driver Age by License Type (FY2019 and FY2020⁶)



Note: Vertical axis is drawn to scale

* Class C licenses are not required to complete driver’s education

⁴ Rural definition based on Office of Management and Budget (OMB) metro counties. A metro area includes one or more counties containing a core urban area of 50,000 or more people, together with any adjacent counties that have a high degree of social and economic integration (as measured by commuting to work) with the urban core.

⁵ Source: Drivers licenses information obtained from the Department of Driver Service (Dec 2019); Estimated young adult population obtained from Georgia’s Online Analytical Statistical Information System (OASIS)

⁶ This graphic includes the number of licenses issued within the state fiscal year (FY2020 is between July 2019 and June 2020). This data includes new teen drivers that received a Class C license without taking the road-skills test between April 23, 2020 and September 30, 2020 per Governor Kemp’s 2020 executive orders in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Commission History

The timeline below describes the key historical milestones and events since the creation of the Georgia Driver's Education Commission (GDEC) in 2005.

JOSHUA'S LAW CREATES GDEC (2005)

Senate Bill 225 (2005), known as Joshua's Law, created the Georgia Driver's Education Commission (GDEC) for the purpose of recommending to the Governor and General Assembly changes in state programs, statutes, policies, budgets and standards relating to the provision of driver's education and training. Since its inception, the GDEC has worked to identify options for teen drivers to satisfy the driver's education requirements mandated by state law for young Georgians. Joshua's Law created a surcharge on all traffic citations in Georgia (originally 5%, now 1.5%), to establish funding to support driver's education programs throughout Georgia.

GOHS FACILITATES ALLOCATION OF GDEC FUNDS (2007)

In April of 2007, through an agreement between the Georgia Department of Driver Services and the Governor's Office of Highway Safety (GOHS), GOHS facilitated the allocation of the GDEC funds by way of grant funding to support driver's education programs. During fiscal years 2007 through 2010, 58 programs received grant funding to create or support existing driver's education programs at public schools and libraries.

GDEC TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED (2011)

In fiscal year 2011, the grant program was suspended due to lack of budget appropriation during the economic recession. The surcharge on traffic citations continued to be collected and appropriated to the State's general fund.

SENATE BILL 231 REDUCES SURCHARGE COLLECTION (2013)

During the 2013 legislative session of the Georgia General Assembly, Senate Bill 231 extended the sunset of the GDEC until June 30, 2016 and reduced the amount of the surcharge collection from 5 percent to 1.5 percent.



BUDGET APPROPRIATIONS RESUMED (2015)

Budget appropriations resumed to the Commission in Fiscal Year 2015 and the Commission has since provided training to over 21,000 Georgia students. After budget appropriations resumed, the Commission continued support of existing driver's education programs at high schools and executed a contract with the Technical College System of Georgia to establish a scholarship program for driver's education.



HB 806 ASSIGNS GDEC TO GOHS (2016)

HB 806 during the 2016 legislative session extended the sunset to June 30, 2019 and assigned the GDEC to the GOHS for administrative purposes.



GDEC STARTS THE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM (2017)

In fiscal year 2017, the Commission suspended the support of driver's education programs and launched the Georgia Driver's Education Commission Grant Scholarship Program in March of 2017. The program, open to public (public high school, technical colleges, universities, and other state-owned driver education programs) and privately owned (commercial, for-profit driving schools and non-profit organizations, and private schools) awards driver's education grant scholarships to students ages 15-17 years old who seek to complete a 36 hour (30 hours of classroom instruction and 6 hours of behind the wheel instruction with an approved instructor) driver's education program (**Method 1**). The Georgia Driver's Education Grant Scholarship Program was continued in fiscal years 2018 and 2020.

