



# ROAD TO SAVING LIVES

Summary &  
Policy Recommendations



Vision Zero Council  
Education  
Subcommittee

# Education Subcommittee

Meetings were held April 29, May 16, June 6, July 25, Sept. 28, and Nov. 14

- State Agencies represented: DOT, DMV, DPH, DCJ, SDE
- Other agencies: COGs, AARP, AAA, Connecticut Children's, Connecticut Transportation Institute, New Haven Coalition for Active Transportation/NH Parking Authority, Valley Transit District, CT Association of Schools
- Others: Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board, Bike Walk CT, community bike/walk/transit advocates, engineers, health departments



# Education Subcommittee

## ■ Sub-Committee Discussion

What we heard through discussion and brainstorming:

1. Need for driver re-training
2. Need for education of children
3. Need to address current dangerous trends: vulnerable user deaths, wrong-way crashes, impairment, speeding, distraction

Minor Discussion Points –

- Need for DMV training materials to reflect new laws in a timely manner
- Child passenger safety



# Policy Recommendations

From the Education Subcommittee to the  
Vision Zero Council

Education  
Subcommittee  
Vision Zero Council

# Potential Policy Recommendation #1

## Utilize schools to better educate children about road safety

Rationale: Teaching children to be safe pedestrians and bicyclists is a good starting point for a lifetime of road safety awareness, and children can influence parent behavior.

Proposal idea 1: Create an initiative between DOT, DMV, and DOE to include transportation education in scholastic curriculums in Connecticut. This proposal is aimed at teaching school-aged children the importance of transportation safety and the benefits of walking, bicycling, and taking public transportation. Furthermore, this initiative would educate children on the importance of their participation in the active transportation network in their communities.

# Potential Policy Recommendation #1

## Utilize schools to better educate children about road safety

Proposal idea 2: Create a Vision Zero Schools program. Based on efforts from North Dakota, create a list of criteria for a school to become a Vision Zero school, which could include traffic safety education to students, peer-to-peer education, outreach to parents, safety messaging to teachers and staff, etc. Ideally, DMV/DOT/DOE would not need to do much of that education, but could help nudge the schools to do it themselves (with help from community safety partners). This program would be optional for schools.

Implementation suggestion: Perhaps tie this in with federal Safe Routes to School initiatives/funding. Involve children and parents in creating safer school zones and routes to schools.

# Potential Policy Recommendation #2

## Utilize the judicial system in driver re-training

Rationale: The criminal justice system provides an opportunity for driver retraining, specifically for traffic offenders.

Proposal idea: Offense-specific retraining classes. Expand the operator retraining program to include an option for the Judicial Branch to offer a class tailored to an offense as part of a plea deal, which could reduce the fine amount that a driver must pay.

Implementation suggestion: For example, if the driver received a distracted driving ticket, they could take a short class on the types of distractions and why they're dangerous. (This could be similar to the CPS course). This would require some more work to set up and have a longer time horizon, but could continue to emphasize safety in the traffic ticket process.

Aligns with Equity Subcommittee Recommendation #2

# Potential Policy Recommendation #3

## Increase options for driver retraining

Rationale: after initial driver training, there are no driver re-training opportunities except for an optional class for older drivers. There is concern that drivers are not made aware of new laws, how to use new infrastructure, etc.

Proposal idea 1: Require a skills refresher at other points in a lifetime. We test drivers once at the onset but nothing after. This would not be optional but required, especially for those who have been driving for 40 or 50 years.

Implementation suggestion: Perhaps after a certain age, people are entered into a pool, similar to a jury pool, where they can be selected for mandatory driver retraining. This could be offered online.



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# Potential Policy Recommendation #3

## Increase options for driver retraining

Proposal idea 2: Offer a statewide, incentive-based driver education for drivers to get a refresher on law updates and other safety reminders.

Implementation suggestion: This could be modeled after the AARP older driver course, a voluntary program that comes with an auto insurance discount. Reduced insurance is especially valuable to young male drivers, a subgroup that is frequent offenders.



# Potential Policy Recommendation #4

## Utilize DMV to educate drivers on a more frequent basis

Rationale: The DMV has frequent touch points where they can impart new information and reminders to current drivers throughout their lives.

Proposal idea 1: Empowering CT's DMV to have more thoughtful engagement with customers/drivers at every available opportunity, such as at license renewals and registration.

Implementation suggestion: This could be in the form of a video that must be watched in its entirety before an online application could be processed. The video would be an update on new laws that impact drivers and pedestrians. Additionally, the videos could be responsive to emerging trends in traffic violence. An example this year would be the proliferation of wrong way driving deaths.



# Potential Policy Recommendation #4

## Utilize DMV to educate drivers on a more frequent basis

Proposal idea 2: Incorporate CT driver training materials within the DMV process of awarding a CT license to out-of-state drivers when they become CT residents. Focus on Connecticut-specific laws as well as key points that have been implicated in car-to-pedestrian and car-to-cyclist fatalities.



# Potential Policy Recommendation #5

## Utilize DPH to educate around emerging traffic safety issues

Rationale: DPH is a leading source for safety and health information, and could perhaps – with funding – play a role in traffic safety messaging.

Proposal idea: Specifically around driving under the influence of RX drugs (with an emphasis on opioids, OTC medications and marijuana), DPH could choose one or two local health departments and/or health districts to collaborate on an educational initiative about the dangers of driving under the influence of prescription drugs. It could include outreach to pharmacies or hospitals (or possibly even methadone clinics) who could themselves communicate information to drivers receiving medications.

Implementation suggestion: DPH already has relationships with health departments to target areas of concern and assist with education and outreach. Suggested more funds to enable that outreach to include education on traffic safety and drug use. AARP is willing to assist as well, as this is a priority for the agency.



# Additional Considerations

## Child passenger safety

This topic came up frequently in our discussions. Rather than create our own specific recommendations, we direct the council to consider supporting the recommendations of the Child Passenger Safety working group, convened in Connecticut by the National Governors Association in partnership with DOT, when those become available.

Attention to issues of child passenger safety align with the Equity Subcommittee's Recommendation #1.



# Additional Considerations

## Driver education

Materials should be updated in a timely manner to reflect new laws and also be responsive to current traffic violence trends (speeding, wrong way driving deaths, etc.).

Driving schools should be monitored specifically to ensure that the most current materials are being utilized and instructors are up to date on new laws and infrastructure.

What is the current process for ensuring the above? Is legislation or regulatory guidance needed?



# Additional Considerations

## Road safety messaging

- Explore opportunities to establish a hub/host agency for coordinated social media messaging across agencies
- Increase public announcements/promotions regarding changes in driver safety laws

Implementation suggestion: Perhaps model after New Jersey, where a lead agency distributes social media content to agencies, which are then released at a coordinated time for maximum impact. This can include the social media pages of government agencies, private organizations, towns, public health departments, and other partners.



# Final Thoughts

- We support the recommendations and proposals of the other subcommittees
- We would like the opportunity for the subcommittees to get together to share thoughts on where our recommendations overlap
- We would like to see a plan for sustainability. What is the plan for continued assessment and improvement over time?