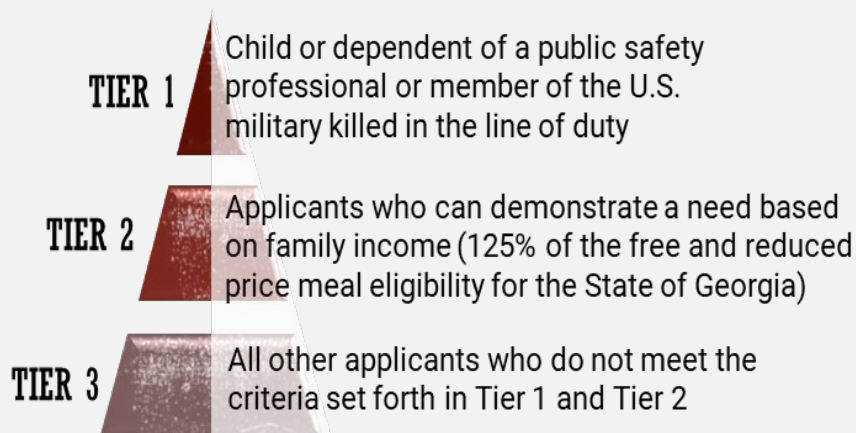


" I am thankful to have had the opportunity to get a scholarship for the Drivers Education course. I may not have been able to take the course without it and it boosted my confidence of driving on the road. Thank you!"

- Carson (Valdosta, GA)

GDEC SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM SELECTION PROCESS

Scholarships are awarded on a tiered priority system. First priority (**Tier 1**) is given to grant scholarship applicants who are a child or dependent of a public safety professional or member of the United States military killed in the line of duty. Second priority (**Tier 2**) is given to scholarship applicants who can demonstrate a need based on family income (financial need eligibility is based on 125% of the free and reduced priced school meal eligibility for Georgia). Third priority (**Tier 3**) is given to all applicants who do not meet the criteria set forth in Tier 1 and Tier 2 outlined above.



PRIORITY TIERS

GDEC Scholarship Program Selection Process

All of the applicants in Tier 1 are awarded before the second priority applicants; and all Tier 2 applicants are awarded before Tier 3 applicants are awarded a grant scholarship. If more grant scholarship applications are submitted than grant scholarships available in each tier, grant scholarships are awarded using a computer-generated random selection method from the priority level applications. Grant scholarships are evenly distributed among Georgia's United States congressional districts to ensure that all Georgians are considered despite geographical location.

Fiscal Year 2020 Activities

July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020

SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

In fiscal year 2020, **8,315** applicants applied for the Georgia Driver's Education Grant Scholarship program and the Commission awarded **5,004** driver's education scholarships. **Six out of every ten** applicants were awarded a scholarship in fiscal year 2020. Compared to the 2019 fiscal year, the number of scholarships awarded **decreased by 11.2 percent** and appropriated funding for FY2020 decreased by less than percent. Of the 5,004 scholarships awarded, 708 students forfeited scholarships or chose not to complete driver's education through an authorized provider in the program. The remaining 4,296 students (**86 percent**) who completed driver's education represents a value of **\$1,806,167.85** paid in driver's education grant scholarships.

Due a decrease in applicants in the final quarter of the fiscal year caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and an Executive Order that waived certain requirements for students to obtain their driver's license, the Georgia Driver's Education Commission experienced a 79% decrease in applicants in final quarter of Fiscal Year 2020 than in Fiscal Year 2019. This decrease in applicants also significantly altered the number of applicants that would have been awarded scholarships.



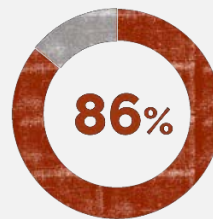
6 out of 10 applicants
were awarded a scholarship in FY2020



Scholarships awarded through the GDEC Scholarship program



Student scholarship recipients compared to FY19



Students redeemed their scholarships at an authorized provider



Paid in driver's education grant scholarships

CHALLENGES IN FY2020

In March 2020, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a world-wide pandemic, and the first detected case of COVID-19 in the state of Georgia was on March 2, 2020. The measures taken to control the spread of the virus greatly impacted the GDEC Driver's Education Scholarship Program. Since March 2020, the number of applicants applying for the GDEC scholarship reduced, the number of awarded applicants redeeming their scholarships reduced, and the way providers are administering the driver's education curriculum and training program has changed. The full impact of COVID-19 on the GDEC Driver's Education program cannot be determined at the time of this report.

GDEC AUTHORIZED PROVIDERS AND SCHOLARSHIPS REDEEMED

In fiscal year 2020, 59 authorized GDEC providers served 4,296 scholarship recipients across 131 locations⁷. The total value of the scholarships redeemed in FY2020 valued \$1,806,167.85 and the average cost per scholarship recipient was \$420.43.

Table 1 below provides a listing of the driver's education providers participating in the program, with the number of training locations operated by each provider, the number of scholarships redeemed by each provider, the financial value of the scholarships redeemed, and the average cost per recipient for each FY2020 provider.

Table 1. Number of Scholarships Redeemed, Value of Scholarships Redeemed, and Average Cost Per Recipient by Authorized GDEC Provider, FY2020

FY2020 Authorized GDEC Provider	Number of Locations	Number of Scholarships Redeemed	Value of Scholarships Redeemed	Average Cost Per Recipient
A-1 Driving School, Inc.	19	761	\$322,389.00	\$423.64
Barber's Driving School, Inc.	1	267	\$124,483.00	\$466.23
West Metro Driving School	1	249	\$112,050.00	\$450.00
A+ Driving Services, Inc.	7	176	\$87,120.00	\$495.00
New London School of Driving Inc.	1	166	\$82,170.00	\$495.00
Advance Driving Academy	1	118	\$44,840.00	\$380.00
Gwinnett County Board of Education	8	106	\$36,570.00	\$345.00
Savannah Technical College	4	105	\$36,750.00	\$350.00
Wiregrass Georgia Technical College	4	101	\$35,350.00	\$350.00
South Cherokee/Jasper Driver Improvement Clinic Inc.	2	92	\$41,400.00	\$450.00
Taggart's Driving School	3	91	\$45,045.00	\$495.00
DriveSmart Georgia	3	90	\$44,910.00	\$499.00
Brock's Driver Education School, Inc.	1	89	\$40,050.00	\$450.00

⁷ Since March 2020, the measures taken to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in Georgia resulted in the reduction of awarded applicants redeeming their scholarships and significant changes in when and how providers administer the driver's education curriculum and training.

FY2020 Authorized GDEC Provider	Number of Locations	Number of Scholarships Redeemed	Value of Scholarships Redeemed	Average Cost Per Recipient
Coastal Pines Technical College	5	85	\$29,750.00	\$350.00
Lanier Technical College	5	80	\$28,000.00	\$350.00
Southern Regional Technical College	3	80	\$28,000.00	\$350.00
Southern Crescent Technical College	4	78	\$27,300.00	\$350.00
Kennessaw Driving School	1	71	\$35,145.00	\$495.00
Central Georgia Technical College	2	70	\$24,500.00	\$350.00
Georgia Driving School, Inc.	1	69	\$29,325.00	\$425.00
Marietta City Board of Education	1	67	\$27,205.00	\$406.04
Dickerson Driving School, Inc.	2	66	\$32,670.00	\$495.00
Augusta Technical College	1	60	\$21,000.00	\$350.00
AA Academy of Action Driving School	1	55	\$27,500.00	\$500.00
Albany Technical College	2	55	\$19,250.00	\$350.00
Georgia Northwestern Technical College	3	55	\$19,250.00	\$350.00
Just Driver Training	1	54	\$27,000.00	\$500.00
A Driving Advantage	1	52	\$23,715.00	\$456.06
Classic VIP Driving School, LLC	1	52	\$20,592.00	\$396.00
Jones Driver Education School of Augusta, Inc.	1	52	\$22,410.00	\$430.96
Southeastern Regional Driving and Safety Academy Inc	1	51	\$20,145.00	\$395.00
The Wiser Driver	1	50	\$21,500.00	\$430.00
North Georgia Technical College	3	46	\$16,100.00	\$350.00
West Georgia Technical College	1	46	\$16,100.00	\$350.00
Georgia Piedmont Technical College	1	45	\$15,750.00	\$350.00
Ogeechee Technical College	3	45	\$15,750.00	\$350.00
Safety 1st Driver Education	1	43	\$17,157.00	\$399.00
Oconee Fall Line Technical College	3	38	\$13,300.00	\$350.00
Brownhill Enterprises Towne Lake Driving School, LLC	1	36	\$17,460.00	\$485.00
AABACUS, Inc.	2	34	\$17,000.00	\$500.00
Duluth DUI and Driving School	1	32	\$14,820.00	\$463.13
Executive Results DUI & Defensive Driving School, LLC	1	28	\$11,900.00	\$425.00
FB Driving, Inc.	1	27	\$9,855.00	\$365.00
South Georgia Technical College	2	27	\$9,450.00	\$350.00
Nathan's Driving School, Inc.	2	22	\$10,958.86	\$498.13
Oconee County Board of Education	2	22	\$8,799.12	\$399.96

FY2020 Authorized GDEC Provider	Number of Locations	Number of Scholarships Redeemed	Value of Scholarships Redeemed	Average Cost Per Recipient
Southern Defensive Driving School	1	22	\$8,690.00	\$395.00
Atlanta Technical College	1	21	\$7,350.00	\$350.00
Rockdale-Newton Driving School	1	21	\$10,395.00	\$495.00
1st United Driving & DUI School	1	18	\$8,930.00	\$496.11
Athens Technical College	1	18	\$6,300.00	\$350.00
Columbus Technical College	1	16	\$5,600.00	\$350.00
Safe America Foundation, Inc.	1	16	\$7,584.00	\$474.00
All Star Driver Education, Inc.	1	13	\$4,549.87	\$349.99
Gordon County Board of Education	2	13	\$3,835.00	\$295.00
Calhoun City BOE	1	10	\$2,900.00	\$290.00
White County Board of Education	1	10	\$2,650.00	\$265.00
Drive Again Driving School	1	7	\$3,150.00	\$450.00
Southeastern Technical College	2	7	\$2,450.00	\$350.00
FY2020 TOTAL	131	4,296	\$1,806,167.85	\$420.43



“ This course helped me in many ways to become the safe and responsible driver I am today. The instructors were calm and patient which helped me overcome being nervous and unsure of myself. Also, they helped me become a safe driver by teaching step-by-step driving skills, giving me opportunities to practice, and modelling safe and legal driving. I recommend that anyone learning to drive should begin by enrolling into a driver education course to get plenty of supervised driving experience before getting their licenses.”

- J’Kira (Savannah, GA)

Funding History

According to O.C.G.A. § 15-21-181, it is the intent of the General Assembly that, subject to appropriation, an amount equal to such proceeds received from such fines in any fiscal year shall be made available during the following fiscal year to the Commission. In other words, **the amount of funds collected in any fiscal year is appropriated to the Commission for the following fiscal year.**

The amount of funding collected in FY2020, **decreased by 11.1 percent (\$329,332.37 less)** from \$2,978,971.10 in FY2019 to \$2,649,638.73 in FY2020. This equates to approximately 780 scholarships becoming unavailable in FY2021.

Table 2 shows the amount of funds (in millions) collected and appropriated to the Commission from FY2017 to FY2020.

Table 2. Amounts of Funds Collected and Amount of Funds Appropriated to the Commission by Fiscal Year

Fiscal Year	Amounts of Funds Collected	Amount of Funds Appropriated to the Commission
FY 2017	\$ 3,095,265.70	\$ 3,313,516.00
FY 2018	\$ 3,004,583.70	\$ 3,095,265.70
FY 2019	\$ 2,978,971.10	\$ 3,004,583.70
FY 2020	\$ 2,649,638.73	\$ 2,978,971.10





Georgia Driver's Education Commission

7 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, Suite 643

Atlanta, Georgia 30334

(404) 656-2769